

pChildren's Trust Statutory Board

11 March 2009

Present

Cllr John Smith (Chairman, Lead Member CYPS DCC), Dr Virginia Pearson (Director of Public Health), Anne Whiteley (Executive Director CYPS DCC), Mary Nisbett (Independent Chair of Children's Trust Council), Alan Wooderson (Independent Chair of Devon Safeguarding Children's Board (DSCB), Jo Tenant (Devon and Cornwall Constabulary), Richard Newton-Chance (Devon Education Forum), John Peart (Learning and Skills Council), Anne Proctor (Probation Service) and Jenny Rudge (Connexions Cornwall and Devon).

In attendance

Debbie Pritchard Children's Trust (Programme Director); Brian Grady (Head of Commissioning and Procurement), Gerry Rufolo (Committee Secretariat)

Apologies

Nicola Bulbeck, Carolyn Evans, Jayne Carrol, Penny Mathers and Dr Kevin Snee

1 Chairman's introduction

Councillor John Smith welcomed members to the first meeting of the new Children's Trust Statutory Board and explained the background and statutory process leading to the formation of the new Board. He emphasised the duty of all organisations represented here and on the new Stakeholder Council, particularly the duty to cooperate partners to work together within joint arrangements to help improve the outcomes for all children and young people, particularly the most vulnerable, in accordance with the Children's and Young People's Plan. This Board and individual members would be held account for its delivery and implementation. This was now a small strategic Board where decisions would be made with key partners. Governance arrangements and representation still required development and would be subject to further consideration.

2 Matters of Interest to the Devon Children's Trust

The Board considered the report of the Executive Director of Children and Young People's Services highlighting the key national developments and local activities and on matters of policy, strategy and implementation. The report included a proposed approach in respect of the statutory annual review of the Children and Young People's Plan, proposed time lines and details of the new Ofsted and Comprehensive Area Assessment Inspection regime.

RESOLVED

(a) that the key national and key local matters of interest to the Devon Children's Trust be noted;

(b) that an overview report from the Executive Director CYPS be received at each Board meeting;

(c) that a further report be brought to the next Children's Trust Board outlining the work programme of the Commissioning Boards relative to the Children's Trust;

(d) that the approach to the review of the CYPP be agreed.

3 Devon Children's Trust Board Governance Paper

The Board considered the report of the Executive Director and received:

- draft Terms of Reference for Board
- draft Terms of Reference for the new CT Stakeholder Council; and
- a diagrammatic outline of remit of the CT and partnerships with the commissioning cycle.

The report outlined the role of the Trust, the duty to cooperate and proposed framework of responsibilities with a proposed terms of reference, a draft working model of governance arrangements and proposed practical working arrangements.

Member discussion points included:

- further clarification was awaited in guidance (in respect of the Children Act 2004) about representation, including representation from schools, general practitioners, the Strategic Health Authority, YOT. Members considered the need for full representation set against the need for a smaller, responsive Board
- in the practical arrangements proposals, arrangements for signing off key documents between meetings should be carried out electronically with Board members when practicable; and reference to decisions requiring investment/disinvestment should be deleted from the document
- complex issues relating to funding and pooling arrangements and accountability
- and that Stakeholder Council representatives should be invited to the next meeting of the CT Executive
- alignment of the Youth Offending Service Management Committee with meetings of this Board.

RESOLVED

(a) that the requirements to change governance arrangements be noted;

(b) that the requirements regarding the Youth Offending Service Management Committee meeting prior to this Board be noted;

(c) that the draft terms and reference be subject to further consideration by Brian Grady, Debbie Pritchard and Jenny Rudge;

(d) that a Framework of responsibility be developed;

(e) that the DSP and the PCT be requested to nominate a Vice Chairman, representing both bodies;

(f) that the need for further work on governance be noted with reference to the comments in the above bullet points

(g) that the review of the transition period be noted and a report be submitted to the next Board meeting.

(h) that the DSP be requested to consider formal representation from the Children's Trust Board as per legislation.

4 Report of the Chair of the LSCB

The Board considered the report of Alan Wooderson on an overview of safeguarding children and young people in Devon, identifying areas where improvement was needed through multi agency working, the outcome of recent serious case reviews, governance arrangements in respect of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, and key issues arising from the Laming Review. Laming's final report and recommendations was to be published the following day.

The County Council's Corporate Board through the Leader Chief Executive, the Executive Lead Member and Director was examining the implications for the County Council.

The Board also received a joint CT/DCC information pamphlet on safeguarding for all frontline practitioners including schools, the PCT and DCC staff with information on protocols.

Reference was made also to an Unintended Injuries report by the PCT which should be submitted to this Board for consideration.

RESOLVED

(a) that the Local Safeguarding Children's Board present an update report at each meeting of this Board;

(b) that a report be made to the next meeting on the publication of Lord Laming's Report and its implications;

(c) that the Annual Performance report of the Children's Safeguarding Board be presented to this Board, for consideration of any implications for the Children's Trust;

(d) that a joint Governing Board event be organized to focus on safeguarding and partnership effectiveness, to be fronted by Anne Whiteley, Virginia Pearson, Jo Tennant and school representatives;

(e) that a further development of multi agency quality audit and performance information and scrutiny be agreed and disseminate learning from this including three workshops in April/May 2009 focusing specifically on immediate lessons from December 2008 multi agency case audit.

5 Safeguarding and Child Health

Virginia Pearson reported on the PCT Action Plan: Working Together to Safeguard Children, which highlighted action already achieved and underway and including new proposed safeguarding contractual requirements for 2009-10. There was no action listed which had not been commenced. She also reported on recent senior appointments within the PCT to progress this area of work and on new impending organizational changes separating the provider and commissioning roles within the Trust.

There followed discussion on the possible reasons for difficulties in the recruitment for community nursing staff in schools and community care staff generally.

The next meeting would be considering the PCT Devon position statement in respect of the Government publication Healthy Lives, Brighter Futures.

6 14-19 Transition and sign-off Phase 2

The Board considered the reports of the Executive Director CYPS on 14 -19 Transition Structure and Transfer of LSC Functions relating to 14 -19 scheduled for April 2010. The reports detailed the challenges with Devon being designated as the lead LA to progress the submission to the Sub Regional Grouping (SRG), shadowing and transition arrangements, the risks and ways forward and staffing and capacity issues. Mr Newton Chance expressed concern about the confusion of functions within the Sub Regional Grouping, particularly in relation to the youth offending elements and the 14 -19 Strategic Leadership Group.

8 Dates of next meetings:

The Youth Offending Management Team starting at 9 am before each Board Meeting starting at 10 am:

- 28 April 2009
- 16 June
- July (date to be agreed)
- 29 September
- 4 November

The meeting started at 1.30 and finished at 4.45 pm