

REPORT TO CABINET

Title: **EVERY DISABLED CHILD MATTERS**

Date: 26 February 2009

Member Reporting: Councillor Mrs Quick

Contact Officer(s): Chris Barefield, Service Manager, Assessment and Care Planning Tel: 01628 683139

Wards Affected: All

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 In 2008 the Council for Disabled Children together with Contact a Family, Mencap and the Special Education Consortium opened a campaign to “challenge politicians and policy-makers to make good the government’s commitment that Every Child Matters.” Local Authorities and Primary Care Trusts were invited to sign a charter affirming commitment to the strategic planning of services for disabled children.
- 1.2 This report outlines the progress that the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead has made towards implementation of the nine recommendations of the Every Disabled Child Matters Charter.

2. RECOMMENDATION:

That the Lead Member for Children’s Services, on behalf of the Local Authority, signs up to the Every Disabled Child Matters Charter.

What will be different for residents as a result of this decision?
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The Council will demonstrate its commitment to provide the best possible services for families of children with disabilities living in the Borough.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 3.1 Local Authorities are invited to sign the Every Disabled Child Matters Charter by December 31st 2009 in order to demonstrate commitment to disabled children. A progress report was prepared for the Overview and Scrutiny Panel by Rhidian Jones in January 2008. This recommended that the panel note the progress towards compliance with the Every Disabled Child Matters Charter and the recommendations for action.

3.2 The recommendations made were:

- a) a working group be set up to look into the instigation of a Key Worker Service for all children with disabilities.
- b) written information should be prepared to serve as a) information available to the public on services available to disabled children and their families and b) the basis of knowledge held by Key Workers and other employees of RBWM
- c) as a matter of policy there should be representative involvement of young people in the planning, commissioning and monitoring of services

3.3 The Children’s Plan 2088-2011 identifies children with complex needs as a key priority group for service development. As a result a multi-agency group of professionals and parents was set up to take the work forward. The work of the group encompasses the above recommendations.

3.4 Additionally in 2008 the Department of Children, Schools and Families announced further initiatives to support disabled children and their families under the **Aiming High for Disabled Children** agenda. This requires every Local Authority and Primary Care Trust to transform services for disabled children. Part of the transformation involves the provision of both specialist and universal services that enable disabled children and young people to receive quality “short term breaks” away from their families and that enable their families to have regular breaks from their caring responsibilities.

3.5 The transformation also involves the development of parent participation in service planning and ensuring that young people are adequately supported in their transition from children’s to adults’ services.

3.6 The Aiming High agenda cannot be delivered without the Local Authority’s commitment to the principles of the Charter.

4. OPTIONS AVAILABLE AND RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 Options

	Option	Comments	Financial Implications
1.	To agree to signing the Every Disabled Child Matters Charter	By agreeing to the principles of the Charter, the Local Authority commits to the principle that disabled children matter as much as their non-disabled peers and that they and their families receive services appropriate to their needs.	Revenue: Officer time Capital: None at present
2.	Not to agree to signing the Every Disabled Child Matters Charter	By not agreeing to sign the Charter, the Local Authority will not be	Revenue: None

	Option	Comments	Financial Implications
		demonstrating a commitment to disabled children. This would not protect the interests of this vulnerable group of children and their families.	Capital: None

4.2 Risk assessment

- 4.2.1 The risks to the Council relate to the interests of disabled children and their families. If the Charter is not signed the Council risks alienation from significant numbers of the community with diverse needs. The risks to the Council will be minimised by demonstrating commitment to disabled children and their families

5. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

- 5.1 No direct consultation has been carried out in relation to the Charter. However, consultation has taken place with parents with regards to the Aiming High agenda, and future service development and delivery. The Charter provides the value base on which these developments can progressed.

6. COMMENTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

The Panel endorsed the report, which had been initiated by the Scrutiny Panel at a previous meeting. The Panel requested that the 'What will be different for residents as a result of this decision?' statement be reviewed in advance of publication of the Cabinet papers.

7. IMPLICATIONS

The following implications have been addressed where indicated below.

Financial	Legal	Human Rights Act	Planning	Sustainable Development	Diversity & Equality
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Background Papers: None