

Select Committee on Children's Services – 17 September 2007

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Children's Trust and Children and Young People's Plan

Purpose of Report

1. This report advises the Select Committee of the developing Children's Trust arrangements in Dudley, the review of the Children and Young People's Plan 2006-09 and the production of a new Children and Young People's Plan 2008-11 for publication in January 2008 with alignment to the revised Local Area Agreement.

Background

2. We said that we would develop our Children's Trust arrangements during 2006/07 to have the Dudley Children's Trust in place by April 2007.
3. During October and November 2006 a series of workshops were held to explore, scrutinize and make decisions about our Children's Trust arrangements, what they would look like and how these would determine governance; commissioning; locality working; planning; service improvement; integrated service design and delivery, involving children and young people.
 - The Children and Young People's Partnership agreed that our partnership arrangements would be Dudley's Children's Trust from April 2007, with a view to review the effectiveness of current structures during the autumn of 2007.
 - The Trust will be a commissioning trust that covers the needs of all children and young people aged 0 – 19 (up to 25 for those with additional needs such as those with a disability and looked after children).
 - A Partnership Unit, incorporating commissioning responsibilities, in support of the work of the overall Children's Trust would be developed during 2007.

Governance

4. Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on all local authorities in England to make arrangements to promote co-operation between the authority,

the 'relevant partners' as determined by the Act, and other locally determined partners, to improve the well-being of children in the authority's area.

5. Robust inter-agency governance arrangements are essential to drive the change processes and to create the framework for new ways of working. Effective partnership working needs to be sustainable and embedded, with supporting structures, policies and processes which maintain the momentum of change and set a clear direction of travel. The key elements of our inter-agency arrangements for governance of the Children's Trust will be:

- Effective leadership by the local authority
- Full engagement of all key partners, including the voluntary and community sectors;
- Clear accountability and decision making processes; and
- Relationships built on trust, a shared vision and a determination to improve outcomes for all children and young people.

6. We will achieve this by:

- Agreeing a constitution for the Children's Trust
- Agreeing a decision making protocol
- Being clear about how the Children's Trust relates and reports to the Dudley Community Partnership
- Agreeing a commissioning strategy which will determine how resources will be brought together across the partnership
- Develop a Section 10 agreement for all partners to sign up to

7. Developing protocols and processes for:

- Joint needs analysis
- Outcomes based accountability as a framework for service re-design to ensure that we turn talk into action
- Developing a new children and young people's plan to be published in January 2008
- Embedding the performance management arrangements currently in development for the LAA within the Community Partnership, across the Children's Trust partners
- Work with the voluntary and community sector to develop commissioning protocols and a quality kite mark
- Develop business planning protocols for producing operational level plans and associated commissioning cycles with all agencies within the Children's

Trust to underpin the strategic actions set out in the Children and Young People's Plan and the related commissioning strategy

- Embed the workforce development strategy
- Develop the parenting strategy and related implementation plan

8. Developing our Joint Commissioning Arrangements

- Review the structure of the Partnership to make sure that it is fit for purpose as a Children's Trust
- Develop a joint commissioning board which will report on the financial arrangements and decision making for pooled budgets directly to the Children's Trust
- Embed the joint commissioning framework
- Ensure that children, young people and their families are integral to the commissioning processes, engaging them within all aspects of the commissioning framework
- Embed the quality kite mark across all services
- Develop the market
- Agree a decommissioning/service re-design process

Developing Integrated Processes

9. Information Sharing and Assessment

- Pooled budget arrangements have been put into place to implement the common assessment and lead professional aspects of the information sharing and assessment requirements of the Children Act (2004)
- A comprehensive multi-agency training programme is now underway for common assessment and the lead professional role
- The Child Index will be in place by April 2008
- The information sharing protocol has been developed in draft form and is scheduled to be in place with full sign up across all agencies by September 2007
- A range of information services and service directories already exist and work is being undertaken to bring these together through a web portal to ensure a coherent Children's Services Directory accessible to practitioners as well as children, young people and their families. This will be in place during 2008.

10. Integrated Front Line Delivery

- Further work will be undertaken over the next twelve months to develop multi-agency working in localities, building on our extended schools, children's centres and integrated youth support
- We will further develop our needs analysis to analyse needs across agreed

localities to ensure that resources can be deployed effectively and timely at neighbourhood level

Review of Children and Young People's Plan 2006-09

11. The Children and Young People's Plan amendments and guidance were received in March 2007 and the APA guidance was issued April 2007. Subsequently, a letter was received from Ofsted on 4 June 2007 which required Local Authorities to submit the APA self assessment grading template, together with the review of the CYPP and the minutes of the last year's Safeguarding Board meetings.
12. In the light of the amendments, the Director of Children's Services made contact with partners proposing publishing a review of the Children and Young People's Plan 2006-09 in June 2007 and changing the timescales for publication of the new Children and Young People's Plan to January 2008.
13. The review of the Children and Young People's Plan 2006-09 was completed and forwarded to Ofsted on 14 June 2007.

The Production of the Children and Young People's Plan 2008-11

14. During the production of the Children and Young People's Plan 2006-2009 and the subsequent review one of the major issues to emerge is the importance of aligning the plan with partner agencies planning processes and the revised Local Area Agreement. In order to resolve this, the Children's Trust has made the decision to produce a new Children and Young People's Plan in January 2008.
15. The outline timetable for this is below:

Plan for Development of Children and Young People's Plan 2008 – 2011	
June – November 2006	Ongoing development of Needs Assessment
9 October 2006	Conference for all stakeholders
22 and 25 October 2006	Conferences for children and young people
November 2006 – January 2007	Production of revised Children and Young People's Plan 2008-2011 – Process to include ongoing and formal consultation with partner agencies
November 2006 – January 2007	Production of summary of Children and Young People's Plan 2008-2011 with children and young people
January 2008	Publication of new plan to be in line with planning processes of partners

Finance

16. There are no additional financial implications for the Council at this time. Some consideration will need to be given to partner contributions towards the development of the Trust arrangements and the Partnership Unit within this.

Law

17. The Children's Trust works within the statutory framework of the Children Act 2004. Children and Young People's Plan Amendment Regulations were issued March 2007.

Equality Impact

18. The Plan includes clear statements relating to equality issues.
19. Children and young people have been closely involved in the development of the Children and Young People's Plan and the review. They have been responsible for writing and designing the summary of the review and will continue to be fully involved in all future developments.

Recommendation

20. It is recommended that the Select Committee endorse the decisions of the Children's Trust to:

- the development of a new plan for January 2008
- the Partnership and Children's Trust Division being tasked to undertake a Joint Needs Analysis with Health and other partners as appropriate
- the process of developing the new plan being clearly positioned with the Partnership and Children's Trust Division, supported by the Joint Planning and Commissioning Group
- endorse the section on the Children's Trust developments in the review of the Children and Young People's Plan 2006-09 and detailed above.
- report back to the Select Committee with a draft plan at the meeting on 15 November 2007.



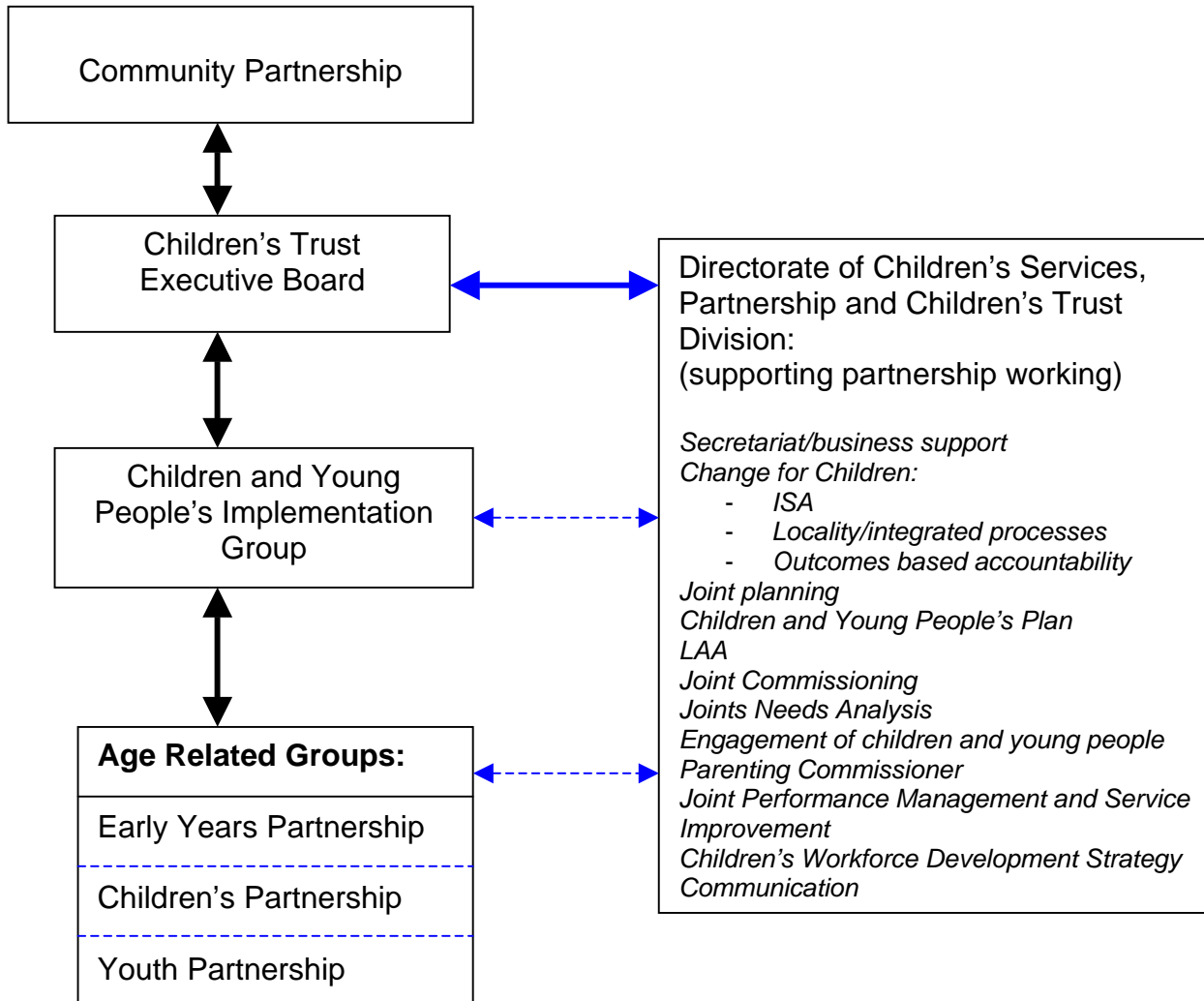
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List of Background Papers

Reports to Children's Trust Executive Board – 22 June 2007
Review of Children and Young People's Plan 2006-09
The above are available through www.dudleycyp.org.uk
Decision making protocol – attached at Appendix One

Decision Making Protocol for Dudley Children's Trust



Requirement to develop stronger reporting lines from the Children's Trust Executive Board to the Community Partnership (cross membership is already in place in that the Director of the Community Partnership is a member of the Children's Trust Executive Board; the independent chair of the Executive Board has a place in their own right on the Community Partnership Executive Board and there is some joint membership, for example, Director of Children's Services; Director of Adult, Community and Housing; Chief Executive of PCT; Chief Executive of Connexions. The Partnership and Children's Trust Division can support the process of reporting and the Assistant Director lead is a member of the Community Partnership's Performance Management Group.

Decisions taken at the Children's Trust Executive Board need to be allocated to a lead agency and the implementation of those then taken through that agencies normal decision making processes. The Partnership and Children's Trust Division can support this process.

Decisions taken at the Implementation Group – some would be for actions allocated to single agencies or the age related groups to enact. Others would be recommendations to the Executive Board. Clear consideration needs to be given to determining delegated powers and this should form part of the constitutional arrangements for the Children's Trust. The Partnership and Children's Trust will support this process.

Decisions taken at the age related groups – some would be for actions allocated to single agencies. Others would be recommendations to the Implementation Group. Clear consideration needs to be given to determining delegated powers and levels of responsibility and this should form part of the constitutional arrangements for Children's Trust. The Partnership and Children's Trust Division will support this process.

During discussions on this draft paper and the preparation of the Children's Trust Constitution consideration needs to be give to confirming/defining the roles and responsibilities of each tier of the partnership arrangements.