

HAVE YOUR SAY IN THE PLANNING OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES IN THE CARRICKFERGUS AREA

Over 40 people who work with children and young people attended an Information and Consultation morning in Carrickfergus Town Hall last week.

The event was hosted by Carrickfergus Children and Young People's Services Planning Group to ask local statutory, voluntary and community organisations what they think should be included in the planning of services for children and young people in Carrickfergus over the next three years.

Mr Sam Crowe, Chair of the Local Strategy Partnership (LSP) welcomed the audience and described how the LSP had funded a project worker for the Children and Young People's Planning Group through its Peace II funding stream:

"I would like to take this opportunity to commend the Group on their work and the LSP welcomes the focus on the needs of children and young people in our local area."

Mrs Anne Hardy, NHSSB spoke on behalf of the Northern Area Children and Young People's Committee:

“The Carrickfergus Children and Young People’s Planning Group is part of the overall NACYPC strategy to improve the wellbeing of vulnerable children across the Northern Board area. It is essential that as many people as possible have a say in the design of services to meet children’s needs”

“Children’s Services Planning brings together all agencies who work with children such as Education, Social Services, Health, Probation, Police, Youth Justice, Voluntary and Community organisations to ensure services better meet children’s needs.”

Ms Jo Colville, YMCA, and Mrs Helen Dunn, Barnardo’s, both spoke on behalf of the Carrickfergus Children and Young People’s Planning Group at the event. This group is made up of local representatives of agencies working with children and young people it aims to raise and support the social, health and educational development of children, young people and their families in the Borough of Carrickfergus and the environment they live in by:-

- ✚ Listening to them to find - their views and needs;
- ✚ Building on existing social partnerships;
- ✚ Developing stronger community ownership and;
- ✚ Responding by providing a needs led range of leisure, social, health, educational and housing services in locally agreed and accessible locations.

Plans based on an audit of local needs were outlined for the next three years and information was given on how to put forward views on services that should be provided for the children and young people in the area.

The draft plans include:

- **0-4 year olds and their families – increased family support**
- **Afterschool provision for 5-10 year olds**
- **Support for children in the transition from**
 - **primary to secondary school**
- **Signposting services to make sure children and young people are aware of the services that are there**
- **Support for fathers**
- **Awareness raising for parenting programmes in the area**
- **A review of the mental health and well being needs of the children and young people**
- **A review of summer schemes will be carried out.**

- **The group will support the YMCA Catalyst Project as they work to meeting the needs of 13-25 year olds.**
- **And will also work towards the inclusion of children and parents to enable them to have a say in planning services.**

The Carrickfergus Children and Young People's Planning Group is keen that as many people as possible have a say in planning services for children in the area.

You can have your say by feeding back to the consultation document which can be found on the NHSSB website on www.nhssb.n-i.nhs.uk or by contacting Jo Colville at YMCA, 10 Cheston Street, Carrickfergus, telephone: 028 93362974. Alternatively, contact Anne Hardy Children's Services Planning Project Manager, Social Services Department, NHSSB, County Hall, Ballymena, BT42 1QB, telephone: 028 256 67653

The Carrickfergus Children and Young People's Planning Group is a Sub-Group of the Northern Area Children and Young People's Committee led by the NHSSB.