

DEVON CHILDREN'S TRUST

At a meeting held at County hall, Exeter on

15 November 2007

Present

Board Members

Mary Nisbett (Independent Chair)
Sarah Baker (Voluntary Sector Youth Services)
Councillor Hugo Barton (Executive Support Member DCC)
Kathy Beechen (Voluntary Sector – Youth Services)
Nicola Bulbeck (Devon District Councils)
Faith Butler (Devon Association of Governors)
Juliet Doswell (Faith Communities)
Gary Ferrand (Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service)
Jeannette Kemlo (Parent Carer)
Bruce Pollit (Parents of Early Years Children)
Debbie Pritchard (Children's Trust Programme Director)
Chris Roberts (Learning and Skills Council)
Jenny Rudge (Connexions, SW)
Councillor Marguerite Shapland (Non-Executive Director, Devon PCT)
David Tall (Devon Association of Governors)
Councillor Nick Way (Executive Support Member, Schools, DCC)
Anne Whiteley (Director of Children and Young People's Services, DCC)
Eelke Zoestbergen (Devon and Cornwall Police Authority)

Also Present

Brian Grady (Joint Strategic Commissioning Team Manager, CYPS, DCC)
Dillon Hughes (Principal Youth Officer CYPS)
Tim Leishman (AXS Programme Manager CYPS)
Penny Mathers (Government Office South West)
Gerry Rufolo (Committee Secretariat, DCC)

Apologies

Councillor Alan Connett (District Councils)
Dr Stella Imong (Clinician nominated by Devon PCT)
Phil Norrey (DCC Chief Executive)
Dr Virginia Pearson (Director of Public Health, Devon PCT)
Councillor John Smith (Executive Member, CYPS, DCC)

21 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2007 were signed as a correct record.

22 Children's Champions: Hear by Right

Dillon Hughes (Principal Youth Officer CYPS) presented a paper on the role of the Hear by Right Champion, expectations of the role and that of the partner organisations including the County Council.

Each partner organisation would be asked to nominate a Champion and make a financial contribution as detailed in the paper to include all district councils (parent carers voluntary sector excepted in view of the considerable commitments they

presently undertake). The financial contributions would assist with the employment of a Participation and Democracy Worker to co-ordinate work to engage young people across the Trust's remit and its partner organisations. The Chairman highlighted the need for the Champion representative from each organisation to join the champions' group.

AGREED that the report and the proposed funding contributions be commended to the Chief Officers Group for approval.

23 Budget Holding Lead Professional

Hywel Lloyd (Office of Public Management) made a presentation on local and national pilot projects developing an integrated multi agency common approach for assessment of children and families with 'additional' needs. He outlined the importance of early intervention with the use of a Common Assessment Form (CAF) in identifying needs and establishing a collective and holistic view of the child and family. He referred to a 'lead' officer approach (an individual most engaged with the family) and generation of an agreed Action Plan which should be fully resourced and followed up with regular reviews. The collective process should lead to a county view about governance and commissioning arrangements involving all partners and in gathering intelligence about local and county needs and informing future policy and resource allocation.

Evaluation of the local pilots in Devon would be made within the month and the national pilots in approximately 12 months. The pilots involved differing emphases and approaches and identified best practice would be rolled out.

Members discussed issues relating to the integration of the CAF into current social care and computer systems and budgetary and accountability systems. There would be needed a real commitment to overcome such barriers. There were opportunities for savings from diverting significant resources from for example traditional residential accommodation. Members also discussed the role of the lead officer who could be a lay person (voluntary sector representative or parent), training and support for assessors, the additional needs of 14 – 19 years olds and NEETs; and the inherent tensions between national rules/drivers and local priorities.

The Chairman thanked Hywel for his very informative presentation.

AGREED that the local evaluation of the pilots be reported to the Board in due course.

24 AXS Programme (Access to Services)

Further to the previous item Tim Leishman (Children's Trust Programme Manager) presented a paper on this programme. The pathfinder project included the completion of over 100 CAFs. The project would be subject to evaluation and there would be a planned roll out following the local and national evaluation.

Following a detailed working party review of boundaries good coterminosity with other relevant structures has been achieved in respect of the AXS Clusters' geographical boundaries, based on learning communities, with a cohort of between 6 and 11 thousand 0-19 year olds.

A report detailing the roll out recommendations would be taken to the Trust Executive.

25 Children with Special Needs

Brian Grady, Commissioning and Procurement Manager (CYPS) reported on a consultation process to help identify and agree key priorities with the PCT for services for children with special needs. He acknowledged the good work emanating from the Honeylands review in helping shape future recommendations. A number of event days/evenings were planned involving parent carers, clinicians, staff, councillors and other stakeholders through out Devon (Hatherleigh, Ivybridge) which would help inform the process.

The development of a web page would also assist the process:

<http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/socialcare/carers/consultation-involvement/county-parent-carers-groups.htm>

26 Children's Trust Grants

(Kathy Beechen declared a prejudicial Interest and left the meeting for this item)

Brian Grady reported on the development of a new Children's Trust grant making process with delegated funding to local communities for young people to meet local needs. Two stake holder events were being organised involving partner organisations to consider recommendations and different models. The Chairman expressed the Board's support for the development of new proposed models based on best practice.

27 Children and Young People's Plan 2008 - 11

Anne Whiteley reported on the Partnership Day held on 13 November 2007 which would help inform the review of the Children and Young People's Plan. The day had been well attended by all 'duty to co-operate' partner organisations focusing on strategic priorities and local themes. Key priorities would be identified in accordance with the Every Child Matters agenda and their impact on the 5 outcomes. These in turn should be backed up with adequate resource from each partner to implement the Plan effectively and to reach a 'good' assessment by the external inspectors for 2007/08. This year's Annual Performance Assessment provided a baseline for achieving "good" as a judgement next year with emphasis on "embed, sustain and making an impact." The Plan would align with the Local Area Agreement (LAA) process and funding. The first draft would be prepared by 20 December for comment by all partners. Further key event days would be held on 16 January (for considering implications at the local level) at the Tiverton Hotel and 22 January 2008 (at a venue to be confirmed) to involve the Board and other partner representatives and stakeholders.

The Annual Performance Assessment was expected in writing on 26 November and that early indications remained positive.

The Plan would be presented to the Board on 28 February 2008.

28 Exeter Unitary: Update

Anne Whiteley reported that an announcement was now expected in early December 2007.

29 Any Other Business

(a) Children's Fund: Voluntary Sector

Kathy Beechen requested that the result of funding bids be made known by the end of December as current funding was due to expire by 31 March 2008.

(b) Leisure Facilities

The Chairman commended the action of Councillor Connett who had written to District Authorities asking that leisure facilities be made available free of charge for all children in public care.

30 Meetings During 2008

AGREED that in view of the impending event days involving members on 22 January the Board meeting scheduled for 3 January be cancelled.

Meetings will be held as follows:

28 February
15 May
10 July
25 September
13 November

The meeting started at 11.30 am and ended at 1.30 pm