

Children and Young People Programme Board – Report from Baroness Ritchie (Chairman)

1. On 12 May I presented an LG Group paper on the council strategic role in education to the meeting of the Ministerial Advisory Group on the council role in education (MAG). It set out the local government view of what the council role in education should be and the types of support that councils will need from the LG Group and other partners to fulfil this role. It won support from partners around the table, including representatives from the government and from schools. A version of the paper, supported by case studies demonstrating the initiatives that are already being taken by councils, will be launched at the LG Group's Annual Conference at the end of June.
2. At the Children and Young People Programme Board on 31 May we received an update on the progress of the sector-led programme of improvement and support for children's services. Subject to final ministerial approval, the programme will receive funding of £10.5m from the Department for Education for the next two years. It will be a major plank of local government's efforts to support and improve the services it provides for children and young people. Support from councils themselves will be crucial to its success and all councils will be invited to commit to supporting the programme by offering officer time to peer challenge.
3. The Board also discussed a proposed programme of work to tackle youth unemployment and support councils in preparing for the raising of the age of compulsory participation by young people in some form of education or training to 18 by 2015. . We will work with the Economy and Transport Board to build on the 'Hidden Talents' programme and reshape our youth engagement work to take account of new initiatives such as community budgets for families with complex needs.
4. On 8 June I chaired the task and finish group established by the Ministerial Advisory Group to discuss the options for the reform of schools capital and revenue funding. The items for discussion included the implementation of the James Review of Schools Capital; the options for the government's proposed reform of the system for allocating revenue funding to schools; and the future funding arrangements for academies.

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