

Date: Wednesday 4 February 2004

Venue: Committee Room 2, National Assembly for Wales

Title: Welsh Assembly Government's Response to "Every Child Matters"

Purpose

1. To receive ["Children and Young People: Rights to Action,"](#) the Welsh Assembly Government's Response to the UK Government Green Paper "Every Child Matters."

Summary / Recommendations

2. This paper describes briefly the achievements of the Welsh Assembly Government over the last 3 years in respect of children and young people in Wales. It describes actions that are currently being taken and the Assembly Government's proposals for the next stage of our project to transform the lives of children and young people in Wales. These include changes that are to be made through the legislative opportunity presented by the introduction of the Children Bill by the UK Government.

3. The draft Bill is due for publication by the end of February 2004. The Committee is invited to consider the report.

Background

4. Since *Framework for Partnership* was published in November 2000, the Assembly Government has taken action in a number of ways to improve the priority given to meeting the needs of children and young people and to generate improvements in policy and service provision. The Children's Commissioner has been appointed and published two annual reports. *Funky Dragon* has been set up as a national organisation to represent the views of children and young people, and has held a number of meetings with Assembly Government Ministers.

5. The report takes account of the views of both an independent Commissioner and young people

themselves, reflecting the Assembly Government's commitment to listening to what children and young people say is important in their lives. It describes action taken under each of the seven Core Aims that underpin services for children and young people.

6. It also sets out in part 4 for consultation a draft national approach to setting policy objectives and evaluating their impact so that achievements can be demonstrated. It proposes the adoption of a logical structure that links policies and objectives, and how they are measured, fitting with the UN Convention and Seven Core Aims. This will provide a basis for an evaluation strategy to determine the Frameworks' effectiveness and a way for partnerships and the Assembly to work together.

Financial Implications

7. There are no financial implications in respect of the report.

Cross Cutting Themes

8. Policy and services for children and young people are the responsibility of a number of statutory and voluntary agencies and organisations locally. These are brought together in Children and Young People's Partnerships to enable joint planning and participation of service users to take place. The report is to be issued to representatives of these interests and groups, including all primary and secondary schools, Funky Dragon and youth forums.

9. Within the Assembly Government, the Cabinet Sub-Committee for Children and Young People is responsible for making sure the interests of children and young people are given due priority in all Cabinet and Assembly policy-making and that cross-cutting policy initiatives are identified and are coherent.

10. Arrangements are to be made for the report to be sent to the other Chairs of Subject Committees and to the Standing Committee on Equality of Opportunity for their consideration.

Action for Subject Committee

11. The Committee is asked to consider the report and to comment on the information and the proposals it contains.

Jane Hutt AM
Minister for Health and Social Services

Contact Point: Chris Burdett, Children and Families Division, tel: 3936