

Children's Services Policies, Values and Principles

Contents

1. **Introduction**
2. **Children and Young Peoples Specialist Service**
3. **Children and Young Peoples Plan**
4. **About the Plan**
5. **Our Values and How We Work in B&NES**

1. Introduction

The Council is committed to making Bath and North East Somerset a better place to live, work and visit.

The Council will deliver quality services. It will be outward looking, open accessible and user friendly. It will work in partnership with citizens, local employers and voluntary, public and private sector agencies to improve the quality of life for those who live and work here.

The Council's service delivery and its partnership work will be driven by the Corporate Policy Priorities which symbolise the Vision and Values of the Council. By having these priorities at the forefront of all our decision-making we will create a Council which addresses the needs and concerns of our residents in an open and consultative manner, encouraging participation from all of the differing geographical communities and communities of interest in the area.

The Council is building for the future of the area in partnership with the community and local businesses via its Corporate Plan which it publishes each year following consultation with interested individuals and groups.

Corporate Policy Priorities

This is a brief statement of the priorities. The Corporate Objectives document from which this was taken also includes detailed service objectives. For Social Services these are as set out in the section on **Social Services Policy Objectives (1.3.4)**. For other Services, refer to the full document.

- Deliver quality services which are accessible to, and meet the needs of B&NES residents;
- Promote a thriving economic community and combat poverty;
- Build a healthier and safer community in B&NES Council;
- Promote quality of life and sustainability;

- Encourage and support life-long learning.

Bath and North East Somerset Council's Vision and Values

We will be a forward-looking authority which is genuinely open and responsive to the needs and aspirations of individuals and communities. We shall work in democratic partnership with other organisations and agencies to deliver high quality, cost effective services to the residents of Bath & North East Somerset. We shall ensure that equality of opportunity underpins all the Council's activities and be an equal opportunities employer.

We shall:

Work in partnership:

- Forming strong and efficient partnerships with public, private, voluntary sector organisations and agencies.

Encourage community involvement:

- Actively seeking contributions from parish councils and other community groups and individuals.

Exercise leadership:

- Providing clear policy direction and monitoring its performance, the Council will represent the community's interests locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Respond to needs:

- Setting service levels, within the limits of resources available, in line with individual and community needs with a courteous, user-focused approach to service delivery.

Deliver services of quality:

- Providing high quality services building on previous best practice and investing in human resources and information technology where necessary to meet defined and monitored standards.

Seek value for money:

- Responding to competition to promote improved value for money in services and ensuring that the authority's services are efficient and in the best position to compete.

Be open and accessible:

- Providing open access for the public to Members, Committees, front line staff and information and offering locally accessible services wherever practicable.

Be a good employer:

- Promoting good employment practices, recognising the importance of Trade Unions and creating opportunities for employees job satisfaction and career development.

Promote economic prosperity:

- Working together with others, we will encourage economic development and employment opportunities throughout the Bath & North East Somerset area.

Be sensitive to the needs of the environment:

- Encouraging sustainable development through effective planning and strategic policies.

Promote public safety and crime prevention:

- Working together in partnership with voluntary groups and other agencies to create safe communities.

Service Vision Statement

People and Communities is an open organisation working together: our aim is to lead, serve and empower the community in providing quality, value for money housing and social services which are locally accessible and responsive.

Values and principles for children’s services agreed with our partner agencies

These principles and values were agreed between agencies at the start of work on the Children and Young People’s Plan 1997; and have since been reviewed & reconfirmed.

All agencies will be expected:

- To promote the well-being of all children resident in Bath & North East Somerset, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, by providing good quality:
 - Education;
 - Health care;
 - Social care;
 - Support for parents and families play and leisure facilities underpinned by environmental policies incorporating the objectives of Local Agenda 21 with the aim of creating a safe, healthy, child-friendly environment.
- To work in partnership with children, young people and their families and carers. Partnership means active participation and involvement in any process;
- To follow the following principles while carrying out their statutory duties and voluntary services towards children & young people and their families and carers:
 - Recognise children's and young people's rights;

- Recognise the responsibilities of parents, carers, the community and young people themselves towards children & young people;
- Develop a strategy for equality of opportunity, which in particular promotes racial equality and justice, and opposes all forms of racism;
- Develop an anti-poverty strategy;
- Develop an information strategy for children, young people, their families and carers;
- Listen to and involve young people and children.

These values and principles reflect the changing context in which children & young people are living. They are reflected, too, in the Service Priorities of Bath & North East Somerset Housing & Social Services, which include the following in relation to Children & Young People:

- Children at risk of physical, emotional and sexual abuse;
- Children in families living in poverty;
- Services which enable people to live in their own homes in the community, including homeless people, preventing family breakdown;
- People with mental health problems;
- Young People leaving Care.

These **Service Priorities** are set as a priorities because changes and improvements in service delivery in these areas will enable resources to be made available for the overall services.

Source: *Children and Young People's Plan 2011-14*.

Specialist Service

This policy sets out the framework within which Children's Services work with children, young people and their families. It is underpinned by a range of legislation including, but not limited to:

- Children Acts 1989 and 2004;
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000;
- Care Standards Act 2000;
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of The Child;
- Human Rights Act 1998;
- Adoption and Children Act 2002;
- Data Protection Act 1998.

The policy framework also has regard to and is consistent with a range of government guidance, particularly the principles set out in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#).

It is largely directed towards the work that Children's Services undertakes with Children in Need and Looked After Children; which is carried out in partnership with all sectors of the Local Authority and with other statutory, independent and voluntary sector services.

2. Children and Young People's Specialist Service

The Children and Young People's Specialist Service comprises the Children's Social Work services (including child protection; disabled children and children in need; children and young people in care; fostering and adoption) and leads on safeguarding children issues for the Council.

The Service provides a range of resources to support parents and carers in looking after their children in the community and to support children and young people in Bath and North East Somerset in realising their full potential. The service also recruits and supports foster carers and adoptive families to look after those children who cannot be cared for within their own family. The service is fully committed to working in partnership with parents and young people to provide and develop services to meet their needs and always promote the best interest of children.

The service has strong working relationships with other agencies, such as Health, Police, Education and Youth Services, and with the voluntary sector, and works with these agencies to provide integrated services to children and their families.

The Service has offices based in Riverside and the Royal United Hospital.

3. Children and Young People's Plan

Definition

The Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) 2014/17 is the commissioning and delivery plan to improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people across B&NES. It is based on evidence collected via the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) analyses of the impact of current services to deliver against priorities and agreed outcomes: the annual review of the CYPP 2011-2014 and comprehensive service user engagement.

Vision

The vision for children and young people in Bath and North East Somerset is that ***“All children and young people will enjoy childhood and be well prepared for adult life”***. We have retained the same vision statement as for the CYPP 2011/14 as it clearly captures our vision for our children and young people. It aims to further develop and support increased resilience in our children and young people as they move through adolescence into adulthood.

This plan has been jointly led by the Children Trust Board and the Local Authority with input from the Health and Wellbeing Board and the B&NES Clinical Commissioning Group. It has been closely aligned to the Health & Wellbeing Strategy to ensure coherent focus on children and young people needs.

The vision has been heavily influenced, as in previous earlier CYPP's, by service users, children, young people and parents and carers. There was widespread engagement on the outcomes and a further month long consultation on the draft plan across a wide range of stakeholders, including the voluntary and community sector, schools and academies and children's health providers.

This plan has been developed in an ever changing economic and political environment. Many agencies budgets are under financial pressure due to changing legislation e.g. SEND reform, Working Together 2013 and significant welfare reform. The Plan, therefore, aims to identify, in a clear and straightforward manner, how services in B&NES will increasingly be targeted toward the most vulnerable and those not achieving their full potential. It highlights further areas to be developed over the period of the plan: to include a clear focus on early help, support for complex families and those in need of increased support and safeguarding. It does not detail all the work that all partners are doing to meet the needs of children and young people locally but rather to capture the key areas that need greater focus above and beyond everyday business as usual.

4. About the Plan

The Children and Young People's Plan explains what the organisations represented on Bath and North East Somerset's Children's Trust Board will do to support children, young people and their families, to lead safe, healthy and successful lives. The plan outlines the Children's Trust Board priorities for the period 2014-17. An Outcomes Framework will sit beneath this plan which will highlight how services will be increasingly commissioned to deliver against the three outcomes. The CYPP will be reviewed on an annual basis.

The CYPP 2014-2017 is closely aligned to the Joint Health & Well Being Strategy 2013-2018 for Bath and North East Somerset and will sit alongside it.

Click here to view [The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#).

The CYPP is structured around three key Outcomes, which were identified following consultation with Children and Young People and Parents and Carers.

Those 3 Outcomes are:

- Children and Young People are Safe;
- Children and Young People are Healthy;
- Children and Young People have Equal Life Chances.

We have worked hard to make sure that this plan truly reflects the complexity and range of work being undertaken to support the needs of children and young people in Bath and North East Somerset, as well as listening to the wishes and needs of families themselves.

5. Our Values and How We Work in B&NES

Bath and North East Somerset's Children's Trust Board is committed to working in the following ways to achieve the strategic outcomes/goals in this plan:

1. Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility

We will constantly keep the safeguarding of children first and foremost in our discussions and working practices. We have a duty of care to all our residents, especially the vulnerable, to keep them safe. Following on previous plans, we will be focusing on helping children, young people and families to promote resilience and to identify and safely manage risks.

2. We will strive to Involve children and young people in our work

We will actively engage with children, young people and their families in order to develop and implement solutions that best meet their needs. We will ensure that their "voice" is central to service delivery. We will ensure wherever we are making changes to services that service users will be actively involved in the re-commissioning process. We have developed a Framework for Service User Engagement in the Commissioning Process that details how service users will be involved (Appendix 1). We expect that all agencies/providers who deliver services will actively engage with children, young people and their families in monitoring how services will be delivered, or re-commissioned. We expect the same standard to be applied for the de-commissioning of services.

3. Working in Partnership

We will continue to work together with all relevant agencies and service providers, to make sure that resources are joined up, deliver good value for money and clearly target the children and young people who most need them.

[Click here for the full Children and Young Peoples Plan document](#)