

## DEVON CHILDREN'S TRUST – BOARD MEETING

Thursday, 10 July 2008

### Present

#### Board Members

Mary Nisbett (Independent Chair)  
Kathy Beechen (Voluntary Sector – Youth Services)  
Nicola Bulbeck (Devon District Councils)  
Heather Colbeck (Voluntary Sector Early Years)  
Councillor Alan Connett (District Councils)  
Gary Ferrand (Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue)  
Dr Stella Imong (Clinician nominated by Devon PCT)  
Bruce Pollit (DAG)  
Debbie Pritchard (Children's Trust Programme Director)  
Dr Chris Roberts (Learning and Skills Council)  
Jenny Rudge (Connexions SW)  
Alyson Sheldrake (CoE Diocese)  
Councillor Marguerite Shapland (Non-Executive Director, Devon PCT)  
David Tall (Devon Association of Governors)  
Jo Tennant (Devon and Cornwall Constabulary)  
Councillor Nick Way (Executive Support Member, Schools, DCC)  
Nichola Winstanley (Parent Carers)  
Anne Whiteley (Director of Children and Young People's Services, DCC)

### Also Present

Janke Bird (DC Constabulary)  
Roger Fetherston (CYPS Education Services)  
Gerry Rufolo (Committee Secretariat, DCC)  
Dr Luke Hounsome (SW Public Health Observatory)  
George Setter (DS FR)  
Claire Wright (CYPS)

### Apologies

Jeanette Kemlo (Parent Carer)  
Penny Mathers (GOSW)  
Phil Norrey (DCC Chief Executive)  
Virginia Pearson (Director of Public Health, Devon PCT)  
Kevin Snee (PCT) Councillor John Smith (Executive Member, CYPS, DCC)Dr  
Councillor Brenda Taylor (DCC Executive Support Member Social Care)  
Eelke Zoestbergen (Devon and Cornwall Police Authority)

## 52 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 May 2008 were signed as a correct.

### **53 Membership**

The Chairman reported the resignation of Nichola Winstanley having recently gained a new appointment. The Board expressed its gratitude to Nichola for her service to the Trust and regret that she was leaving and congratulated her on her new appointment.

### **54 School Improvement and Overview**

Roger Fetherston (CYPS Devon Education Services) reported on the work of the Local Authority to help maintained schools to raise standards in accordance with the Children and Young People's Plan 'Achieve' goal. This support comprised four elements:

(i) Monitoring: using quantitative and qualitative data and intelligence through the input of other agencies such as Ofsted and audit reports;

(ii) Challenge: involving professional dialogue between for example School Improvement Partners (current or recently retired head teachers and officers allocated to all maintained Schools in Devon); use of self evaluation processes, with the school reflecting on what it does well, where it can improve and how and by when, and assessing its capacity to improve with effective leadership and distributed leadership with clear roles and responsibilities and clearly defined priorities and objectives;

(iii) Support: by, for example, accredited School Improvement Partners who work to a national agenda and which they adapt to local circumstances; specialist advisory curriculum support covering for example ICT, numeracy, science and advice on behaviour and attendance, tailored for the needs of individual schools. These forms of support were not designed to 'prop up' a school but to help embed good practice and help schools develop their own professional expertise. Schools would also need to evaluate improvements and ensure that a real difference has been made with emphasis on improved outcomes for children;

(iv) Intervention: when necessary. Only 10% of school intervention relates to general low performance following for example an Ofsted identifying a school requires special measures or a notice to improve. The authority also identify where intervention is required and this may be low performance or where there had been a breakdown in relationships between key personnel and the Governing Body for example. Action Plans are agreed in these circumstances which would include clear responsibilities and reporting processes.

Board Members commended the work of the Local Authority's Devon Education Services. In response to questions Mr Fetherston outlined the work to support children with special needs and the additional resources made available for schools, and the non statutory audit processes to identify and support the most vulnerable children. Members commented that

notwithstanding the LAs best practices these processes should be made statutory to ensure good support for children with special needs.

Anne Whiteley circulated to the meeting three newly published Department for Children, Schools and Families Consultation Documents. The first on Draft Guidance explained to schools in detail what was meant by 'promoting well-being' and what support schools should expect from their local authority and other partners in the Children's Trust.

The second document consulted on how the Children's Trusts could be strengthened including putting them on a statutory basis. The document proposals included extending responsibility for Children and Young People's Plans and the 'duty to cooperate' to include schools and requiring CT Boards to define set functions and responsibilities.

The third and final document related to the LA's strategy leadership role in promoting high standards in education.

Board Members were invited to submit their views on the consultation documents to Debbie Pritchard in order that a CT Board response could be collated and submitted to the DCFS by (22 July in respect of the second document) and by 25 September at the latest.

## **55 Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service: Children and Young People's Strategy**

The Board received a presentation by Gary Ferrand and George Setter from the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service on their Children and Young People's Strategy. They outlined the wide range of initiatives especially for disadvantaged and disaffected young people, including young offenders, building on previous good work and practices. The Strategy and programmes highlighted the contribution the Service working with partners can make in support of the Trust's objectives.

The Service's activities include school visits, Firebreak a personal development scheme for KS 4 pupils based at local fire stations, the Phoenix programme designed to reduce fire risk and fire related crime by working with 'at risk' young people aged 15 -18 years, to include a passing out parade; fire safety and training using specialist advisors; and a fire cadet weekly programme. The programmes were subject to monitoring and evaluation processes.

These initiatives were carried out from within the Service's current operational budget and it would welcome any joint funding initiatives to promote these and other schemes with its Trust partners.

Board Members commended the Service's excellent initiatives for young people to promote self esteem and confidence and asked whether they could be expanded to wider age groups (subject to health and safety

considerations). The Service would be happy to discuss the development and funding of initiatives with Board partners.

The Chairman thanked Gary and George for their excellent and informative presentation.

#### **56 Children's Trust Development Day: Outcomes and Next Steps**

Debbie Pritchard thanked all for their contributions to the development day. A sub-group would formalise proposals to come to the next meeting in light of the national consultation. Future steps were likely to include: ensuring all members of the Board had access to the papers received by the Executive, such as the delivery plans for the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP); each member taking a link role with an aspect of the CYPP with the right to raise issues and achievements with the Board; and developing more themed discussions for each meeting to look at matters in depth with invited participants and thus adding value to the work of the Executive. These steps were welcomed.

#### **57 Annual Performance Assessment**

The Board received an update paper from Debbie Pritchard on the Annual Performance Self Assessment process and anticipated next steps. The final report from Ofsted was expected on 17 December 2008.

Anne Whiteley in response to Board questions reported on the continued work (detailed in the self evaluation) with partners to address historic inequalities in service delivery across Devon in children's health and mental health services. This ongoing work involving review, needs analysis and joint commissioning would help ensure provision of consistent and fair access across the County.

(Note: arising on concerns from Councillor Connett about the provision of school nursing services at a Community College the current position at the College (since January 2008) would be reported to him)

#### **58 Teenage Pregnancy and Young Parents**

Anne Whiteley reported on her attendance at a regional conference on this key national issue. There was now an expectation on Children's Trusts nationally to work with partners notably LAs and PCTs, to improve organisational arrangements to reduce teen-age pregnancies and improve outcomes for young parents and their children. To this end a local partnership Board would be formed in November.

#### **59 Children's Trust Champions**

The Chairman gave an update on Hear by Right initiatives and developments. This included consultation with young people through 'Kongomana' involving the CT partners on 25/26 July; young people's involvement in the appointment of the new independent Chairman of the Safeguarding Board; and

appointment by East Devon District Council of a new worker with a Hear by Right remit. The Chairman thanked partners for their financial contribution towards Kongomana.

Any Hear by Right initiatives and work should be reported via the Champions or directly to the Chairman. The Chairman also requested further CT Champion representation from the Police and Voluntary sectors.

**60 South West Public Health Observatory: Healthy Schools Mapping Tool**

The Board received a presentation by Dr Luke Hounsome from the South West Public Health Observatory on their Healthy Schools Mapping Tool available on the Internet [www.swpho.nhs.uk](http://www.swpho.nhs.uk). This tool supports a long-term project to involve children, staff and parents to make health and well being improvements by giving access to timely and detailed data pertinent to children's health.

Members noted the potential of this valuable tool to assist CT Partners in for example needs assessment processes and joint commissioning arrangements.

A copy of the power point presentation would be circulated to the Board.

The Chairman thanked Dr Hounsome for the interesting and informative presentation.

**61 Any Other Business**

Anne Whiteley reported on a County Council approved allocation of £500k (which would be subject to joint bid proposals) for local anti social behaviour diversionary initiatives and projects. An update report would be made to the next meeting.

**62 Date of the Next Meeting**

3 November 2008 at 11.30 am at County Hall, Exeter (followed by a buffet lunch)

The meeting started at 11.30 am and finished at 1.30 pm