

# Children's Trust Statutory Board

4 November 2009

## Present

Cllr Christine Channon (Chairman) (Cabinet Member for Schools and Skills, DCC), Richard Atkins (FE Colleges), Cllr Baverstock (Devon District Councils), Keith Bennett (Shad), Gary Chown (DAPH), Nicola Bulbeck (Devon District Councils), David Fitzsimmons (DASH), Mary Nisbett (Independent), Sue Par (Job Centre Plus), Dr Virginia Pearson (Director of Public Health), Anne Proctor (Probation Service), Jenny Rudge (Careers South West), Jo Tennant (Devon and Cornwall Constabulary), Anne Whiteley (Executive Director CYPS) and Alan Wooderson (Independent Chair - Devon Local Safeguarding Children Board)

## In Attendance

Becky Carmichael (PCT)  
Brian Grady (Head of Commissioning and Procurement)  
Dillon Hughes (Assistant Director IYSDS CYPS)  
Penny Mathers (Observer - Government Office South West)  
Debbie Pritchard (Assistant Director CYPS)  
Gerry Rufolo (Committee Secretariat)

## Apologies

Jayne Carroll (NHS Devon),  
Carolyn Elliot (Adult and Community Services)  
Rebecca Harriott (NHS Devon)  
John Peart (Learning and Skills Council)  
Eelke Zoestbergen (Devon and Cornwall Police Authority)

## 46 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2009 were signed as a correct record.

## 47 Executive Director's Overview

Anne Whiteley reported on the latest progress with the County Council's Building Schools for the Future bid to the DCSF. The bid had been highly regarded with positive feedback from 'Partnership for Schools' the government body examining all the bids nationally. The results were expected from the Minister by the end of November.

Anne Whiteley commended to the Board the document Quality Matters in Children's Services documenting a body of research edited by Mike Stein which provides a good evidence base and application to strategic, operational and practice issues in terms of safeguarding, substance abuse, domestic violence, Looked After Children and other vulnerable groups. Debbie Pritchard would be examining the document in detail with a view to incorporating good practice into the Children and Young People's Plan

Refresh. The document may also give rise to key strategic questions which should be addressed by all Children's Trusts. The document for partners' consideration can be found on the Net at this address:

<http://www.rip.org.uk/qualitymatters/resources/overview/Quality%20Matters%20in%20Childrens%20Services%20-%20Messages%20from%20Research.pdf>

Anne Whiteley also reported that as a result of the positive Ofsted finding relating to Looked After Children the DCSF has invited the County Council to a Ministerial Briefing in November looking at Corporate Parenting (including stability of placements) and practice in Devon across all partners.

#### RESOLVED

(a) that CT partners be invited to access the above document and examine how it can assist in their work in respect of children's services;

(b) that Debbie Pritchard bring to the CT Board's attention key issues/questions for it to consider.

#### 48 The Impact of the Recession on the Job Market for Young People

The Board received the report of Jenny Rudge Chief Executive Careers SW on the implications of the recession for young people 16+. The report outlined the issues, challenges and implications for young people and provided detailed regional statistical data and information.

Board members referred to the need to benchmark data/information across the peninsula, to develop demand forecasting of the skills required by employers and to promote inward investment and development of communication and relations with local employers, the important work of the 14 - 19 area partnerships, and the need to raise aspirations particularly with boys. There also remained serious funding issues particularly for young people (18+) not accessing Higher Education and the need for development of national policy for this age group. Sue Par outlined an initiative from Job Centre plus in respect of the 18+ with the creation of Young Adult Personal Advisers. Councillor Baverstock also referred to a South Hams initiative to promote the employment of NEETs the details of which would be circulated to the Board, noting that if every District Council and other public bodies adopted a similar policy this would make a significant impact on NEET numbers. Nicola Bulbeck indicated that Debbie Pritchard and Anne Whiteley have been invited to the District/County Chief Executives' meetings to discuss how the councils could develop policies for the recruitment of NEETs and other young people (including cadetships). This policy development could be extended to include all public bodies in the County.

#### RESOLVED

(a) that the 14 -19 Scrutiny Task Group findings when published be circulated to the Board and that the 14 -19 County Council Strategy be also circulated for comment;

(b) that Debbie Pritchard with other Board members develop proposals for consideration at the next meeting.

49 Children's Trust Governance: Memorandum of Understanding

The Board considered a paper by Debbie Pritchard on development work required for the draft Memorandum of Understanding and operation handbook by the Sub Group of the Board delegated with this task.

The following were agreed as leads for their organisations covering

Understanding Need - Virginia Pearson

Safeguarding - Alan Wooderson

Investment/Disinvestment - Nicky Allen

Integrated Working and Co-location - Jo Tennant

Progress would be reported to a future meeting.

Penny Mathers commended a recently published CIPFA document that gives advice on improving financial management in Children's Trusts and also gives a check list for CTs to consider whether they are working well. The document can be found on the Net at:

<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nationalstudies/localgov/arewethereyet/Pages/childrenstrusts.aspx>

50 Local Children's Trusts: Purpose, Value and Resources

The Board received a paper on a business case for the local Children's Trusts and funding and operational options which required further appraisal work.

Mary Nisbett referred to the valuable work of the Local Children's Trusts, the commitment and goodwill of the partners involved and the need for additional support. Jo Tennant referred to potential costs involved during a difficult financial climate and the need for a business case.

The Chairman referred to the possible option of additional funding from the County Committees' locality budgets which would then provide a more direct link and feed back to these committees.

RESOLVED

(a) that the local Children's Trusts be recognized as a valued part of the governance of the Children's Trust in Devon;

(b) that the Achievement through Collaboration model be used to co-design their future working;

(c) that the options for supporting the LCT work be reported to a future meeting.

51 Children's Trust Workforce Strategy Implementation Plan

The Board considered a paper by Anne Whiteley on a proposed Workforce Strategy Implementation Plan and its resource implications across all partner organisations. The Plan (attached to the Report) and implementation would be overseen by the Workforce Strategy Commissioning Board chaired by Anne Whiteley. The paper also sought nominations for leads across identified areas so that the leadership load was spread across the Trust and to emphasize that it is a Partnership plan. These nominations should be made to Debbie Pritchard as soon as practicable.

RESOLVED

(a) that the Workforce Strategy Implementation Plan be agreed and its delivery be supported by the Trust partners;

(b) that the responsibility for its delivery be delegated to the Children's Trust Workforce Strategy Commissioning Board;

(c) that each partner nominate a lead for implementation in the areas detailed in the Plan;

(d) that the resource implications be noted.

52 Carers Strategy

Clare Cotter presented a joint DCC/NHS Devon paper on a detailed 10 year partnership strategy for carers, statutory, independent and third sector organisations in Devon. The strategy included action plans with targets and a financial plan was also being developed.

The Board discussed issues relating to identification of young carers within school settings and the AXS process and its valuable work in identifying the needs of young carers and their families. Mary Nisbett as the Chief Executive of a voluntary young carers' service across the County commended the development of the strategy and its recognition of the valuable work carried out by the third sector. Board members referred to the need to more clearly identify how young carers can access benefit advice and the development of more quantitative and qualitative indicators/measures in respect young carers. The Chairman indicated that this could be an area for the Council's CYPs Scrutiny Committee to examine.

RESOLVED that the Strategy be commended and progress be reported to the Board in approximately 6 months.

53 Post Ofsted Action Plan (POAP) plus Monitoring Report

Debbie Pritchard circulated and reported on a paper giving quarterly information on the progress on the Key Performance Indicators in respect of the POAP. There was no direct reporting or feedback to Ofsted but in future inspections reference would be made to the Actions required detailed in the past inspections and all the partners involved would be held to account.

Penny Mathers advised on an Ofsted document available on the web giving advice for CTs in this area.

Members referred to the links with the Comprehensive Area Assessments and the Local Area Assessments and analysis by the Audit Commission.

RESOLVED a representative of District Audit be invited to the next meeting to discuss the issues involved.

54 Devon Safeguarding Children's Board

The Board considered a paper by and presented by Alan Wooderson on DSCB Business Plan, the outcome of a serious case review and processes, the commissioning of a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment of Safeguarding, Section 11 audits and difficulties in appointing a Head of Safeguarding, which remains vacant.

In response to a question from Councillor Baverstock, Alan Wooderson offered to speak with the Samaritans in regard to issues relating to confidentiality and safeguarding.

Penny Mathers commented on how Devon within the peninsula wide evaluation process can develop quantitative and qualitative data.

RESOLVED

(a) that the progress on the DSCB Business Plan 2008/2011 be noted;

(b) that the joint strategic Needs assessment when completed be reported to this Board for action;

(c) that the difficulty in recruiting to the Head of Safeguarding post be noted and support be given to a short term role of focusing on performance management and quality improvement.

55 Resource Statement

Debbie Pritchard reported that partner agencies needed to identify officers to work with Nicky Allen to provide indicative budget information as part of the pooled budgetary arrangements. Progress reports would be submitted to future meetings.

56 Reports for Information

The Board received the following items for information: (i) National Service Update: National Service Framework; (ii) Scaled Approach/Youth Offending Order; and (iii) Contraception and Sexual Health.

57 Dates of meetings 2010

Tuesday, 26 January 2010; Tuesday, 23 March; and Tuesday, 29 June

58 Forward Plan

In addition to the standing items future business would include

- (i) Update on Southwark
- (ii) DSCB funding - recommendations following Loughborough report
- (iii) Post Ofsted Action Plan plus monitoring
- (iv) Contraception and Sexual Health
- (v) Carers Strategy Progress
- (vi) Resource Statements.

The meeting started at 10 am and finished at 12.58 pm