

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 10 November 2009

Subject: Update on progress towards meeting the Every Disabled Child Matters charter

Report of: Pauline Newman Director Children's Services

Purpose of report:

The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on the progress which has been made in meeting the requirements outlined in the Every Disabled Child Matters charter which the Local Authority signed up to in February 2008

Recommendations:

It is recommended that members note progress made towards compliance with the Every Disabled Child Matters Charter

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1. Background and introduction

- 1.1 In Manchester, we currently have 3200 children and young people registered as having a learning disability or difficulty (LDD) on our register which is maintained by the Multi agency Partnership (MAP).
- 1.2 Our vision for children and young people with LDD is the same as it is for all children and young people. We want all of our children and young people, through an enriched, challenging and fulfilling learning journey, to emerge emotionally resilient, confident and competent citizens who are able to realise their full potential, contribute to and access the opportunities available to them within their communities. Manchester has also made a commitment through its Community Strategy to enable its residents to achieve their potential and to establish neighbourhood where families choose to learn, live and play.
- 1.3 We also share the vision of Every Child Matters where the government has identified 5 outcomes to be achieved for all children and young people. These are:
- Stay safe
 - Be healthy
 - Make a positive contribution
 - Achieve economic well-being
 - Enjoy and achieve
- 1.4 These are holistic, universal outcomes which are not focused on individual services such as education, health or social care and they therefore cannot be achieved unless services are working together in a coherent way in partnership with families and their communities. This approach is absolutely essential for families of children with LDD, who we recognise have to face extra challenges in order for their children to achieve these outcomes.
- 1.5 In order to support the realisation of this vision, the Local Authority has signed up to the Every Disabled Child Matters Charter in February 2008 (appendix 1). This national charter was launched in October 2006 with the aim of securing the active engagement of all Local Authorities in achieving positive outcomes for all children and young people with LDD and their families. It was based on research which showed that Local Authority plans were failing children with disabilities. It was found that in most cases Local Authorities had not consulted or involved children and young people with disabilities or their families when developing plans and that plans did not include actions on how services would be provided for this group. The charter outlines a number of commitments that Local Authorities should make in order to improve services for children and young people with LDD and their families.
- 1.6 Within Manchester, through our engagement with parents/carers of children with LDD and children and young people, particularly over the past year in relation to a number of proposals and programmes, we have also gathered a significant amount of information about what local children and young people with LDD and their families want from services. This can be summarised as:

- Universal services, which are more flexible, understanding and accountable with well-trained staff able to respond to a wide range of need.
- Whenever possible access to locality based mainstream services that can meet needs of children with LDD
- Services which are informed by service users and mechanisms in place so that families can influence services on an ongoing basis
- Choice
- Better access to information
- Smooth transitions
- Flexible services enabling children to move along the continuum as needs change
- Higher expectations for the life chances of children and young people with LDD with support that embodies this
- Effective multi agency integrated working with child and family at the centre
- Single point of contact for families
- Specialist services that come to the child
- Access to appropriate specialist services at the appropriate level when needed
- Clarity, consistency and fairness regarding access to services
- Preventing problems becoming a crises
- Improved access to a wide range of short breaks
- Budgets devolved to parents
- Budgets which are pooled and able to react to changing circumstances

1.7 There are currently a number of developments in Manchester that support the Every Disabled Child Matters Charter and also take into account the information we have gathered through our engagement with children and young people with LDD and their families. These are:

- the development of a Strategy for LDD;
- the Aiming High for Disabled Children short breaks programme;
- the Early Support programme;
- the review of Child Health and Disability Service;
- the development of specialist resourced Sure Start Children's Centres.

1.8 In addition to these developments, the recent recommendations discussed in this committee and agreed by Executive in October to develop a continuum of provision for children and young people with specific language impairment (SLI) and/or autistic spectrum disorder and for children and young people with physical disabilities and complex health needs also support the charter.

This report will consider each of these developments in more detail.

2. Development of strategy for children and young people with LDD and their families

2.1 This is a high level strategy which sets out our vision for children and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) and their families in Manchester and describes how Children's Services and its partners will work in an integrated, coherent way, making the best use of available resources, to achieve this vision.

This strategy aims to:

- Provide a strategic steer for future activity, funding and resources aimed at children and young people with LDD and their families
- Raise the profile and awareness of the needs of children and young people with LDD and their families across universal services
- Ensure that all partner agencies working with children and young people with LDD have shared aims, high expectations about what children and young people with LDD can achieve and are working together to reduce inequalities
- Ensure the improved delivery of services which are designed around the needs of children and young people and their families so that they receive the right services, from the right agency at the right time
- Ensure the well being and safety of all children and young people with LDD
- Increase parent/carer confidence that their child's individual needs are being provided for effectively

2.2 This strategy describes how community based integrated services working with families in a flexible and responsive way will work towards achieving our vision and close the gap between the outcomes achieved by children and young people with LDD and other children. Throughout the strategy there is a much greater emphasis on universal and targeted services being better able to meet the needs of children and young people with LDD and their families and less reliance on specialist provision and services being the only provider for these families.

Consequently, this strategy will need to impact on the full range of universal settings, all of which impact on the daily lives of all families in Manchester including childcare, education, out of school provision, youth, play, leisure and cultural activity and health services to ensure that they are able to contribute to improving outcomes and opportunities children and young people with LDD.

2.3 There are six key themes identified in the strategy which take into consideration the outcomes of our consultation, as well as national and local policies and drivers for change such as the Every Disabled Child Matters charter. These can be summarised as: Theme 1: understanding and meeting need through universal, targeted and specialist services; Theme 2: reducing inequalities and narrowing the gap in outcomes; Theme 3: developing the

workforce; Theme 4: think family; Theme 5: engagement of parents/carers, children and young people; Theme 6: improving transitions;
A critical aspect within each of these themes is the importance of joint working with other agencies and partners.

- 2.4 This strategy will be underpinned by robust monitoring and evaluation processes, with all agencies and partners ensuring that improved access and outcomes for children and young people with LDD is a high priority within their service areas. Overall outcomes for children and young people with LDD in Manchester will be set out in our Children and Young People's Plan and our Local Area Agreement will include targets for the level of service to be delivered to families with a disabled child. The impact of this strategy on improving outcomes for children and young people with LDD and service delivery will be reported to and governed by the LDD Board.

3. Aiming High for Disabled Children – Short Breaks transformation programme

- 3.1 Through Manchester's approach to delivering the national Aiming High for Disabled Children Short Breaks transformation programme, we aim to ensure that disabled children have the same opportunities to participate in positive activities whilst they are not at school as other children do, and in doing so, ensure that the parents and carers of disabled children are able to access short breaks from their caring responsibilities.

By the end of March 2011, all 1300 children who fall within the national A and B categories* will be able to access short breaks. (See footnote to section 3)

- 3.2 Until recently, access to short breaks for Manchester families was extremely limited. Families would often be at crisis point before being enabled to access a short break and choice was limited to costly overnight residential "respite" provision and a small number of specialist playschemes and youth sessions, the demand for which far exceeded the supply. We will build short breaks into our core offer for disabled children and their families. We believe that if families are enabled to access regular short breaks on an ongoing basis, they will be prevented, in the main, from reaching crisis point. More families will be enabled to remain together as a family unit and the emotional health and well being of these families will improve. We are focussing on a move towards a much wider range of flexible provision and services for children, young people and their families which are closer to their home with specialist services working in partnership with locally based universal providers such as Surestart, Leisure Services, Extended Schools, Music Service, Youth Service, Play teams and so on.
- 3.3 Progress to date:
- More than 500 disabled children and their families engaged in shaping short breaks programme
 - More than 350 additional children accessed short breaks delivered in Manchester's summer programme – included playschemes, leisure

activities, music sessions and family short breaks away – delivered by mixed economy of providers – local authority, third sector and schools.

- Summer programme evaluated
- October half term programme delivering additional 206 short breaks and includes trampolining, horse riding, dancing, playschemes, specialist sitting service
- Saturday morning crèches in local Sure Start Children's Centres commissioned for run up to Christmas
- Arndale Centre has agreed to install Changing Place on its 24 hour corridor which will enable families with an older disabled child to access Manchester's City Centre offer
- Pilot of individual budgets for first 25 families to begin in November to enable them to commission their own short breaks
- Commissioning strategy agreed which sets out investment plan for additional funding available to end March 2011 to deliver short breaks for all target children and their families
- Supporting capital programme will improve accessibility of leisure centres so that Manchester Leisure can deliver a Leisure Pledge to disabled children, will support parks to improve accessibility for disabled children through for example, accessible play areas and the extension of existing Bikes for All scheme and will work with venues throughout the city to install Changing Places

3.4 Contribution to Every Disabled Child Matters:

- We know how many children fit within our group A* and B* categories and all agencies involved in delivering the Short Breaks transformation are planning services on the basis of this knowledge
- The Multi Agency Partnership service is being proactive in contacting the more than 3000 families on their database to inform them of services available to them as they come on stream. The parental engagement workstream lead, who is a parent herself and the Chair of the Parent Carer Consultative Group, is in constant contact with parents and is actively promoting the range of services available.
- The workforce development workstream will ensure that staff delivering short breaks will have access to relevant training
- Disabled children and families are involved in the planning, commissioning and monitoring of short breaks

*Group A: Children and young people with ASD. These are likely to have other impairments, such as severe learning disabilities or have behaviour, which is challenging. Not all children of Autistic spectrum will require specialist additional short breaks services.

*Group B: Children and young people with complex health needs which includes those with disability and life limiting conditions who have reached the palliative care stage of their life cycle as well as other children and young people with complex health needs as well as other impairments – physical, cognitive or sensory impairment

4. Early Support Programme

- 4.1 The development of a key worker service is one of the commitments within the Every Disabled Child Matters charter. The Early Support Service was developed in July 2008 and offers an intensive key worker service to families

with a child aged under 6 years who has a significant disability requiring complex service involvements. A team of 8 fte district based key workers operate as designated key workers supporting parents and co-ordinating services. They also work with staff who are non designated key workers such as Children's Centre workers and health workers who are involved with families. Many of the pre school special needs team act as non designated key workers for families they are involved with. Non designated key workers take on a co-ordinating role with families they are involved with whilst also undertaking their main role with the family. Currently, 192 children within the early years are known to the Early Support service.

4.2 An evaluation has recently been completed with a small number of families accessing this service which showed that:

- For the families who are receiving key working, the service aims are being achieved;
- The designated key worker service is highly valued by both families and practitioners. Both groups report personal and service level impacts;
- Increased efficiency since the introduction of designated key working may mean that services are able to see more clients without increasing resources. This could result in cost savings, but further research is necessary;
- Service capacity is limited and waiting lists are a source of frustration for both families and practitioners. Clear and explicit eligibility criteria are required.

5. Review of Children and Disability Service (CHAD)

5.1 CHAD is a discreet city wide service operating from Chorlton District Office. The Disabled Children's Team provides social work services for the most severely disabled children in the city. The service also comprises of a team of Manchester Community Health funded nurses, a family placement team supporting foster carers and a family support domiciliary service supporting children at home with complex needs. The service also includes the Multi Agency Partnership (MAP) which has a much broader criteria than the Disabled Children's Team and offers information, advice, signposting, advocacy and other support to parents on a short –term basis as well as maintaining our register of children and young people with LDD.

5.2 CHAD is to be reviewed to ensure the needs of disabled children are met across the continuum of need. A review will bring together the range of services currently available in a more integrated way and should realise efficiencies that can be reinvested to meet need. Fundamental to the review is the better integration of CHAD services with the social inclusion portfolio.

There is within a wider opportunity to develop joint arrangements with Manchester Community Health in terms of joint commissioning and joint appointments. There is a commitment from MCH to progress this work and bring together budgets in an efficient way.

The redesign should ensure that services are part of the integrated district model so that disabled children receive appropriate services in their locality and that localities are resourced to meet those needs. The current isolation from district working impacts on the workforce and on the service provided to families. This would be most effective through the 6 Specialist Resourced Children's Centres that will be the district hub where needs are assessed and appropriate care packages are agreed.

6. Development of Specialist Resourced Children's Centres

- 6.1 Although there are a number of highly regarded services and resources available within the Early Years to provide support for individual children with LDD and settings they mostly operate as city wide services and there is often a lack of clarity about how they can be accessed, with a number of different referral panels and pathways in operation. This can result in parents and settings sometimes feeling that they are not getting the right services at the right time due to inflexibilities in the system. There are also cases of children are also arriving at primary school with significant LDD where they have not been assessed by the most appropriate services and of children spending too long in the system preschool waiting for assessments.
- 6.2 In addition to the consultation with parents and carers which showed us some of the things they would like to see developed within the City (referred to early in this report), consultation with staff from a range of Private Voluntary and Independent settings in November 08 informed us that the majority of staff were unclear about how to access additional support or services for their settings or individual children. A very clear outcome of this consultation was that settings wanted a single point of contact within the district which they could contact for advice or signposting.
- 6.3 Proposals have been developed to designate one Sure Start Children's Centre in each district as a specialist resourced Children's Centre. In addition to the services currently accessible through a Sure Start Children's Centre such as Speech and Language Therapy and CAMHS, each of these centres would have a range of additional services located within them to providing an integrated service for children with LDD attending the centre and for children with LDD within the district. These services include:
- Early Support Service
 - Pre School SEN Team
 - Outreach Workers
 - Educational Psychology (through a commissioning arrangement)
 - Sensory Services
 - Specialist teachers including from Lancasterian School and Rodney House School.

There would be a clear link to social care and family support teams and the Disabled Children's team which may possibly in the future also be located at

these Children's centres (subject to the review described in the previous section).

- 6.4 The team based at each Specialist Resourced Children's Centre will have a clear role in the early screening and identification of children in the district with additional needs, surveillance of trends and patterns of need in the district, delivery of services to meet identified patterns of need, monitoring progress and provision and ensuring that there are effective transition arrangements for children with LDD into school. They would also ensure that those with a SENCO role in other settings are fully supported and are able to make high quality provision for children with LDD and they would have a key role in building the capacity of all settings in the district to make provision for a wider range of need.
- 6.5 Each centre would also have designated places for children with a range of LDD including up to 3 places specifically for children with physical disabilities. All centres would access specialist support and advice for these children from Lancasterian School. Some of the centres such as Benchill Children's Centre's daycare provision at Lyndene Road currently, would have specialist teachers and teaching staff on site and would be resourced to provide additional assessment places for children with more severe and complex LDD. Rodney House Assessment Provision is currently developing a similar model of provision with Old Moat Children's Centres so that they can open a class there for children who would normally attend the assessment provision and the plan is to roll this model out to other Children's Centres across the city. This provision would be staffed from Rodney House.
- 6.6 Some of the current arrangements for accessing services and provision would be brought together at a local level and mean that referrals are made to a single district panel for a variety of purposes and outcomes all of which would be linked to needs identified through a CAF. This includes the development of district preschool LDD panels which are currently in the early stages of implementation. These 'one stop shop' panels make decisions about requests for statutory assessment, additional funding, Sure Start Inclusion Grant, access to assessment provisions and special school places. In the future it is intended that they also make decisions about access to designated places in Sure Start Centres and link to Child Care Commissioning so that when appropriate, the panel could commission places for children with LDD in other settings. This will mean that through multi agency discussion at a single panel, an individualised package of support or services could be wrapped around a child and based on the needs of the child and their family identified through a CAF and coordinated by a designated key worker.
- 6.7 Capital programmes for each of these centres have been approved and the design briefs have been agreed and are progressing. Each centre will have a multi functional medical room and hygiene suites with space for children to receive therapy in their locality such as physiotherapy, hearing test, sight test etc.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 Overall, although there are many examples of good and outstanding practice across Manchester for children and young people with LDD, we are aware that there sometimes lacks a consistency of approach across all services and agencies and across the age range. This means that access to services and resources is not always timely, clear, transparent or seen as equitable which often results in parents/carers of children and young people with LDD feeling that they have to 'fight' to access appropriate support.
- 7.2 The commitments set out in the Every Disabled Child Matters charter provide a challenging agenda and there is a need for everyone working within the city collectively to raise their aspirations and expectations for what children and young people with LDD can achieve and then enable them to achieve it. As a Local Authority we have to equip our communities and the people who work within them to perceive disability differently, to move away from a deficit model of thinking to one which is founded in strengths and enablement.
- 7.3 In particular, there are massive implications for workforce development in all of the developments described in this report. Parents, children and young people have told us how important it is that the staff working with their children have the appropriate skills and experience to understand and meet their needs. An essential part of our strategy for children and young people with LDD will therefore be to ensure that staff within Children's Services and within partner agencies, understand their role and have the skills, knowledge and understanding required meeting the needs of this population. The challenge is for all partners and agencies across the city to see meeting the needs of children and young people with LDD as their business, not as something that only 'specialists' can do. In many cases this will involve bringing specialists to universal services to build their capacity and understanding.
- 7.4 Through programmes such as Aiming High we have increased the way that children, young people, parents and carers are engaged in the planning, commissioning and monitoring of services to ensure that the services meet their needs and we need to ensure that lessons learned and practice developed through this is applied to other service areas. Our desire for greater personalisation of services will only be achieved by a transformation in the power relationship between services and families.
- 7.5 There is a need to ensure that improved access and outcomes for children and young people with LDD is a high priority within all service areas across the Local Authority and not just within Children's Services. In order for this to happen we need senior managers from other service areas to support the strategy for children and young people with LDD and that ensure that their services build planning, delivery and monitoring of this area into their service development activity. In addition, there must be effective processes across the Local Authority to challenge policy and practice across all services when they do not have high aspirations for children and young people with LDD.