

Number: Y53

File Ref: PR/NB/3 66/2/1

Date: 19 April 2007

**NORTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES APRIL BOARD
MEETING**

At the April meeting, Members were updated on a range of issues including the work of the Northern Health Investing for Health Partnership and the Northern Area Children and Young People's Committee.

Northern Area Children and Young People's Children Services Plan

The Northern Area Children and Young People's Committee is a partnership of agencies from the statutory, voluntary and community

sectors, which comes together to identify disadvantaged children and plan services to meet their needs.

The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister has set out six goals to be achieved for all children. That they are:

- Healthy
- Enjoying, learning and achieving
- Living in safety and with stability
- Experiencing economic and environmental well-being
- Contributing positively to community and society, and
- Living in a society that respects their rights.

For the majority of the 109,510 children and young people living in the Board's area, reaching these goals will not prove difficult. However for some children extra help is needed. For example: children with a disability or long term illness, children with mental health problems, children who have been abused, children who have caring duties in the home, children who are at risk of offending behaviour, children affected by domestic violence.

At 31 March 2006 in the Northern Board area:

- 2,832 children had a social worker

- 317 children were living with foster parents
- 64 children were living in residential care homes
- 244 children were considered to be at risk of significant harm and were put on a child protection register
- 2,397 pupils in the North Eastern Education and Library Board area had a statement of special educational needs
- 1 in 3 children were living in poverty
- 57 children were on court orders delivered by Probation, and
- 151 children were referred to the Youth Justice Agency during the year.

Central government, statutory, voluntary and community organisations, parents, the public and young people themselves, have a part to play in helping these children and young people reach the goals set for all of their peer group.

The Children's Services Planning process brings all these partners together to ensure all parties are heard and their views taken on board in the design of services.

The Committee's Annual Review of 2006/07 and Work Plan for 2007/08 was presented at the recent meeting of the Northern Board. Kevin Keenan, Acting Director of Social Services, said:

“The work of the Committee is particularly important in this year of change facing the public sector. We need to make sure that the partnership working which has improved services for children over the past nine years continues into the new arrangements.

“As corporate parents we have a duty to ensure disadvantaged children have the supports they need to reach their full potential and the goals the Government has set out.”

Further information about the work of the Committee can be found at www.northernchildrensservices.org.

