

Our spending plans

This Plan has identified the priorities for improving the lives of children and young people in York over the next three years. It provides a clear focus for all who work in this field. We need now to ensure that all available resources are directed towards the effective delivery of those priorities. This is not necessarily about spending new money: in a city such as York, resources will always be limited. It could mean stopping doing something else in order to concentrate on the new priorities. It will certainly mean, at times, working in different ways or working better together.

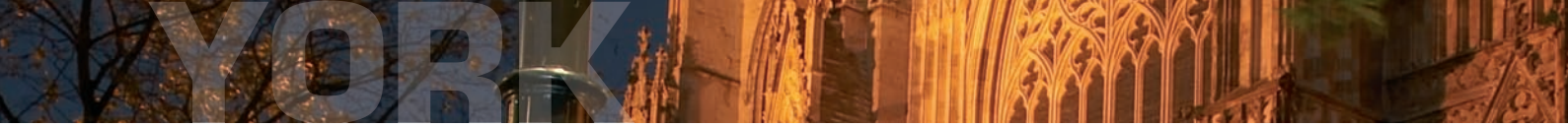


The first step is to ensure that all the YorOK partners really are focused on the priorities set out in this Plan. You will therefore see references to this Plan in a wide range of other plans and strategies, including those of the City of York Council and the local Primary Care and Acute Hospital Trusts. Its principles, and its priorities, will influence decisions about the allocation of resources in a wide range of subsidiary bodies, such as those set out in the right hand column of Appendix B.

We have already demonstrated, in recent years, our capacity to take difficult decisions in order to concentrate our resources on new priorities. For example, in the period covered by the last Children and Young People's Plan, we closed one of our children's homes and invested in improving our private fostering arrangements. Similarly, we have shown that we can put our resources together on occasion: the Castlegate city centre advice centre was funded from a range of capital sources. Decisions such as these have been taken against a constant background of a need to secure efficiencies in the use of public expenditure.

The YorOK Board now seeks to build on these established local strengths and adopt a more strategic approach to the integrated commissioning of services for children, young people and parents in the city. The Board has established a new sub-group, the Integrated Commissioning Group, to oversee this approach. 'Commissioning' covers both the formal procurement of services as well as partnerships of a non-financial nature, including market analysis and capacity building.





The main purpose of the Integrated Commissioning Group, which is chaired by the Director of Children's Services, is to establish a dynamic relationship between a wide range of partners in order to improve services and performance. It is responsible for ensuring that the strategic aims of the Children and Young People's Plan are achieved and that the new priorities genuinely inform partnership planning and decision-making. The Group will consider how both mainstream resources and specific grant funding can be used to achieve the key strategic and delivery objectives of the Plan. It will ensure that:

- ▶ the allocation of all relevant funding (both capital and revenue) is aligned to the priorities and delivery objectives of the Plan;
- ▶ all actual and potential income streams are identified;
- ▶ where possible and desirable, budgets are aligned or pooled;
- ▶ new and additional sources of funding are attracted in order to have an even greater impact.

An early outcome of the Group's work is the combined YorOK budget for children and young people, which is set out at Appendix E. The main component of this is provided by City of York Council, or channelled through it to schools. The overall level of resources available to the authority (based on 2008/09 budget levels) is the lowest per head of all multi-purpose councils in the country. However, despite a challenging budgetary position, the authority has maintained frontline services and protected important initiatives that are consistent with the priorities of this Plan.

The next task of the Integrated Commissioning Group will be to prepare a more detailed statement of the extent to which existing funding streams across the YorOK partners are aligned to the twenty-five priorities in this Plan. In doing so we will be better placed to ensure that funding is pooled and targeted to address the right issues.

In conclusion

We have enjoyed writing this Plan, not as a technical exercise but because it provides such a clear, agreed focus for our future partnership working. We have particularly enjoyed talking with children, young people, parents and staff. We have listened very carefully to everyone's ideas, and we would once again like to thank everyone who has contributed. We hope that the twenty-five priorities for 2009-2012 are a fair reflection of those contributions, and we know that they will lead us all to achieve even more in the years ahead. The children and young people of York deserve no less.

For your convenience, the priorities are set out in summary form on the following page, a page that is available as a poster.

"I feel lucky to live in York and I don't really know how it could be better."

All quotations with a yellow border are from children and young people across the City