

## Discussion Paper Extending HCFF remit to include young people

### Summary statement

Hampshire Children and Families Forum (HCFF) was established in April 2000 to achieve this aim;

*To promote high quality provision for children and their families to enable all children to fulfil their potential by effective two way communication, pro-active working, influencing policy and community development.*

As shown in the constitution, the first page of which is attached, the upper age limit of 14 is used to define the children for whom we work with the exception of children with special educational needs. For children and young people with special needs there is no upper age limit.

The purpose of this paper is to enable the inclusive membership of HCFF to debate whether this age range and definition is appropriate to take forward the work of the charity in the future or if we should redefine our mission to include all children young people 0-19 years and their families. If this change is voted for by two thirds of the branches an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting will be held in early 2005 to vote formally on a change to the constitution, and HCFF marketing strategy will be adapted accordingly to publicise this change.

However, it is the branch membership that must direct the work under the Governance of the Executive Committee in order to set the work plan for its staff. Branch coordinators will feedback the findings of their group and the Executive Committee will make a decision on this basis.

### Why debate this now?

The Government's agenda for children and families has never been more clearly stated. Eradication of child poverty by 2020, halved by 2010 and currently on track according to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (November 2004) child protection through the development of Local Safeguarding Children's Boards, Common Assessment and Information Sharing protocols and a Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board (CYPSPB) as detailed in *Serving Children Well* published by the Local Government Association, the NHS Confederation and the Association of Directors of Social Services last summer. A Children's Services Board (CSB) is to be statutory by 2008 and will work under a single Director with local multi-agency commissioning and delivery units - such as Children's Trusts.

### Why does all this matter to HCFF?

In Hampshire this agenda is already having an enormous impact on HCFF work. HCFF Strategic Officer is a member of the Children and Young Peoples Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) and is either directly involved in the work or comments on reports to the CYPSP about every other major initiative working with 0-19's in Hampshire; Preventative Strategy, Participation Strategy, Family Support re-structure, Information Sharing Protocol; Child and

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Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Children's Trust, National Service Framework, Hampshire Police Strategy, Teenage Pregnancy strategy, Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, Sure Start, Children's Fund, Connexions, Hampshire County Youth Strategy and HCFF is being seriously considered by the Chief Executive of Hampshire County Council to be the Voluntary Sector representative on the Children's Services Board – the forerunner to Hampshire Children's Trust and responsible for the implementation of the Children Act (2004) in Hampshire.

### **Benefits**

This will enable HCFF to represent all organisations involved in provision for families and children.

It is increasingly recognised that the family needs to be regarded in a more holistic manner, the health of one affects the health of all. For HCFF to be in a position where we can service the needs of only part of the family is restrictive.

### **How might this benefit HCFF work?**

HCFF is fortunate to be involved in this high-level agenda. Strategic involvement is essential if we are to influence the agenda, represent members including parents and support joint aims. Involvement at this level will inform practice and policy as it filters down to the local level activity and advise budget holders of the need to support what works locally in delivering on the outcomes of Every Child Matters. The future success of any organisation is dependent upon its ability to accept and adapt to change in order to fulfil its responsibilities. In this case those responsibilities are to the children and families in Hampshire and to the practitioners that we work in partnership with. There is clearly an important and immediate opportunity to expand and enhance HCFF work for those beneficiaries.

### **Is this a long-term change or just a knee jerk reaction?**

Terms of Reference for all these major new initiatives make it clear that they are being developed in order to implement policy and practice to support the Children Act 2004 for children 0-19yrs.

*In 2002 John Denham, the then Minister for Children and Young People wrote to all Chief Executives of local authorities asking them to develop a local preventative strategy for children and young people aged 0-19 years Guidance suggested that it would be helpful if Local Authorities set up Children and Young Peoples Strategic Partnerships (CYPSP) who would hold responsibility for setting the direction for joint working in Children's services.....The Green Paper Every Child Matters, the National Service Framework for children health and social care 2004 and the Children Act 2004 confirms this approach.*

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Children and Young Peoples Partnership Hampshire Strategic Plan  
(Early intervention and prevention) 2004 – 2007 Draft for  
consultation November 2004

**What do HCFF staff think about the change?**

- § Generally positive comments included; useful overarching viewpoint, promotes partnership working, prevents duplication, common contact point for information for children young people and families, links with Government and many local strategies now working with 0-19ys, good for families, good for teenage parents, good if it supports funding opportunities.
- § Generally negative comments included; too large for one organisation, concern over drop in service for 0-14's, coordinators would be less effective in their role, could cause duplication, what if political climate changes?
- § Practical comments included; Already involved in youth work and have many contacts already, raising the age range may strengthen links, parallel forums would be more manageable with a cut off at 0-11years and 12-19 years.
- § Comments about ways forward included; Further research needed to investigate how HCFF could operate alongside and support existing agencies. A more in depth proposal to be available for the January branch meetings around the county, stating our intentions of how we will move this forward should the constitution be changed.

**How might we move this forward?**

This development, if agreed will be moved forward in partnership with parents, other voluntary organisations, statutory agencies, funding bodies and strategists throughout Hampshire.

- § The first stage will be to fully inform and enter into dialogue with these key stakeholders. HCFF newsletters, local press, radio and partner organisation publications will be used e.g. Horizons. Publicity about HCFF's potential change to include services to all parents, children and young people is a good news story, which in itself will promote and support the work of the organisation.
- § The second stage; formal consultation with parents and practitioners will follow, so that HCFF is made aware of the priorities for development according to key stakeholders. Opportunities to consult will be achieved by expanding the existing countywide survey work and using branch meetings etc.
- § The third stage is collaboration – supporting key stakeholders to work with us to effectively expand our service. Funding available from programmes to build Voluntary Sector Infrastructure such as 'Change Up' or to support the implementation of the Children Act (2004) will be achieved to hold workshops with crèche in each Borough District Council area. These will involve County, Parish and District Councillors, local people and practitioners of service 0-19 years.

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- § The fourth stage will be internal information sharing and development of an implementation proposal with staff, volunteers and trustees. At this point working terms and conditions will be agreed and practical implications for the organisation considered.
- § The final stage of development will be to meet with strategists and fund holders within Hampshire County Council. Based on feedback from all four stages, HCFF will present funding and aspiration proposals to achieve fully its Aim and Objectives for all children and young people (under 20 years of age) and their parents.

**It is not expected that the remit will be expanded without further significant increase in resources.** However; consider for one moment the example of HCFF's worth to the new pathfinder CAMHS Trust (below) in achieving their remit through participation of children, *young people* and *all* parents and in promoting multi agency working with practitioners of *all* age groups through two way communication, proactive working, influencing policy and community development (HCFF objectives)

**The Hampshire CAMHS Children's Trust is a commissioning partnership between Social Services, Education and the 7 Hampshire PCTs. By working together the partners aim to**

- ✓ develop a de-stigmatising, inclusive culture because "mental health is everybody's business";
- ✓ actively promote children's, young people's and families participation in care programmes;
- ✓ develop the skills, confidence and capacity of those who have frequent/close contact with children, young people and their families, (including families themselves and local communities);
- ✓ target early intervention for those groups considered to be at risk or vulnerable;
- ✓ co-ordinate strategic planning and commissioning of CAMHS.
- ✓ jointly plan and target local, specialist, multi-agency services for those with the most complex health, social and educational needs;
- ✓ jointly plan, at county level, specialist services, including residential / in-patient services for the highest level of psychiatric/forensic need;
- ✓ identify and maximise funding / resource opportunities and create a pooled budget, to maintain and support new developments in CAMHS;
- ✓ establish joint workforce planning;
- ✓ develop an overarching framework for common performance management;

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Please use this paper to stimulate discussion with the HCFF coordinator local to your area. This will be fed back via HCFF Strategic Officer to the Executive Committee and discussed at their meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2005.

Many thanks, Debra Gibbs HCFF Strategic Officer

## **Constitution: Hampshire Children and Families Forum**

Adopted on the 17 February 2000

### **1. NAME**

The name of the charity shall be **Hampshire Children and Families Forum** (Hereinafter called "HCFF") [Or such other name as the committee may from time to time decide with the approval of the Charity Commissioners].

### **2. THE OBJECT**

To promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of the community in the area of benefit through the promotion of care, education and development of children under the age of fourteen, or children who have special educational needs in the area of Hampshire as defined by the County Authority Boundary; and to assist in the provision of support and advice to their families by: -

- a) The provision of centralised services to member groups, to include payroll, employment services, group insurances, accounting services, applying for and administering funds to the membership, provision of a three-year plan.
- b) Advise and support to local Hampshire fora that are willing to include and involve parents, employers; statutory and voluntary agencies in their charitable activities.
- c) Being responsible for promoting the provision and development of services for children and families.
- d) Sharing information, experience and insight between Hampshire Children and Families Forum Members.
- e) Publishing or distributing information.

### **3. FURTHERANCE POWERS**

- a) Power to raise funds and to invite and receive contributions, if in raising funds the committee shall not undertake any substantial permanent trading activities.
- b) To assist member or affiliate organisations to further their activities in the sphere of service provision.
- c) To co-operate with other bodies with similar objectives to Hampshire Children and Families Forum.
- d) To seek representation on such bodies as may from time to time be deemed appropriate.