



Denbighshire Children & Young People's Single Plan

Our Story

We are quite a small authority of contrasting needs, with some areas of great poverty and some of significant wealth. Our population is growing quickly as the result of people moving into the area and our population is becoming noticeably more diverse and we expect this to continue - though we're not sure exactly what the future pattern of this will be or what issues it will bring.

Young people are really important to the area's future and future workforce, but we currently have a significant demographic "hole" in those aged 18-30.

Even though we're small, people working with children & young people have not always communicated very systematically or shared approaches across sectors.

Severe deprivation is concentrated in a small number of wards, though with pockets elsewhere. The Communities First areas are quite different. South West has particularly high rates of single parent families. West Rhyl, in particular, has strong characteristics of inner city areas, with predominantly private sector housing and a significantly transient population. It has very high levels of social, economic, education and health needs (and incidence of mental health and disability among adults).

Crime rates are down but are also concentrated in West Rhyl. Poverty and deprivation in these areas has visible impact on outcomes for children and young people and needs to be continuously tackled on a multi-agency basis, across all age ranges and groups, linked to our umbrella regeneration strategy "Rhyl Going Forward".



The need to respond to intense "urban" deprivation and to the needs of rural areas creates particular features in developing services for children and young people, and means we need to develop approaches tailored to the needs of quite different areas. Regular "locality network meetings" will be a way of doing this.

Educational attainment is weak in particular schools and especially at KS4. Attendance is low in some schools, particularly in the secondary schools where attainment has also been low. We think, as partners in the Children & Young People's Partnership we can all add specific value to what the local education authority and schools, and other partners,



are already doing through proactive partnership in early years work, through supporting achievement in all settings, and encouraging attendance.

Helping young people into good quality training, Further and Higher Education and employment opportunities is another key role and vital both for individual young people and the future of Denbighshire.

A linked issue is the availability of housing in Denbighshire. We only have a small public housing stock, and together with an expensive housing market and a private rented stock of mixed quality, this poses particular difficulties both for young people who want to get their own accommodation and stay in the County and for families with children on low incomes. The issue comes up time and time again from young people themselves and organisations in contact with them.

We think our services to support children and young people's emotional and mental health are fragmented and have gaps. We have failed in the past to develop a strategy for these services. Disabled children and young people, and their families are dissatisfied with the quality, range and co-ordination of services we provide. We have tried to improve them previously, and have made some progress, but it is limited. We need to make integration work this time.



We face some really significant issues which will be common to almost all areas eg the threat posted by childhood obesity to the long term health and wellbeing of our population, the loss of green space/play space and the need to feel safe (the latter two are particularly mentioned by children and young people in our consultations).



The involvement of children and young people is developing, with examples of excellent practice. However, it is not as consistent or high profile as it needs to be. We plan to have two Youth Conferences a year, linked to other participation structures such as school councils, young carer and disabled children's groups, to make this more consistent and influential.



We are developing some integrated and some collective/complementary action plans as the basis for work on each of our agreed priority areas. We will be working hard to make links between Youth Support Services Action Plan, The Health, Social Care & Well Being Strategy and the Community Safety Strategy (eg relating to youth crime and young people as victims of crime).

We are prioritising some cross cutting processes to aid communication, sharing approaches so as to develop a more common culture which itself will help further integration. These include developing the functionality of Youthden, a training catalogue



and training activities to support the priorities in the plan, a schedule of locality network meetings to build on local needs and networks and making the Common Assessment Framework really work.

We will not change the world by 2011. However we should be able to see some improvements against national indicators and against the local outcome measures we set. We should also see those working with children and young people working more as an effective network, and greater evidence of services being shaped by children and young people themselves.



We will use Ceri's Family as a way to find out the answer to the important question - "So What"?! We also plan to collect "case studies" and survey children, young people and parents to collect information. We need to be sure that what we are doing, how we are working, and what we are developing are meeting the needs of children and people and having a positive impact on their lives.