

Children's Trust Board
7 October 2009
2pm CR1, County Hall

Present:

Steve Robinson	Chief Executive (Chair)
John Stephens	Director of Children and Young People's Services
Sarah Blaylock	Policy Development Officer
Ian Kirby	Performance Manager
Ann Moore	Head of Service – Achievement & Wellbeing
Paul Boyce	Head of Service - Safeguarding
Alison Navarro	VCFS HUB
Jane Middleton	Head of Service – Strategic Commissioning
Vicki Silver	Workforce Development
Chris Troughton	Learning & Skills Council
Chris Burkett	Workforce Development
Steve Hoy	Chief Executive, Connexions Cheshire & Warrington
Cllr Arthur Harada	Portfolio Holder Children's Services
Lizzie Wiffen	Non-Executive Director, NHS Western Cheshire
Jon Betts	Superintendent, Cheshire Police
Sarah Lee	Headteacher, School Forum

1. Apologies

Julie Webster, Director of Public Health, Western Cheshire PCT
Sarah Mogel, Principal, West Cheshire College
Moira Chapman, Lead Member Cheshire Police Authority

2. Minutes and Actions

No actions

3. Third Sector Report

Alison Navarro gave a presentation about the work of the Voluntary Community and Faith Sector Hub which incorporates approximately 30 organisations which range from very large national organisations down to the smaller organisations with 2 or 3 staff. Communication is a challenge, particularly with the reach to smaller organisations, but it is improving each year.

Action: Alison to provide the Board with a full Membership list

The Every Child Matters Scrutiny Panel is currently working with Looked After Children; it was recommended that the Hub should link into this work.

4. Integrated Workforce Development

VS provided feedback from the 15 September workshop and highlighted key issues that were raised in the development of 'one children's workforce' in Cheshire West and Chester.

A self-assessment has been made using the 'one children's workforce framework' (rainbow). This is a national tool for authorities to benchmark how well they are working towards objectives. Most progress has been made under 'capacity to deliver' and 'keep children safe in an integrated way'. Least progress has been made in integrated working practice. In order to progress from a fragmented to a more integrated workforce, priorities for action 2009/10 were formulated and will be fed back to the Trust via a Workforce Strategy Group.

Priorities for Action 2009/10 were highlighted as follows:

- establish a strong Communications Strategy about workforce integration;
- work with CWDC and National College;
- set up a task and finish group to take the work forward.

SL asked how the work will be integrated with the current schools' induction programme and also how it can be localised. The differences between Primary and Secondary training and induction needs were acknowledged and it was agreed that if one organisation is using particularly effective approaches, we need ways for them to be shared.

Action: Youth workers training – SH to share experiences with VS

Multi agency training opportunities need to emphasise the importance of seeing things from the perspective of children and young people.

JB was concerned that the one workforce document could be seen as a council document. The rainbow framework does not adequately capture the partnership approach; partners shouldn't be an 'add-on'.

A discussion took place about the ways in which partners must retain their specialist roles but operate within a multi-agency environment

The Children's Workforce Group will be the first step in identifying what best practice across the partnership and considering how it can be developed.

Action: JS to forward extracts from Professor Richard Barker's most recent publication on integrated working to all Members

5. Outcome Leads

Stay Safe

PB is currently looking at the outcome brief in order to start improvements in child protection and safeguarding practices in light of having a new Children's Trust and LSCB. A fundamental review of systems is being undertaken.

4 priorities are being taken forward:

- Review and reform of current practice to ensure clear systems and processes are in place;
- Review of Social Care and re-structure as part of review to ensure we have clear 'front door';
- Review of the care management system;
- Management of performance

Action: PB to bring performance reports and key issues to the January Board.

NOTE: Written reports are needed in advance of future meetings in order for members to challenge information given at meetings.

It was stated that the business of the LSCB should come to the Children's Trust Board for information, discussion and, where appropriate, for action.

A significant issue for the Trust is the need to ensure consistency in practice, moving away from a fragmented response to vulnerable children. Opportunities to alleviate this are seen through co-location and effective integration.

Be Healthy

Teenage Pregnancy (TP) update: there is no longer a plan to recruit a joint TP post; the work will be commissioned. Outcomes will be improved through existing work and practices but with much more effective co-ordination and targeting.

A National Support Team strategic group is being established. The NST action plan challenges all partners and outstanding issues need to come back through this group as progress issues. In terms of data, visible deliverance against action plans is needed.

JB raised the issue of links between the Area Programme Board's (APBs) and the Children's Trust. The APBs need to be linked in to key strategic priorities in order to respond at a local level in area-appropriate ways.

Enjoy & Achieve

A task for the sub Group was to consider the role of the Virtual Headteacher (HT), to write a Job Description and appoint.

There are 321 children looked after in Cheshire West and Chester. Looking at the Virtual HT's role has assisted in the restructure work in Children and Young People's Services; the structure is out for consultation. The job will go out as part of the formal consultation and we need to look at what else someone in this role can do for all vulnerable children, not just those looked after.

Positive Contribution & Economic Well-Being

Not in Employment Education or Training (NEET):

There has been a visit from the Prime Ministers Delivery Unit to consider the approaches to reducing NEET in the area.

SH distributed NEET figures as at August 2009. Successes were noted and some concerns raised about the comparative performance of Cheshire West and Chester and statistical neighbours, particularly in relation to the 'not known' figure,

Positive Contribution:

The UK Youth Parliament elections are to be held in February. Last year 5,400 children voted in the west. Letters are being sent out to Headteachers. Young people are to also have the opportunity to shadow the senior officers and elected members as part of their citizenship studies and 'Take Over Day'.

JS stated that a lot of excellent voluntary work with young people takes place in the West. Chester Air Training Corps was given as an example. They provide positive, accredited activities for 100 young people in the area.

6. Future Developments of the Children's Trust

Item deferred. An extra-ordinary meeting to be arranged for December to discuss given the importance of this issue.

Action: JM to work with Policy Team to establish clear protocols for the distribution of Trust papers and the organisation of meetings.

7. Future Meetings

Extra-ordinary meeting to be confirmed in December
14 January 2010 – 2pm, Winsford venue tbc
11 March 2010 – 2pm Rural West venue tbc