

Report to:	EXECUTIVE
Relevant Officer:	Diane Booth, Director of Children’s Services
Relevant Cabinet Member:	Councillor Kath Benson, Cabinet Member for Schools, Education and Aspiration
Date of Meeting:	16 September 2019

BLACKPOOL EARLY YEARS PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY 2019/2020

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider the proposed strategy for Early Years.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To agree the Blackpool Early Years Partnership Strategy 2019/2020 for the period until 30 September 2020, and endorse its key strategic priorities.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 The Local Authority is required to strategically plan with their partners to improve the outcomes of all children under 5 and secure appropriate child care provision. This partnership strategy brings together the commitment of partners and the Local Authority to support the strategy.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council’s approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

The alternative option is to have no strategy, this would not be practical or advised.

The strategy attached could have different priorities and recommendations. This would mean the strategy could not be approved at this meeting and officers would need to do further consultation work.

4.0 Council priority:

4.1 The relevant Council priority is: “Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience”.

5.0 Background information

5.1 Since the introduction of the Childcare Act 2006 local authorities are required to secure information, advice and training for providers in their area set out in on the following matters:

- meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage;
- meeting the needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities, vulnerable and disadvantaged children; and
- effective safeguarding and child protection.

5.2 The attached strategy at Appendix 2a has been developed with both the Council’s statutory requirements as outlined above and the national and the local context, which have been outlined in the strategy in detail. The Early Years Strategy has identified a number of key strategic priorities, which have been grouped into the following five themes: Good Maternal and Child Mental Health and Well Being, Parental Engagement, High Quality Inclusive Education, Workforce Development and, Integrated working and system change. Under each theme key strategic priorities have been listed along with actions for parents and professionals. The strategy also re-emphasises the values of the service and how an integrated early years’ service would be delivered by health, early education, social care and voluntary service partnerships.

5.3 The proposed strategy has been developed in partnership with Better Start. The strategy has been shaped by the views of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee which has been consulted at its meeting on 20 June 2019.

5.4 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

5.5 List of Appendices:

Appendix 2a- Blackpool Early Years Partnership Strategy

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 The Child Care Act 2006 and 2016 sets out legal duties for Local Authorities regarding early years. These include sufficiency of places for Early Years and duties to provide support and training for Early Years providers.

7.0 Human resources considerations:

7.1 Resource implications are currently funded through the Local Authority Early Years Grant and through Better Start funding. Sustainability will need to be considered once the impact of Better Start research projects is known. This may have resource implications once the Better Start funding ends.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 The strategy does not have any adverse implications on equality. Early Years education is a legal right for children should parents wish it.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 There are currently no financial implications.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 The risk of not having an Early Years Strategy will significantly impact the Council's ability to plan and provide sufficient Early Years places and to meet the needs of the local population.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 The strategy supports the Council Plan and its core purpose and functions.

12.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

12.1 Consultations have taken place with the following groups:

- Better Start Executive Board – 1 May 2019 - strategy agreed
- Early Years Strategic Group – 23 May 2019 – strategy agreed
- Better Start Operations Board – 23 May 2019 – strategy agreed

The strategy has been reviewed by the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 June 2019.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None.

14.0 Key decision information:

14.1 Is this a key decision? Yes

14.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number: 14/2019

14.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days? No

14.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

15.0 Call-in information:

15.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process? No

15.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

16.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):

Date informed: 6 September 2019 Date approved:

17.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):

17.1

18.0 Executive decision:

18.1

19.0 Date of Decision:

19.1

20.0 Reason(s) for decision:

20.1

21.0 Date Decision published:

21.1

22.0 Executive Members in attendance:

22.1

23.0 Call-in:

23.1

24.0 Notes:

24.1