

**MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
REPORT FOR INFORMATION**

COMMITTEE: PERSONNEL
DATE: 27 MAY 2009
SUBJECT: CHILDREN'S SERVICES REPORT - OVERVIEW
REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To provide a brief overview and context for three Children's Services Personnel reports to be presented at Personnel Committee.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Committee is recommended to:

1. Consider the three Children's Services Personnel reports (covering Youth, Education Services and 14-19) in the context of the strategic priorities for the service and the Directorate's contribution to City and sub-regional priorities

FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES FOR THE REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS:

These are dealt with within the individual reports.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

WARDS AFFECTED: All

IMPLICATIONS FOR:

Anti-poverty Yes	Equal Opportunities Yes	Employment Yes	Environment Yes
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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Children's Services Directorate is engaged in a programme of change to deliver improved outcomes for children, young people and families across the City. At the heart of this programme are a number of key principles:
- placing Children's Services' contribution to key corporate and City priorities at the heart of service planning and commissioning;
 - developing further a neighbourhood focus for delivery and commissioning;
 - maximising the Directorate's contribution to city-wide strategies to address residents' wages and the needs of families;
 - delivering more for less, through efficiencies and innovation, changing practice to reflect priorities;
 - ensuring management and staffing structures are, where appropriate, simpler, leaner and flatter;
 - securing a high quality workforce able to work flexibly to meet changing needs and demands; and
 - ensuring that Children's Services functions complement corporate functions and are aligned clearly to partnership responsibilities and priorities.
- 1.2 Within the reports, clear priorities are outlined for placing the neighbourhood focus at the heart of the directorate's work, whilst retaining a strong strategic leadership and commissioning function for key areas of service provision: in the Youth Service report, for example, the report proposes the establishment of district teams able to respond to local needs and aspirations.
- 1.3 Central to the directorate's purpose is an intention to ensure there is a clearly defined understanding of our functions: strategic leadership and commissioning, provision of high quality services where appropriate and strong performance and project management to ensure that the pace of change is maintained. Each of the reports seeks to strengthen and clarify capacity in one or more of these areas. In the Education Services report, the proposals build on the Education Services Redesign through further clarification and strengthening of roles based on experience of working the structure: the core school improvement function, which is critical to our robust and challenging relationship with schools, is enabled to focus fully on its activities and supported in securing a suitably qualified workforce; activities associated with service delivery are brought together, to ensure greater flexibility and agility in meeting schools' demands and needs and delivering efficiencies; and the strategic leadership role of the service, in planning and commissioning activity for the City as a whole, is further strengthened. Similarly, the Youth Service report outlines proposals for clear and strong strategic leadership and performance management.
- 1.4 In the next 12 months, the City Council will assume significant additional responsibilities with the demise of the Learning and Skills Council, as well as working across the City and sub-region to ensure that today's young people are the highly skilled workforce of tomorrow, connected to local employment opportunities and able to adapt flexibly to changing economic times. The 14-

19 Team proposal seeks to strengthen and more firmly establish our capacity to achieve this. It will ensure we are able to take a key strategic leadership role within the sub-regional context of improving skills and employment opportunities for young people feeding into the economy of the Region.

- 1.5 Across the reports, financial information is provided; in a number of areas, these reports deliver financial savings which are essential to enable the directorate to work within the budgets agreed for this year. More importantly, though, through clarifying roles and clearly determining capacity, they aim to place our services on a strong and robust footing which looks to the future.
- 1.6 Looking ahead, Children's Services will be bringing further reports, including around Business Change and Improvement, Early Years and Family Placements, which extend the application of the key principles outlined above, as a continuation of our drive to improve performance, deliver efficiencies and provide strategic leadership for services for children within the council and across the city as a whole.