

Tuesday, 13 July 2010 commencing at 1.30 pm
Professional Excellence Centre, Acre Lane, Bromborough

1. **13:30 APOLOGIES**
 2. **13:30 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
 3. **13:35 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (Pages 1 - 8)**
 4. **13:45 CONTACT POINT UPDATE**
 5. **13:55 COMMISSIONING UPDATE**
 6. **14:05 SAFEGUARDING UPDATE YEAR END (Pages 9 - 10)**
 7. **14:30 WIRRAL CHILDREN'S TRUST AND LSCB SAFEGUARDING PROTOCOL (Pages 11 - 14)**
 8. **14:40 ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (Pages 15 - 34)**
- 15:00 BREAK**
9. **15:15 CHILD POVERTY ACT 2010 (Pages 35 - 38)**
 10. **15:30 POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION STRATEGY GROUP ANNUAL REPORT (Pages 39 - 46)**
 11. **16:00 STAYING SAFE STRATEGY GROUP ANNUAL REPORT (Pages 47 - 56)**
 12. **16:25 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
 13. **16:30 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING: 24TH SEPTEMBER 2010, 09:00 - 12:00**



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WIRRAL CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday, 28th May 2010

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	Sheila Clarke (Chair)
	Councillor	Phil Davies
	Councillor	Tom Harney
		Marie Armitage
		Jo Beet (representing Gillian Thomas)
		Howard Cooper
		Emma Dodd
		Bob Gittins
		Tina Long
		Bev Morgan
		Kathryn Podmore
		Shanila Roohi
		Andy Styring
		Hazel Thompson
<u>In attendance:</u>	Officers	Nancy Clarkson
		Mark Ellis
		Julia Hassall
		Maureen McDaid
		Eileen Newman
		Peter Wong

1. Apologies

Paula Dixon
Richard Longster
Thelma Wiltshire
Gillian Thomas (represented by Jo Beet)

Councillor Sheila Clark thanked Councillor Phil Davies both personally and on behalf of the Board for his service as an excellent Cabinet member for Children's Services and Chair of Wirral Children's Trust; he will be a hard act to follow.

Councillor Phil Davies thanked colleagues for all their work to support him.

Councillor Chris Meaden will be the new Labour representative for Children's Services. Councillor Sheila Clarke also welcomed Councillor Tom Harney who is the new Liberal representative on the Board.

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2. Declarations of Interest

None declared.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting on the 19th March 2010 be confirmed as a correct record.

4. Contact Point Update

Mark Ellis updated on Contact Point. Four organisations have been accredited, Children and Young People's Department, Wirral University Teaching Hospital, NHS Wirral and Homestart Wirral. There are now 40 practitioners using the system. In Health four trainers have been accredited to roll out the training and plans are in place to train 30 additional trainers, however this has been put on hold. The national audit requirements have been fulfilled and the accreditation certificate has been achieved. Data cleansing of data feeds from local systems has also been carried out.

The new Government has led to some potential changes, full information is not yet available; a Bill and a new Act is required. The Bill may be in the current session in June/July 2010. There is uncertainty as Conservatives favour a more focused Contact Point and Liberal policy was removal of the system and additional funding for front line services. It is not clear as yet which direction will be progressed. Locally decisions will be taken to ensure we are in a position to continue if required. Further national guidance is now required.

Tina Long asked on the links between the Integrated Children's System (ICS) and Health Systems. Currently there are no links but developments are in progress through Adult Social Care regarding future links with the health systems.

Shanila Roohi asked if there were links between the Wirral ICS and other local authorities systems. Mark Ellis responded that they are individual stand alone systems. Julia Hassall noted that when children move local authorities have processes in place. In Wirral the Central Advice and Duty Team (CADT) pass information between local authorities.

Andy Styring noted the importance of keeping children safe within national changes to systems and asked if locally we should put a system in place to ensure we are sharing the appropriate data between organisations to ensure children are kept safe within the law. The Board agreed there is scope for local activity once the proposals for national changes were known.

Resolved: That a further update be provided to the next Board meeting.

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5. Performance Management Year End

Nancy Clarkson presented the year end performance review outlining progress against children's services indicators. Performance headlines were outlined. Progress against targets was discussed and performance issues and corrective action in a number of areas were discussed by the Board.

Resolution: That the report be noted.

6. Local Area Agreement Quarter Four

Nancy Clarkson presented the LAA quarter four report. For the specific LAA indicators detailed monitoring data was presented including national and statistical neighbour benchmarks. A positions statement from each quarter was provided as context for the indicators and an overall summary report was provided.

Resolution: That the report be noted.

7. Annual Review of the Children's Trust Board Membership

The membership of the Board is reviewed on an annual basis. As the Board was reformed in 2009 no significant changes were suggested. Two members were proposed; a probation representative and the Chair of the Wirral Governor Forum.

Alan Stennard the Head of Regeneration has retired and Council Regeneration is being restructured by the Council so a replacement is not currently sought. Marie Armitage has replaced Sue Drew as the Public Health representative.

Councillor Tom Harney suggested that he thought there was a lack of awareness concerning the Children's Trust at governor level within schools and a lack of communication concerning governors in schools.

The new government may remove the requirement to have a Children's Trust. Howard Cooper would advocate strongly for maintaining a children's strategic trust as it has great benefit for Children's Services in Wirral.

Councillor Sheila Clarke would like to see the Children's Trust Board continue in the future and believes that strengthening the youth justice area is a positive step. She also suggested that it may be beneficial to evaluate the communication of the Children's Trust at a future meeting.

Howard Cooper would like the Board members to consider if chairs of the other Local Strategic Partnership Blocks would be beneficial attending the Children's Trust Board meeting as a member or an observer.

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Resolution: That the Board approve the addition of two new members to the Board.

8. Wirral Children's Trust and LSCB Safeguarding Protocol

Using recent government guidance a protocol has been developed by Nancy Clarkson and Caroline McKenna to enable clarity regarding local accountability. The board was asked for comments regarding the protocol.

Tina Long requested a change in 6.1 reflecting services that safeguard children and young people.

Councillor Tom Harney requested additional information regarding the roles of the Chief Executive and the Lead Member and the general public. Howard Cooper suggested that a paragraph should be added as how the Chief Executive and Lead Member fulfil their responsibilities.

Howard Cooper reported that he and Julia Hassall meet with the Chief Executive monthly to scrutinise Children's Social Care. This includes detailed performance data, human resources information and Safeguarding.

There is a requirement from this year to produce a Safeguarding annual report and for the Leader of the Council to sign off this report. The previous Cabinet agreed for a group to be set up to strengthen safeguarding activity. This group has been established and includes three political leads and the Chief Executive. The group will keep an overview of safeguarding performance of the Council's agencies so that the Council as a body can scrutinize this area.

Julia Hassall reported that in the case of the general public two new lay members will join the LSCB. There is information on the website for members of the public regarding the public's role.

Marie Armitage noted the Public Health view of Safeguarding in the broader context not just children at severe risk of injury. The role of the citizen in protecting children and how to shift the balance back to the community rather than agencies. In bringing lay members on board to the LSCB this can help with a cultural shift.

Councillor Phil Davies noted that executive summaries of Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) were reported to Cabinet to ensure that this significant area is reported in a public forum. Reporting of SCRs may change with the new government. Regarding the protocol he has concern that the Children's Trust does not duplicate the work of the LSCB.

Howard Cooper noted that this is a complex area. He suggested that it is incumbent on Children's Services Lead Member and the Director of Children's Services to ensure that Cabinet members have sufficient training and support to evaluate this area.

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Howard Cooper also expanded on proposed publication of full SCRs. The purpose of SCRs is learning and improvement. One concern is that if full reports are published there is a danger that writers will amend the content of the report which may impact on lessons to be learnt. Howard Cooper's view is that this change will make children less safe.

Councillor Phil Davies does not support publication of full SCR, but wants to ensure that there is confidence from the public that the lessons are being learnt.

Councillor Sheila Clarke noted that if elected members are to be held accountable then they need to have the full understanding to ensure improvements. It is incumbent on the Lead Member of Children's Services to ensure that Cabinet members understand this. She suggested that opening cases up to the public may build public trust.

Resolutions:

That subject to the changes outlined Wirral Children's Trust Board endorse the protocol.

That the protocol will be reviewed by the LSCB and the final version returned to Wirral Children's Trust Board.

9. JobCentre Plus Presentation

Jo Beet of JobCentre Plus gave an overview of the work of the organisation and how it supports the Every Child Matters outcomes. JobCentre Plus is part of the Department of Works and Pensions and is a large organization with 50,000 adviser interviews a day.

In Wirral at March 2010 there were 9,410 people receiving job seekers allowance. At November 2009 there were 19,020 people receiving incapacity benefit and employment support allowance. Of these 42% have mental health issues. Statistics indicate that people who have been on incapacity benefit for 7 years or more are likely to be on it for life. The national economic cost of sickness allowance is £100 billion which is greater than the annual NHS budget. On Wirral this is an area of high spend.

JobCentre Plus personal advisors offer a range of services including

- 'Better off' calculations
- Pathways to Work – help with confidence, skills, condition management
- Access to free training, financial help and mentoring
- Help for those with alcohol/drug issues, ex-offenders or those who are homeless
- Voluntary work
- Access to partners services and provision
- Tax free in work credit of £40 per week for a year for those eligible
- Access to Work – help with equipment, adaptations, support worker, travel, communications

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A number of programmes are in partnership including community linked initiatives with the Third sector and drug strategy and mental health co-ordinators are employed by JobCentre Plus.

In looking ahead there are challenges but also opportunities to ensure a joined up approach to ensure partners work together effectively through the 'Think Family' approach and joint targeting resources.

Andy Styring thanked Jo Beet for the presentation and was impressed with the JobCentre Plus approach to mental health. He suggested that there are ways to improve how organisations work together and he would like to investigate closer working with JobCentre Plus.

Marie Armitage noted that Public Health deliver intervention management and what is found is that there is often a mental health aspect. Being out of work has an impact on mental well-being, and there can be specific communities where this is an issue. Mental well-being in families is an issue for deprived areas in Wirral.

Howard Cooper asked if lone parents were encouraged to claim child maintenance. A high proportion of Children in Need (CIN) were part of lone parent families and joint working through JobCentre Plus and Children's Social Care may be possible in order to maximize the income of families with CIN.

Resolution: That the presentation be noted.

10. Wirral Children's Trust Commissioning Update

At the previous meeting a regular commissioning update was requested. Peter Wong updated the Board on progress. The progress is predicated on the appointment of a post. The job description has been drafted and further discussions need to take place.

The Children's Trust Executive has a continuing focus on developing the commissioning executive role and clarity over items that should be discussed at the executive. The draft project plan for preparing a new Children's and Young People's Plan (CYPP) has been discussed and is being developed from a commissioning angle.

The Children's Trust has some Commissioning Support Programme (CSP) support days available. Potential areas to be investigated are mapping of funding for services to support the CYPP and a facilitated workshop to analyse speech and language therapy.

Resolution: That the report be noted.

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11. Commissioning of Activity Fund Plus

Maureen McDaid presented the report which focused on commissioning to fill the outstanding gaps from the previous commissioning road. The key areas for development were 'Big Nights'. Big Nights are large scale events including Battle of the Bands or DJ and Disco Nights. They would provide a new experience in a safe environment for young people.

A new provider RDPO Enterprises were identified from the criteria. They have experience in Lancashire in organising large scale events and work in partnership with appropriate authorities. A Steering Board has been set up including partners such as the Police, Technical Services and Cultural Services to ensure effective development of the activities.

Resolution: That the Board approve the allocations as set out in the report.

12. Activity Fund Monitoring Report

Eileen Newman, Senior Lecturer, Liverpool John Moores University led the external monitoring of the Activity Fund. The purpose of the Activity Fund was linked to Aiming High for young people and tackling disadvantage. Young people were given opportunities for personal development and to engage with communities through activities.

The social and emotional benefits of the activities were outlined. The activities carried out through the activity fund also link to the Integrated Youth Support Strategy to focus on targeted activity and deliver the CYP objectives.

The external monitoring provided a very positive assessment of the programme. Administration of the events was excellent and all standards were met. Integrated working and effective planning was in evidence, and evaluation of the impact on the social and emotional development of young people was rated outstanding.

Resolution: That the Board note the report.

13. Staying Safe Strategy Group Annual Report

Due to time constraints this report was deferred to the next meeting.

Resolution: That the report is deferred to the next meeting.

14. Key Stage 2 Literacy Overview and Scrutiny Report

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Councillor Sheila Clarke requested that the Board review the literacy report and to contact her if there were any queries regarding the report.

Resolution: That the Board note the report.

15. Any other Business

Nothing to report.

16. Date and time of next meeting:

The meeting has been re-arranged from the 2nd July 2010, 9:00 – 12:00 to the 13th July 13:30 – 16:30.

WIRRAL CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD – 13TH JULY 2010

Report to the Children's Trust Board on Safeguarding Arrangements

1. Introduction and background

This report forms part of a regular update from the LSCB to the Children's Trust Board on key developments locally and nationally on regulatory reform, updates on progress of local Serious Case Reviews and key challenges for the partnership and agencies.

2. National reform and statutory guidance

The national framework for safeguarding, Working Together to Safeguard Children was published in March 2010. There was significant changes to this framework and the LSCB were provided with an implementation plan on these by the Strategic Service Manager – Safeguarding for consideration. The plan is as follows:

- LSCB membership: the lead elected member has attended the Board as 'participating observer', Adult Social Services have nominated a lead officer, Housing representative has been nominated, schools have become statutory members and Wirral Metropolitan College have been consulted and will be represented. One lay person has been recruited as a member of the Children in Care Council (CiC). An induction programme has been agreed with this member and an advert has gone out for the other member.
- Chapter 5 – Managing individual cases – work on policies and procedures re-draft has begun with the sub-committee of the LSCB to consider the changes required. The LSCB is considering contracting with an agency who provide web based procedures along with other north west authorities. A tendering process has already begun for this work. In addition agencies are reviewing their own part of the procedures to consider any changes required. The timescale for completing the written revision of the procedures is September 2010.
- Child Death functions of the Board- revisions of the child death procedures are being lead by the Designated Doctor with the Child Death Review Panel. These revisions mainly concern revised duties on Coroners (Coroners Amendment Rules 2008) and Registrars to inform the LSCB of any death of a child and further inform of Inquest or Post Mortems. There is a change in emphasis the definition of 'preventability' to include the term 'modifiable factors' which have contributed to the death.
- Relationship between the CTB and the LSCB –a draft Memorandum of Understanding has been presented to both the CTB and the LSCB. A final version of this is being presented to the CTB today following minor amendments.
- An LSCB published annual report - work has begun on this and the first draft will be available for the LSCB and the CTB, to coincide the annual review of the Children and Young People's Plan, which will capture an analysis of the needs of all children and young people in the area, areas for challenge and key developments. There is a specific role for Chief Executives and Leaders of Councils to ensure that they are satisfied with the safeguarding arrangements by making an assessment of the

effectiveness of local governance and partnerships in place for children. The Director of Children's Services has presented a report to the Local Authority Cabinet on proposals for developing this area. It is proposed that a Safeguarding Reference Group be established and membership includes the Chief Executive, the Leader of the Council, and all political party spokespersons. Officers will be the DCS, the Head of Branch and Strategic Service Manager-Safeguarding. This group will consider and sign off the Annual Report, progress on Serious Case Review action plans and safeguarding issues appertaining to any local authority services. Wirral LSCB will produce the first statutory report by October 2010.

- Serious Case Review reform and publication of Overview reports—LSCB were informed by the Minister, Mr. Loughton on the 10th June that there was to be statutory changes to the publication of SCR's. The new requirements are as follows: Overview Reports are to be published in full for those cases initiated after 10th June 2010. They have to be suitably anonymised to protect the individuals involved. There is an exception to this in that if by publishing it could affect the welfare of the child then consideration would need to be had to their welfare and rights to privacy. It also requires the Individual Management Reports should not be made publicly available. There is no change to the guidance on the Executive Summary.
- SCR's in Wirral –the LSCB initiated a SCR on a family of 4 children in February 2010. The final submission for this report is October 18th 2010 to Ofsted. Progress on the actions from CF (reported at the last CTB) is good with many of the key actions well underway with health, police, mental health and other agencies.
- The Munro national Review - this review is intended to improve child protection which began with the appointment of Professor Eileen Munro. Professor Munro is due to submit her final report in April 2011, an interim report in January 2011, and an initial report in September 2010. One major strand to the review is to improve the SCR function and consider alternative ways of learning from experience. In Professor Munro's Call for Evidence Wirral LSCB are submitting a report based on the collaborative work just undertaken with the Social Care Institute of Excellence, (SCIE). The LSCB were one of three pilots in the North West to develop an alternative approach to learning from cases. Regional dissemination events took place in June 2010 and a final report on the work will be received by the LSCB and thereon disseminated in September 2010.

3. Recommendations:

3.1 The Children's Trust Board note the points raised in this report and facilitate any necessary developments required to ensure standards and requirements are met.

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WIRRAL CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD – 13th July 2010

WIRRAL CHILDREN'S TRUST AND LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD
SAFEGUARDING PROTOCOL FINAL VERSION

1.0 Background

In March 2010 the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) published Working Together to Safeguard Children. This is guidance for inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in accordance with the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. These Acts are the primary legislation from which Working Together derives its statutory basis.

2.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Everyone shares responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. However it is vital that all partners who work with children are aware of and appreciate the role that each of them play in this area.

A draft protocol outlining roles and responsibilities for Wirral Children's Trust and the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) was presented to the Board on the 28th of May and was endorsed with minor amendments. This protocol was then presented to the LSCB on the 15th of June and has been endorsed with minor amendments.

The final protocol is now presented for endorsement by the board.

3.0 Recommendations:

3.1 That Wirral Children's Trust Board endorses the protocol.

3.2 That subject to endorsement by the LSCB Wirral Children's Trust Board endorse the embedding of the protocol into the Wirral Children's Trust Memorandum of Understanding which is reviewed each year.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 Wirral Children's Trust and Local Safeguarding Children Board Protocol

Protocol Between Wirral Children's Trust and Wirral Local Safeguarding Children Board**1.0 Aim**

- 1.1 The aim of the protocol is to ensure complete clarity about local accountabilities underpinned by effective local challenge.

2.0 Roles

- 2.1 Wirral Children's Trust (WCT) and Wirral Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) have important but distinctive roles in keeping children safe. It is not a hierarchical relationship. WCT is accountable for overseeing the delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). In progressing this plan the Trust is accountable for ensuring services deliver improved outcomes for children and young people.
- 2.2 LSCB is responsible for challenging each relevant partner of WCT, through the WCT Board, on their success in ensuring that children and young people are kept safe in the Borough.
- 2.3 In order to ensure the complementary roles of the two bodies and the necessary challenge the two bodies are chaired by different people.
- 2.4 The Director of Children's Services (DCS) and the Lead Member for Children's Services have central roles. The DCS has lead responsibility for improving outcomes for children in the Borough. The Lead Member is politically accountable for ensuring that the Local Authority (LA) fulfils its legal responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The Lead Member should provide the political leadership needed for the effective co-ordination of work with other relevant agencies with safeguarding responsibilities. The Lead Member will also take steps to assure themselves that effective quality assurance systems for safeguarding are in place and functioning effectively across services areas and levels of need.
- 2.5 The DCS is a member of both WCT and LSCB. The Lead Member is Chair of WCT and is a 'participant observer' of LSCB as described by statutory guidance Working Together (2010).
- 2.6 The LA Chief Executive and Council Leader also have critical roles to play. The Chief Executive must ensure that the DCS is fulfilling their managerial responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people; in particular by making certain that the relationship between the CTB and the LSCB is working effectively; that clear responsibility has been assigned within the LA and among WCT partners for improving services and outcomes; and that targets for improving safeguarding and progress against them are reported to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).
- 2.7 The Chief Executive and the Lead Member fulfil their responsibilities through monthly scrutiny meeting with the Head of Branch Children's Social Care which includes detailed evaluation of safeguarding including performance and human resources data. In addition there are quarterly meetings with the Lead member, LSCB Manager, Independent chair and the Director of Children's Services on safeguarding matters within the LSCB.
- 2.8 The wider public has an important role to play: keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility. WCT has actively sought the views of the local community and consulted children young people and their families when drawing up the CYPP.

- 2.9 From April 2010 LSCB arrangements will be opened up to wider public scrutiny through the appointment to the LSCB of two lay members drawn from the local community. This will support stronger public engagement in, and understanding of children's safety issues. The voice and experiences of young people will also affirm the work of LSCB by ensuring that one of the lay persons position is taken up by a member of the Children in Care Council.

3.0 LSCB Responsibilities

- 3.1 The LSCB is the decision making body for multi-agency safeguarding activity within Wirral. It is a statutory partnership and its work is directed by statutory guidance which dictates its functions. The DCS has a statutory responsibility for ensuring that an effective Safeguarding Children Board is in place for the local area.
- 3.2 The work of the LSCB falls into three broad areas, all of which aim to safeguard children and promote their welfare by:
- Protecting children from maltreatment;
 - Preventing impairment of children's health or development;
 - Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- 3.3 The LSCB is well positioned through its various quality assurance processes to advise, and where appropriate, challenge WCT arrangements. For example learning from Serious Case Reviews, Child Death Overview Panels, section 11 self assessments and multi-agency critical incident reviews.
- 3.4 From April 2011 the LSCB will publish an Annual report on the effectiveness of arrangements locally, and the contribution and activities of each local partner for keeping children safe as outlined in Working Together Guidance March 2010.
- 3.5 The LSCB will report on its safeguarding performance information on a quarterly basis to the WCT and LSCB. It will make recommendations from the monitoring and evaluation of safeguarding arrangements during the year.

4.0 Children's Trust Responsibilities

- 4.1 WCT is the statutory local partnership brings together organisations responsible for children's services. It is a thematic group of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).
- 4.2 It has responsibility for developing and publishing a Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). The plan sets out how CT partners co-operate to improve the well-being of children in the local area and will monitor how partners act in accordance with the plan.
- 4.3 WCT must ensure the work of all the strategy groups takes into account the safeguarding needs of children in the development of the CYPP.
- 4.4 WCT as part of its CYPP Annual Review will make an assessment of the effectiveness of partnership arrangements in supporting the best possible standards for safeguarding children And in its response WCT will ensure that any refresh to the plan include priorities identified by the LSCB.
- 4.5 WCT will seek approval from LSCB regarding any proposed commissioning arrangements which are linked to the factors which impact on safeguarding children, including compromised parenting.

5.0 Operational Arrangements

- 5.1 WCT and LSCB will jointly hold an annual event to meet with frontline staff which will explore the effectiveness of safeguarding at all levels of need.
- 5.2 The LSCB will report to the CT each quarter on the arrangements for local safeguarding by monitoring and scrutinising activity and offer robust challenge to partners and the Trust on its activity. It will provide an annual report setting out the assessment of local safeguarding and its findings and make recommendations for improvement. The LSCB will also reflect within the annual report priorities for commissioning of safeguarding activity
- 5.3 The following people are members of both WCT and LSCB Boards. This will ensure clear lines of communication:
 - Lead Member for Children's Services
 - Director of Children's Services
 - Director of Strategic Partnerships, Wirral Primary Care Trust.
- 5.4 Once agreed by WCT Board and the LSCB this protocol will be embedded in Wirral Children's Trust Memorandum of Understanding and will be reviewed annually with the Memorandum.

6.0 Accountability

- 6.1 The LSCB will request evidence from WCT as to its rigour in commissioning or developing services that Safeguard children and young people. LSCB will call member organisations of the Children's Trust to account should it have evidence that children are not being adequately safeguarded by one or more relevant partners. The resolution will require a formal response/ action from WCT within a specific timeframe which will be agreed mutually.

WIRRAL CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD – 13th JULY 2010

WIRRAL CHILDREN'S TRUST MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ANNUAL REVIEW

1.0 Background

The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 strengthened existing national guidance related to Children's Trust co-operation arrangements and placed the Children's Trust Board on a statutory footing from 1st April 2010. A Memorandum of Understanding was developed for Wirral Children's Trust in June 2009 to ensure that the structure and governance arrangements provide an effective and transparent framework and clarity of roles and responsibilities for partner organisations. The original memorandum was developed using Wirral Council Partnership Governance Framework, Audit Commission Children's Trusts tools and good practice in other areas. The Wirral memorandum has been used as a model of good practice by the Virtual Staff College in their training courses.

2.0 Annual Review

The memorandum is reviewed on an annual basis. It has been refreshed in light of national guidance and local changes. The protocol between the Trust and the Local Safeguarding Children Board has been embedded within the memorandum. The refreshed memorandum is now presented for endorsement by the board.

3.0 Recommendations:

3.1 That Wirral Children's Trust Board endorses the refreshed memorandum.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 Wirral Children's Trust Memorandum of Understanding



Wirral Children's Trust

Memorandum of Understanding

July 2010

DRAFT

Wirral Children's Trust Memorandum of Understanding

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Foreword

Children and young people are society's future and with them rest our hopes and aspirations. Supporting their interest and welfare is paramount. Through Wirral Children's Trust we will secure an active partnership of services, parents and carers, working together to deliver the best outcomes for all our children and young people and thus enabling them to fulfil their potential.

The purpose of this memorandum of understanding is to ensure that the structure and governance arrangements of Wirral Children's Trust provide an effective and transparent framework and clarity of roles and responsibilities and that effective use is made of public resources for the benefit of children and young people.

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Councillor Sheila Clarke
Lead Member for Children's Services

Howard Cooper
Director of Children's Services

<signatures when ratified>

Wirral Children's Trust Memorandum of Understanding

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 strengthened existing national guidance related to Children's Trust co-operation arrangements and placed the Children's Trust Board on a statutory footing from 1st April 2010. This memorandum reflects the statutory guidance "Children's Trusts. Statutory guidance on co-operation arrangements, including the Children's Trust Board and the Children and Young People's Plan". It establishes Wirral Children's Trust (WCT) arrangements for governance, integrated working, joint planning and commissioning, and accountabilities in order to deliver improved outcomes for Wirral's children and young people.

2.0 Statement of Commitment

- 2.1 The member organisations of WCT are committed to working together at every level to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of all children and young people in Wirral.

3.0 Aims of Wirral Children's Trust

- 3.1 *"Our vision is to enable Wirral's children, young people and families to access services quickly in order to be secure, healthy, have fun and achieve their full potential"*
- 3.2 The aim of WCT is to work across professional and agency boundaries to make a difference to the experience and life chances of children, young people and their families. The trust will agree priorities and actions for children's services ensuring safeguarding underpins all activity and provide a framework for the effective operation of local arrangements. The framework will support a focus on preventative and early intervention services and ensure service providers understand what is expected of them. Monitoring of performance will inform future planning and commissioning, ensuring clear strategic direction and providing value for money.

4.0 Partnership Principles

- 4.1 The members agree to work together actively to achieve the aims of WCT, on the basis of:
- visible commitment and 'ownership' by the various member organisations and individual representatives;
 - mutual trust and respect;
 - openness and transparency;
 - effective communication and accountability;
 - shared ownership of resources where appropriate;
 - combined expertise;
 - creative and innovative solutions to problems;
 - identification and sharing of best practice, based on mutual learning;
 - removal of barriers to equality of access and opportunity;
 - clear purpose, clarity of expectations and agreed targets for action;
 - effective decision-making;
 - shared mechanisms for risk management, monitoring, evaluation, reviewing and reporting on performance, progress and success;
 - allowing each constituent member unobstructed access to the audit records of the partnership, on request.

5.0 Governance & Accountability Arrangements

- 5.1 The governance and accountability arrangements set out in this document put into operation the duty to cooperate as set out in section 10 of the Children Act 2004 as amended by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.
- 5.2 This applies to all services provided or commissioned by WCT that support children and young people's 0 to 19 and specific groups of young people up to age 25.
- 5.3 WCT requires each partner agency to retain full responsibility for its statutory duties and functions at all times and allows for these duties and functions to be carried out through a system of joint planning and commissioning. This supplements existing organisational arrangements and provides additional robust accountabilities outside of existing partner agency arrangements.
- 5.4 The Board will take responsibility for setting the strategic direction for services to children, young people and their families. This includes setting priorities, joint planning and commissioning decisions; the alignment of resources at strategic level and agreeing service models based on service performance and agreed service specifications.
- 5.5 Through the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) the Board will act as the single coordination body for all children's services planning and commissioning arrangements and will be the focus for facilitating joint working leading to the integration of multi agency services for children and young people and their families.
- 5.6 The Board will be responsible and accountable for the performance and commissioning decisions made by all other planning and commissioning groups in children's services.
- 5.7 The Board will be accountable to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board for the actions it takes in ensuring that all children and young people in Wirral are adequately safeguarded.
- 5.8 WCT assumes all partners accept collective responsibility and accountability for all decisions made by the Board. However, within this collective responsibility and decision-making process it is recognised there are different levels of accountability and risk for individual agencies and organisations.

6.0 Decision Making

- 6.1 Each partner agency accepts collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Board. All decisions will be transparent and informed by open debate, advice, performance reporting and analysis, best practice, risk assessment and option appraisal.
- 6.2 Decision making will be by consensus, wherever possible, but if a consensus cannot be reached, decisions will be taken on a simple majority of those present and voting will be by a show of hands. In the event of a tied vote, the person chairing the meeting may exercise a second or casting vote.
- 6.3 The Children's Trust Executive (CTE) the multi-agency Strategy Groups and the District Boards will be responsible for providing advice to the Board to support the decision-making processes.

7.0 Challenge process

- 7.1 In exercising collective responsibility for all decisions made by the Board each partner agency will be open to challenge and scrutiny through the formal processes of the accountable body (the Council) and of the other agencies.

- 7.2 Progress on the delivery of the Children and Young Peoples Plan (CYPP) will be performance managed by the Board and an annual review will be published which is open to challenge by any interested party.

8.0 Partner Roles and Responsibilities

- 8.1 The Local Authority (Council) is responsible for leading WCT and the Council in the improvement of outcomes for all children and young people. In this respect the Council is the accountable body for WCT. The Council is responsible for the development and implementation of the CYPP as the single agreement between the partnership on priorities and actions for children and young people.
- 8.2 The Primary Care Trust (PCT) is responsible for ensuring that health provision meets the identified needs of children, young people and their families on behalf of WCT. The PCT is responsible for ensuring health provision is aligned to the priorities agreed in the CYPP, and for the commissioning of health service on behalf of WCT.
- 8.3 Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service are responsible for ensuring that their strategic planning encompasses the WCT vision and the priorities in the CYPP.
- 8.4 The Youth Offending Service (YOS), the police and probation service work together within the criminal justice system. They have roles in prevention of offending and re-offending, identification of suitable intervention programmes and identifying children and young people at risk of harm or other poor outcomes. Through the Youth Justice Board (YJB) the Youth Offending Service (YOS) is responsible for the production of the Youth Justice Plan. This plan must be consistent with WCT vision and with the priorities agreed in the CYPP. The Police are responsible for ensuring that the Local Policing Plan is consistent with the WCT vision and the priorities in the CYPP.
- 8.5 The Third Sector have a significant expertise in the delivery of services and in engaging children and families in identifying needs, innovative service models and commissioning priorities. Third Sector representation is responsible for informing WCT on these areas of expertise and for ensuring the sector has a voice in identifying priorities and actions in the CYPP.
- 8.6 Schools and Sixth Form and Further Education Colleges representatives are responsible for ensuring the sector inform and influence priority setting in the CYPP and advise the WCT on engagement with schools in Wirral.
- 8.7 Job Centre Plus representatives are responsible for ensuring their organisation inform, influence and advise the Board.

9.0 The Scope of Involvement

- 9.1 WCT Board will demonstrate clear links to other thematic partnerships through the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) to ensure that strategies are not fragmented and that different services share priorities and thinking. WCT will inform and influence the work of the LSP in regards to children, young people and families and ensure that these groups are reflected in within the Local Area Agreement (LAA). It will ensure that the CYPP is consistent with the strategic vision of the Sustainable Community Strategy.
- 9.2 The views of children and young people are at the centre of strategic planning and service design. WCT Board will ensure ongoing high quality consultation with children, young people and their families is undertaken to empower and engage the wider community. Specific consultation will be carried out during the preparation of the CYPP.

10.0 Role of the Director of Children's Services and Lead Member

- 10.1 The Director of Children's Services (DCS) is professionally accountable for the delivery across the Every Child Matters (ECM) five outcome areas for children and young people. The DCS together with the Lead Member (LM) has a key role in leadership, strategy and effectiveness of services. Both work to drive forward the development of a dynamic Children's Trust encompassing partnership working and to integrate and transform services.
- 10.2 The Lead Member exercises political accountability for the same range of services as the Director and is expected to ensure there is a clear focus on safeguarding.
- 10.3 Both the DCS and LM therefore have particular and distinct responsibilities as memberships of the Board. This entitles both the Director and Lead Member to hold other agencies to account for the joint planning and commissioning of integrated services.

11.0 Protocol between Wirral Children's Trust and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board

11.1 Roles

- 11.1.1 Wirral Children's Trust (WCT) and Wirral Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) have important but distinctive roles in keeping children safe. It is not a hierarchical relationship. WCT is accountable for overseeing the delivery of the CYPP. In progressing this plan the Trust is accountable for ensuring services deliver improved outcomes for children and young people.
- 11.1.2 LSCB is responsible for challenging each relevant partner of WCT, through the WCT Board, on their success in ensuring that children and young people are kept safe in the Borough.
- 11.1.3 In order to ensure the complementary roles of the two bodies and the necessary challenge the two bodies are chaired by different people.
- 11.1.4 The Director of Children's Services (DCS) and the Lead Member for Children's Services have central roles. The DCS has lead responsibility for improving outcomes for children in the Borough. The Lead Member is politically accountable for ensuring that the Local Authority (LA) fulfils its legal responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The Lead Member should provide the political leadership needed for the effective co-ordination of work with other relevant agencies with safeguarding responsibilities. The Lead Member will also take steps to assure themselves that effective quality assurance systems for safeguarding are in place and functioning effectively across services areas and levels of need.
- 11.1.5 The DCS is a member of both WCT and LSCB. The Lead Member is Chair of WCT and is a 'participant observer' of LSCB as described by statutory guidance "Working Together" (2010).
- 11.1.6 The LA Chief Executive and Council Leader also have critical roles to play. The Chief Executive must ensure that the DCS is fulfilling their managerial responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people; in particular by making certain that the relationship between the CTB and the LSCB is working effectively; that clear responsibility has been assigned within the LA and among WCT partners for improving services and outcomes; and that targets for improving safeguarding and progress against them are reported to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).

11.1.7 The Chief Executive and the Lead Member fulfil their responsibilities through monthly scrutiny meeting with the Head of Branch Children's Social Care which includes detailed evaluation of safeguarding including performance and human resources data. In addition there are quarterly meetings with the Lead member, LSCB Manager, Independent chair and the Director of Children's Services on safeguarding matters within the LSCB.

11.1.8 The wider public has an important role to play: keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility. WCT has actively sought the views of the local community and consulted children young people and their families when drawing up the CYPP.

11.1.9 From April 2010 LSCB arrangements will be opened up to wider public scrutiny through the appointment to the LSCB of two lay members drawn from the local community. This will support stronger public engagement in, and understanding of children's safety issues. The voice and experiences of young people will also affirm the work of LSCB by ensuring that one of the lay persons position is taken up by a member of the Children in Care Council.

11.2 LSCB Responsibilities

11.2.1 The LSCB is the decision making body for multi-agency safeguarding activity within Wirral. It is a statutory partnership and its work is directed by statutory guidance which dictates its functions. The DCS has a statutory responsibility for ensuring that an effective Safeguarding Children Board is in place for the local area.

11.2.2 The work of the LSCB falls into three broad areas, all of which aim to safeguard children and promote their welfare by:

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

11.2.3 The LSCB is well positioned through its various quality assurance processes to advise, and where appropriate, challenge WCT arrangements. For example learning from Serious Case Reviews, Child Death Overview Panels, section 11 self assessments and multi-agency critical incident reviews.

11.2.4 From April 2011 the LSCB will publish an Annual report on the effectiveness of arrangements locally, and the contribution and activities of each local partner for keeping children safe as outlined in Working Together Guidance March 2010.

11.2.5 The LSCB will report on its safeguarding performance information on a quarterly basis to the WCT and LSCB. It will make recommendations from the monitoring and evaluation of safeguarding arrangements during the year.

11.3 Children's Trust Responsibilities

11.3.1 WCT is the statutory local partnership brings together organisations responsible for children's services. It is a thematic group of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).

11.3.2 It has responsibility for developing and publishing a Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). The plan sets out how CT partners co-operate to improve the well-being of children in the local area and will monitor how partners act in accordance with the plan.

11.3.3 WCT must ensure the work of all the strategy groups takes into account the safeguarding needs of children in the development of the CYPP.

11.3.4 WCT as part of its CYPP Annual Review will make an assessment of the effectiveness of partnership arrangements in supporting the best possible standards for safeguarding children And in its response WCT will ensure that any refresh to the plan include priorities identified by the LSCB.

11.3.5 WCT will seek approval from LSCB regarding any proposed commissioning arrangements which are linked to the factors which impact on safeguarding children, including compromised parenting.

11.4 Operational Arrangements

11.4.1 WCT and LSCB will jointly hold an annual event to meet with frontline staff which will explore the effectiveness of safeguarding at all levels of need.

11.4.2 The LSCB will report to the CT each quarter on the arrangements for local safeguarding by monitoring and scrutinising activity and offer robust challenge to partners and the Trust on its activity. It will provide an annual report setting out the assessment of local safeguarding and its findings and make recommendations for improvement. The LSCB will also reflect within the annual report priorities for commissioning of safeguarding activity

11.4.3 The following people are members of both WCT and LSCB Boards. This will ensure clear lines of communication:

- Lead Member for Children's Services
- Director of Children's Services
- Director of Strategic Partnerships, Wirral Primary Care Trust.

11.4.4 Once agreed by WCT Board and the LSCB this protocol will be embedded in Wirral Children's Trust Memorandum of Understanding and will be reviewed annually with the Memorandum.

11.5 Accountability

11.5.1 The LSCB will request evidence from WCT as to its rigour in commissioning or developing services that Safeguard children and young people. LSCB will call member organisations of the Children's Trust to account should it have evidence that children are not being adequately safeguarded by one or more relevant partners. The resolution will require a formal response/ action from WCT within a specific timeframe which will be agreed mutually.

12.0 Leadership

12.1 Each Board member will act on behalf of their organisation as an ambassador for children services locally, regionally and nationally. Board members will take responsibility for ensuring the agreed actions are carried out and their agency/sector is fully informed about the work of WCT and engaged in the delivery of the CYPP.

13.0 Commissioning

13.1 The Board, supported by joint commissioners, will be responsible for the identification of need and the setting of priorities to support the development of integrated multi-agency services for all children, young people and their families. Commissioners will ensure there is a comprehensive up to date analysis of children and young people's needs upon which informed decisions on the design and commissioning of services can be based. They will

coordinate the implementation of the partnerships preventative framework by identifying shifts in activity and resource allocation that will enable the development of planned targeted interventions.

13.2 All planning and commissioning decision making will be informed by:

- Needs analysis
- Prevention priorities
- Performance
- Risk analysis

13.3 The Board will carry out an annual review of commissioning and evaluate how outcomes and services have been improved through the alignment and pooling of resources and jointly agreed priorities.

14.0 Performance Management

14.1 Each member of the Board will take full responsibility and accountability for the delivery of the five ECM outcomes. The specific responsibility for the performance management of the ECM outcomes will be held by the Children's Trust Executive (CTE).

14.2 The Board will review progress in achieving improved outcomes for all children on a regular basis. Management information reports will inform the Board of the progress being made in achieving the key targets set out in the CYPP, Local Area Agreement (LAA), National Indicator (NI) set and relevant areas of Wirral Council's Corporate Plan.

15.0 Locality Working

15.1 In ensuring that joint planning and commissioning priorities are relevant to the diverse communities in Wirral, the Board has established District Boards. These groups are accountable to the WCT Board.

16.0 Information Sharing

16.1 The Board will ensure that information sharing protocols are designed to enable intelligence gathering for effective needs analysis to be carried out on a continuous basis. Information sharing arrangements will also be developed to ensure the effective implementation of the common assessment framework (CAF).

17.0 Risk Assessment

17.1 On an annual basis the Board will undertake a formal risk assessment process in order to identify:

- The effectiveness of the Board's work.
- The impact the partnership is having on outcomes for children and young people.

18.0 Equalities and Inclusion

18.1 The Children's Trust will operate on the basis of principles that actively value the benefits of diversity and ensure fair treatment and equality of opportunity.

18.2 On an annual basis an equalities impact assessment will be carried out through the CTE alongside the review of the CYPP.

19.0 Dispute and Conflict Resolution

19.1 Members of the partnership:

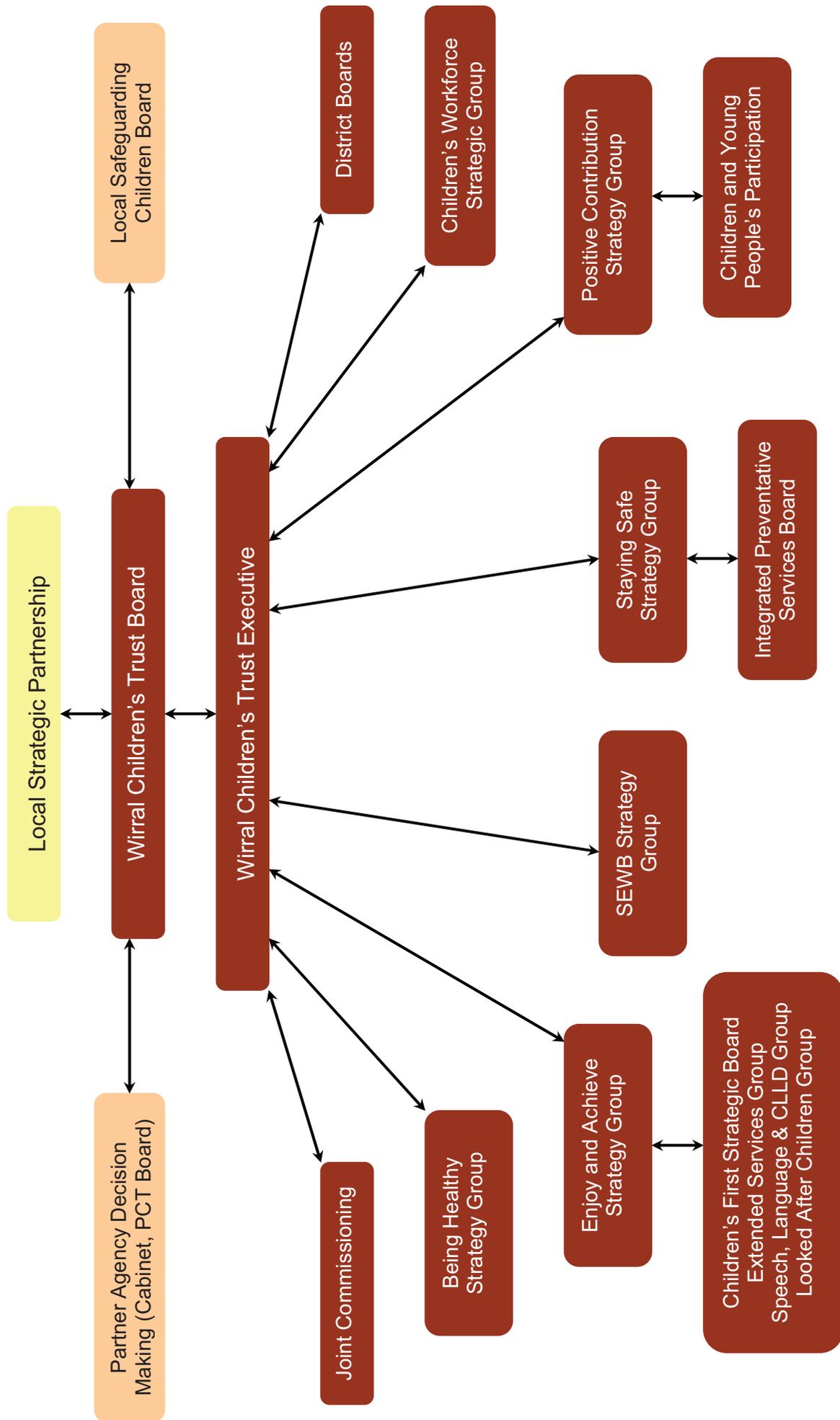
- Must not use their position improperly, confer on, or secure for themselves or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage.
- Must ensure that activities are not undertaken for political purposes
- Must not unduly influence any person in the paid employment of any of the partner agencies.

19.2 Issues of conflict within the partnership will be resolved initially by informal discussion. If this is not successful the issue will be referred to the Chief Executive of each agency who will meet to attempt to resolve the issue. If the issue is still not resolved appropriate alternative dispute resolution (ADR) will be considered.

20.0 Review of the Memorandum of Understanding

20.1 This memorandum of understanding will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Figure 1 The Structure of Wirral Children's Trust



21.0 Wirral Children's Trust Board

21.1 Role of Wirral Children's Trust Board

21.1.1 The Boards role is to provide leadership for the Children's Trust within a framework of effective controls. Each Board member will act as an ambassador for children services locally, regionally and nationally.

21.2 Terms of Reference

21.2.1 Board members will:

- Co-ordinate services for children and young people.
- Oversee the preparation, agreement, monitoring and review of the Children and Young People's Plan to meet both statutory requirements and local need.
- Ensure that children, young people and their families and carers are able to contribute effectively to the design and delivery of services for them.
- Determine the integrated strategies required to improve the outcomes for children's well-being with robust performance monitoring with regard to outcomes and impact.
- Agree joint commissioning strategies and be responsible for pooled budget arrangements.
- Create a shared culture and vision amongst partners.
- Identify and celebrate best practice.
- Ensure that there is appropriate challenge where partnership working becomes ineffective.
- Ensure that their agency/sector is fully informed about the work of the Board and engaged in the delivery of the CYP.
- Oversee the arrangements for the sharing of information about children and young people.
- Maintain a strategic link to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.
- Demonstrate involvement in the Sustainable Community Strategy and clear links to other thematic partnerships through the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).
- Monitor progress on the Children and Young People's block in the Local Area Agreement.
- Oversee inspection arrangements and support agencies to meet the requirements of the Ofsted Children's Services Inspection regime.
- Oversee the development of future governance arrangements and approve such arrangements.

21.3 Membership

21.3.1 Chair: Lead Member for Children's Services

21.3.2 Deputy: To be appointed by the board

21.3.3 All partners under a statutory duty to cooperate will be represented and other persons or bodies the CT board consider appropriate. Attendees to be nominated by their constituent body.

21.3.4 The membership will include representatives from the following:

- Elected members
- Wirral Council
- Wirral National Health Service organisations
- Merseyside Police
- Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service

- Job Centre Plus
- The Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector
- Primary and Secondary (including Special) Schools, Sixth Form and FE Colleges and School Forum representatives

21.3.5 The membership will be reviewed on an annual basis.

21.4 Meeting Arrangements

21.4.1 The Children's Trust Board will meet bi-monthly.

22.0 Wirral Children's Trust Executive

22.1 Role of the Children's Trust Executive

22.1.1 The CTE will operate as an executive of the WCT Board. Whilst the strategic leadership, accountability and agreement reside with the Board, the CTE works to support the Board through a process of delegated and devolved decision making powers. All proposals concerning key strategic developments will be presented to WCT Board for final approval.

22.2 Terms of Reference

22.2.1 Board members will take responsibility for:

- Delivering the identified needs of Wirral children and young people in terms of the five outcomes in the Children Act 2004.
- Developing the strategies required to improve the outcomes for children's well-being.
- The preparation and annual review of the Children and Young People's Plan
- Identifying best practice and proposing joint commissioning of services and identifying shared resources.
- Annual review of joint commissioning arrangements.
- Implementing service improvement priorities.
- Establishing the evidence base behind development proposals.
- Ensuring that agreed actions are carried out.
- Ensuring that the cross agency strategy groups are fully informed about the work of WCT and are engaged in the delivery of the CYPP.
- Disseminating a shared culture and vision amongst partners in the working groups.
- Preparation for the strategic engagement cycle and priority meetings with GONW.
- Performance management including the Local Area Agreement.
- Preparing for and evaluating practice to inform inspection arrangements including the Ofsted led annual Children's Services Assessment.

22.3 Membership

22.3.1 Chair: Director of Children's Services

22.3.2 Deputy: To be nominated by the Executive

22.3.3 The membership includes the Strategy Lead for each multi-agency strategy group and invited representatives.

22.4 Meeting Arrangements

22.4.1 The CTE will meet bi-monthly.

23.0 Strategy Groups

23.1 Role of the Strategy Groups

23.1.1 The multi-agency strategy groups (SG) are linked to the five ECM outcome areas for children and young people. They own the CYPP and are responsible for its delivery. They are accountable to WCT Board and the CTE.

23.2 Terms of Reference

23.2.1 The Strategy Groups are responsible for:

- The monitoring and reporting on progress. Issues regarding their respective National Indicators, LAA targets, CYPP priorities, allocated tasks groups and any other locally based targets agreed by the partnership.
- Receive information from and respond to requests from other groups and stakeholders.
- Make quarterly performance progress reports highlighting areas of poor performance, issues and risk.
- Develop opportunities for multi-agency involvement and networking to share best practice
- Provide support and information to other groups within the Trust.
- Maintain effective arrangements to consult with children, young people, families and carers, act on the results of the consultation and provide feedback.

23.3 Membership

23.3.1 Chair: Outcome area Strategy Lead

23.3.2 Multi-agency representation related to each outcome area, including family representation.

23.4 Meeting Arrangements

23.4.1 To be agreed by each group.

24.0 District Boards

24.1 Role of the District Boards

24.1.1 The District Boards chaired by an elected member provide the opportunity for those with an operational responsibility for providing services to children and young people to co-ordinate activity and ensure integrated working in a district. The boards operate as networks for existing groups and services supported by the District Manager who will feed information into the appropriate Strategy Group as necessary. The District Managers will support local networks via a range of engagement methods such as a formal District Board Meeting, linking into established groups across schools and GP surgeries and running workshops to ensure an appropriate response to local need. The networks will also develop working links with the Council's Area Forums and District Youth Forums and their membership. These networks are a conduit for providing a front line perspective in relation to the impact and success of the implementation of Children's Trust arrangements.

24.2 Terms of Reference

24.2.1 The District Boards are responsible for:

- Local needs analysis.
- The identification of priorities, which will contribute to the delivery of statutory requirements priorities as set out in the CYPP and local priorities where these are relevant.
- The monitoring and review of performance of the delivery of agreed priorities.
- The development of local preventative services.
- The coordination of the integration and deployment of preventative services in each locality.
- The promotion of collaborative partnership working at a local level.
- Ensuring that children, young people and their families are involved in informing all decision-making.
- To coordinate the participation of children, young people and their families in priority setting and service development.

24.3 Membership

24.3.1 Chair: Appointed Councillor

24.3.2 Additional members include:

Councillor from each Area Forum.
Youth Forum representative.
Extended School Cluster Lead.
District Manager.
Senior Social Care Manager.
Children and Young People's Department Head of Branch.
Senior representative from each partner agency.

24.4 Meeting Arrangements

24.4.1 The District Boards meet bi-monthly.

25.0 Wirral Children's Trust Support

25.1 The Children's Services Department Planning and Resources Branch will provide the following key functions to WCT Board and the CTE:

- Agenda.
- Minutes.
- Performance management reporting arrangements.
- Risk management arrangements.
- Seek appropriate contributions from partners to support the CT governance framework.
- If required send representation to advise groups in terms of processes relating to governance reporting and standard agenda items.



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WIRRAL CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD – 13th JULY 2010

THE CHILD POVERTY ACT 2010

1.0 Background

The Child Poverty Act 2010 which became law prior to the General Election, placed duties on local authorities in England and their named partner authorities. This report provides background to the Act and outlines how the requirements are being taken forward in Wirral.

2.0 The Child Poverty Act 2010

The previous Labour government's 2020 pledge for eradicating child poverty set out four aspirations:

- More families in work that pays, and with the support they need to progress;
- Financial support that is responsive to families' situations;
- Environments in which children can thrive; and
- Poverty in childhood no longer translating to poor experiences / outcomes.

Success in tackling child poverty requires the delivery of services tailored to local needs across a range of policy areas, referred to as the child poverty "building blocks" shown in Figure 1 below.

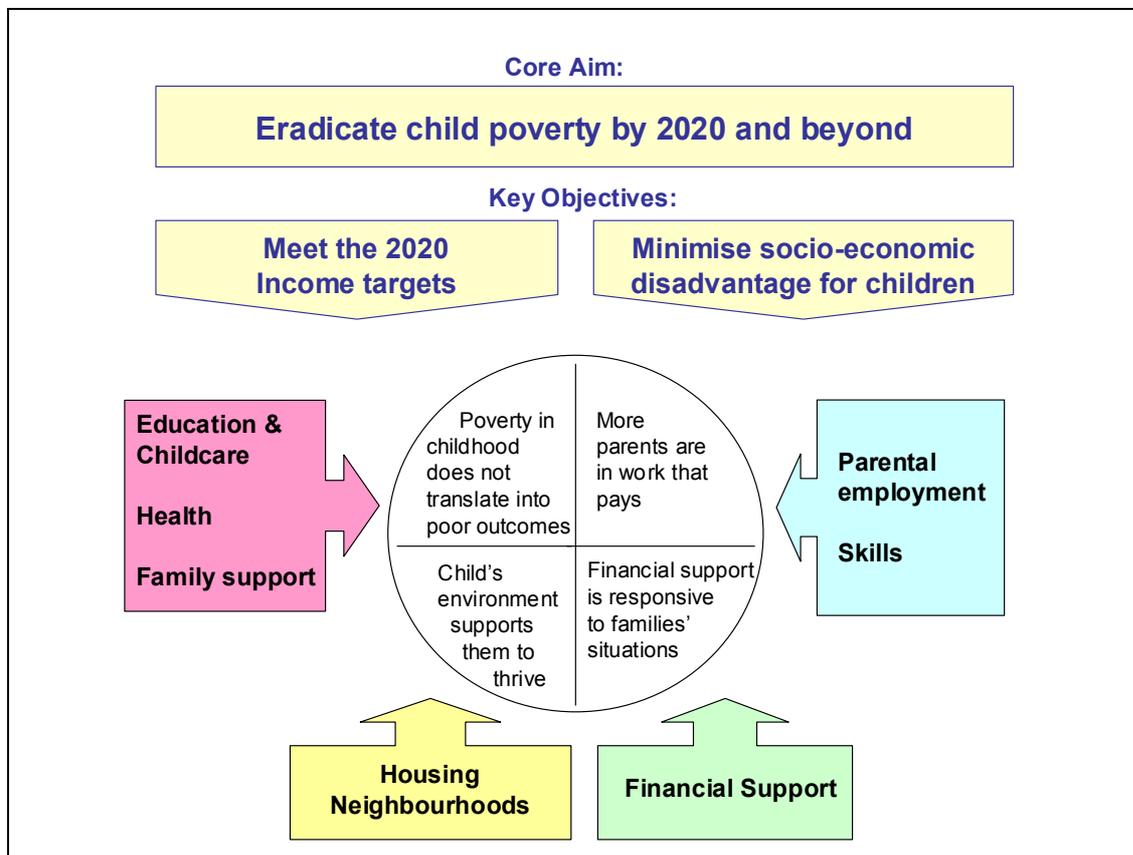


Figure 1: Child Poverty 2020 Building Blocks, Source Child Poverty Unit.

The Child Poverty Act enshrines the 2020 pledge in law to ensure that it remains priority for local partnerships and provide a framework for them to work in. It recognises that accelerating progress in tackling child poverty not only requires local partnerships to take action, but to ensure that this action is co-ordinated, comprehensive and prolonged, and leads to substantially better outcomes.

The Act sets four challenging UK-wide targets to be reached and sustained from 2020:

- **Relative poverty** – to reduce the proportion of children who live in relative low income (in families with income below 60% of the median) to less than 10 per cent.
- **Combined low income and material deprivation** – to reduce the proportion of children who live in material deprivation and have a low income to less than 5%.
- **Persistent poverty** – to reduce the proportion of children that experience long periods of relative poverty, (specific target to be set at a later date).
- **Absolute Poverty** – to reduce the proportion of children who live in absolute low income to less than 5%.

The Local Authority (LA) is expected to lead on the delivery of the duties but they must be delivered through Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP). Like approaches to safeguarding, child poverty is everybody's business. The Child Poverty Act introduces new duties on responsible local authorities in England and their named partner authorities to:

- Cooperate to put in place arrangements to work to reduce, and mitigate the effects of, child poverty in their local area;
- Prepare and publish a local child poverty needs assessment to highlight the drivers of child poverty in the local area and the characteristics of those living in poverty; and
- Prepare a joint child poverty strategy setting out measures that the local authority and each named partner propose to take to reduce, and mitigate the effects of, child poverty in their local area;
- Take tackling child poverty into account when preparing or revising Sustainable Community Strategies.

'The Coalition: our programme for government' sets out a commitment by the new government to maintain the goal of ending child poverty in the UK by 2020. The new coalition government have appointed Frank Field MP as a Child Poverty Advisor. He is leading a poverty review on behalf of the coalition Government. The Review on Poverty and Life Chances is charged with conducting a wide-ranging inquiry into poverty and developing recommendations to help poorer people.

3.0 Duty to Co-operate

The duty to co-operate recognises that, whilst the local authority should play a lead role in coordinating local partners, it cannot tackle child poverty alone and a range of other partners must play their role. A number of agencies are named as partner authorities in the Bill in relation to the responsible local authority:

The police, youth offending teams, and probation service;

- Transport authorities;
- Primary Care Trust and Strategic Health Authorities;
- Jobcentre Plus.

In addition there are many other organisations which are mentioned in the Bill but can play a critical role such as private and third sector service providers, charities, community groups, the housing sector and employers.

The guidance recognises that “the specific governance and management structures to enable and support the delivery of the child poverty agenda will vary according to local circumstances”. The suggestion is of a central board or group that brings together senior representatives of all the key organisations and takes responsibility for shaping and driving the child poverty agenda. The board need not be a new group: partners may cooperate through existing structures and forums. There is flexibility as to which group or forum takes responsibility for leading action on child poverty.

4.0 Developments in Wirral

Wirral has formed a child poverty officer working group with representation from Children and Young People’s Department, Strategic Development and Corporate Policy. The work is being co-ordinated centrally by the Head of Corporate Policy. The partnership approach will be formalised through the LSP governance review currently underway.

The City Employment Strategy Board has adopted child poverty as a key priority. Knowsley is the Child Poverty lead and the Employment and Skills lead in the Liverpool City Region (LCR) and is working with the component local authorities to deliver an LCR-wide needs assessment and Child and Family Poverty Strategy. Wirral has nominated representatives for the LCR Data Group and Advisory Group. Wirral officers are also members of the Government Office North West Child Poverty Network.

Data mapping for the LCR needs assessment is being delivered by Mott McDonald in conjunction with local authorities. A data mapping exercise is being carried out in Wirral to ensure that the needs assessment is aligned with other activities to avoid duplication and make best use of local intelligence.

Wirral’s Joint Child Poverty Strategy will need to outline how co-ordinated services will tackle child poverty up to 2020 and be refreshed every three years. The first strategy will be in place by April 2011. The development of the strategy aligns with the production of the new three year Children and Young People’s Plan (CYPP) 2011-14 and an integrated approach will be adopted in the development of the two documents. The Child Poverty Strategy will also be integrated with the Sustainable Community Strategy.

5.0 Recommendations:

5.1 That Wirral Children’s Trust Board note the report.

5.2 That Wirral Children’s Trust Board members make recommendations on partnership involvement in child poverty strategy developments.

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WIRRAL CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD –JULY 2010

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION STRATEGY GROUP REPORT TO THE BOARD

Introduction

The Making a Positive Contribution outcome area within the Children and young people's Plan aims to ensure young people are supported to positively make an impact on the decision making process about issues that affect them. There has been a significant amount of effort in the developing of this work which has resulted in young people being significant partners in the design and commissioning of services for children and young people. The remit of Making a Positive Contribution covers targeted support for young people involved in the Youth Offending service, the development of Healthy Schools to the provision of Universal developmental fun opportunities for children and young people. There are a number of partners integral to the successful implementation of the Positive Contribution Strategy and the range of opportunities available to children and young people reflects the significant contributions of partners from both the statutory and Voluntary, Community and Faith sector. Three priorities underpin the implementation of making a Positive Contribution:

- Fewer children and young people are involved in offending and antisocial behaviour.
- Children and young people have access to a range of appropriate play opportunities which meets their needs.
- Children and young people are actively engaged in community and democratic decision making process.

The Making a Positive Contribution strategy Group is chaired by the Principal Manager (Commissioning/ Participation), Wirral's Children and Young People's Department. Membership of the group is drawn from multi- agency representation relating to each priority group and others who have an interest and are able to influence the development of opportunities for the engagement of children and young people in the respective decision making process. Partners include Community safety, Connexions, Healthy Schools, Children's Social Care, Youth and Play Service, Special education Support service, Youth Offending Service, Brook, Young Carers, Learning and Achievement, Participation and Inclusion and the Voluntary Community and Faith sector.

One of the main functions of the Positive Contribution is to monitor and report on progress of the Making a Positive Contribution element of the Children and Young People's Plan, including issues regarding the respective national Indicators, Local area Agreement targets and other locally agreed targets. Meetings are held every six weeks with agreed performance updates timetabled on the agenda for each meeting when partners report on the areas for which they have responsibility.

Other functions of the group include:

- Co-ordination of participation activities formal/ informal
- Providing opportunities for multi agency involvement and networking to share good practice
- Identify with partners, opportunities for them to develop children and young people's decision making processes.
- Co-ordinate the Youth Voice Conference and Youth Parliament
- Maintain the infrastructure underpinning the development of decision making processes for children and young people

Relevant Performance Indicators

The following National Indicators (NI) are monitored through the making a Positive Contribution outcome group.

- NI 111 First –time entrants to the youth justice system aged 10-17
- NI 86 number of secondary schools as judges as having outstanding behaviour

- NI 45 Young Offenders engagement in suitable education, employment and training
- NI 46 Young offenders access to suitable accommodation
- NI115 Tellus Survey, the total number of young people reporting either frequent use of drugs, or alcohol or both is lower compared to the number of respondents in previous survey returns
- NI 57 Children and young people's participation in high quality PE and sport
- NI Young people's participation in positive activities
- 95% schools on Wirral achieve Healthy Schools Status – December 2009

Overview of progress June 2010

<p>Key recent achievements</p>	<p>Fewer children and young people are involved in anti social behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NI 111 – FTE's - For 2008/09 the PNC data shows 442 FTE's which equates to a rate per 100,000 of the 2007 local population of 1341. The target rate was 1600. This equates to a reduction of 17% overall when comparing 2008/09 with the 2007/08 baseline. Note: the PNC data for 2009/10 has not yet been published by the YJB. • Wirral YOS has successfully exceeded the local target set for 2008/09. In fact Wirral YOS has already exceeded the 2010/11 target. • The introduction of four youth hubs to act as a focus for district planning for provision of positive activities for young people. • Positive Futures has achieved Gold level in a Home Office assessment of its work in producing positive outcomes for young people • Effective use of Restorative Justice to reduce the number of schools exclusions • 11 outdoor play areas developed through consultation with children have been improved and are open <p>Children and Young people have access to a range of appropriate play opportunities which meets their needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More outdoor play areas developed through consultation with children. • 244 children were surveyed across the borough to find out how safe they felt when playing out. <p>Through the strategic commissioning, the commissioning group have been able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the strategic planning, delivery and evaluation of a District Youth Offer • Give support to provide programmes which respond to the needs and wants of young people • Further develop links with a range of providers, including the voluntary, community and faith sector and Local Authority
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Children and young people are actively engaged in the community and democratic process

- 220 children at 11 feeder schools asked their views on the design of play areas
- 77 Primary, Secondary and Special schools surveyed on play activities within schools
- 650 pupils surveyed on their individual play experiences
- 5 Neighbourhood studies undertaken asking 130 children about access to play and knowledge of play facilities in their local community.
- 100% of Wirral Schools reached National Healthy School Status-three months ahead of schedule.
- To further support pupil consultation Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 Healthy Schools' pupil panels have been developed and held on a termly basis to support areas such as transition. These panels link into the Key Stage 4 panel which has run for many years. All pupil panel members link into school councils and have reported changes that have taken place as a result of attending the panel meetings range from additional play equipment being purchased to friendship schemes being developed. A wide range of partners have attended the meetings for consultation, to deliver training and development of resources eg DAAT, Targeted and Mental Health Services in schools (TaMHS) pilot and the Young Carers Liaison Officer.
- Effective strategic decision making by young people on the Youth Opportunity Fund as evidenced in the following decisions:
 - Commission programmes tackling Teenage Pregnancy.
 - Purchasing scooter to help young people who are NEET to be able to have transport to employment

- Development of Children in Care Council
- Development of Wirral's Pledge to children in care.
- Involvement of parents/ carers and children in development of activities as part of Aiming High for Disabled Children.
- Between the period of March 2009 and March 2010 the Young People's Interview Panel have interviewed candidates ranging from entry level Social Workers up to new roles such as Practice Managers, Advanced Social Work Practitioners and Local Safeguarding Children's Board Manager.
- The young people have devised and firmly established a standard set interview for Social Workers based on previous experiences which include interactive exercises, a written exercise, a group discussion and a young person's centred skill base exercise.
- Effective strategic decision making by young people on the Youth Opportunity Fund Grant Panel, evidenced through them funding programmes which targeted national and local priorities, i.e. reducing teenage pregnancy, reducing young people who are NEET, increasing young people's participation in positive activities.

Key issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring schools are part of the consultation/ decision making process. • More engagement by young people from priority groups • IYSS – Integration of a number of services into new structure • Government economic measures reducing funding to Children's Services
Key challenges ahead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness across the Trust about issues linked to involvement of young people in decision making and consultation. • Further develop links between schools councils' and the five Strategy Group • Sustaining work undertaken to reduce schools exclusions • IYSS - Integration of a number of services into new structure
Risks to outcome delivery and proposed actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of clarity about the funding of Youth opportunity Fund and Youth Capital fund • Funding of a number of intervention programmes finish in March 2011 • Integrated Youth Support Service stream lining of services. • Grant Funding ends march 2011. • Play Builder programme grant now not ring fenced, so potentially more vulnerable
Areas requiring further partnership involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of work with schools via schools councils to promote more engagement by young people • To ensure full representation by young people from the minority ethnic communities' development links with relevant organisations.
Equalities impact assessment areas for development and progress made	<p>Following and assessment of current and previous work identified in the Children's Plan, Work with young people with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities has been identified as a priority for the Positive Contribution Group 2010-2011.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YOS Participation Group needs to recruit new young people onto the group as a number of previous members have now left the

	service.
Areas for promotion /publicity / communication / engagement	<p>Effective use of Restorative Justice</p> <p>Effective involvement of parents/ carers and children in commissioning of activities for Aiming High for disabled children.</p> <p>Reduction of the number of First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice System</p> <p>Effective strategic decision making by young people</p>

Areas for Reporting Focus

Outcomes from Young people's involvement in Decision Making

There are clear outcomes for young people in how the Grant Panel decided to manage this year's Youth Opportunity Fund. Applications to the general fund with emphasis on priority areas, has meant that projects funded are contributing towards:

- Reducing teenage pregnancy
- Increasing awareness of substance and alcohol misuse
- Increasing awareness of homelessness and reducing the number of young people who become homeless
- Music, Arts and Media projects for young people
- Environmental projects which benefit the community

Through the strategic commissioning, the commissioning group have been able to

- Increase young people's access to leisure activities
- Increase young people's access to a variety of forms of transport
- Promote young people's use of public transport
- Facilitate organisations working together for the benefit of young people
- Increase young people's participation in a range of opportunities
- Reduce the number of young people who are NEET
- Reduce the overall cost of leisure time activities
- Increase the general mobility of young people
- The number of young people who have benefited from YOF has increased due to the strategic use of the funds
- Some of the transport schemes funded by the commissioning group will benefit young people after April 2010, potentially for a number of years

Outcomes for the young people on the commissioning group have been far reaching. Increasing their knowledge on the local and national context has proved to be beneficial, not only by informing their decision making but also that they are now cascading this information to their peers on the other decision making groups that they attend locally, regionally and nationally. Being able to share learning with other young people in order to gain their views has resulted in young people now having a good working knowledge of policies and targets and how they can ensure that young people's voices are heard.

- The commissioning group now have a better understanding of youth provision across all four districts, including the imbalance of provision linked to areas of deprivation and high population.

Young people's involvement in decision making has contributed to national and local initiatives

- The targets for Healthy Schools have been realised before the national deadline
- The Children –in - Care Council has been established and the Youth Pledge published

The Impact of Preventative measures to Reduce the Number of First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System

- Wirral YOS has successfully exceeded the local target set for 2008/09. In fact Wirral YOS has already exceeded the 2010/11 target.
- The Police National Computer (PNC) rate published by the Youth Justice Board for 2007/08 shows a rate of 1618 compared to a rate of 1341 for 2008/09. This equates to a **reduction of 17%** overall when comparing 2008/09 with the 2007/08 baseline. This far exceeds the 6% reduction set over the three year target period.
- Although the indicator will be reported on **annually**, data is to be submitted on a quarterly basis to allow areas needing support to be targeted.
- The data for this indicator will be submitted using the Police database PNC.
- The use of Restorative Justice to reduce school exclusions

Brief SWOT Analysis of the Outcome Area

Strengths	Weaknesses:
1. Good focus on priorities 2. Effective planning to meet priorities 3. Partnership working	1. Level of involvement with schools 2. Lack of universal perspective on work of strategy group - business not relevant to all group members 3. Lack of breadth in groups of young people engaged in decision making/ consultation 4. IYSS \ TYS – Duplication of services to be addressed by new integrated structure
Opportunities:	Threats:
1. Change in national policy 2. Use information gained from Strategy group to influence future service planning 3. Use information from positive contribution group to inform work of other outcome groups. 4. Development of Teen Wirral website 5. Positive contribution group to formalise its	1. Change in national policy 2. Not enough information about strategy group is in the public domain 3. Government economic measures reducing funding to Children's Services

position on leading on youth engagement.	
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Summary

Progress across the Positive Contribution area has been good. There have been a number of achievements which have contributed to positive outcomes for young people. Young people are able to identify where they have affected decisions and improved outcomes for young people. There is still work to be done such as the engagement with young people from priority groups. There is however a good foundation from which future work will develop.

Recommendations:

That Wirral Children's Trust Board endorse the report.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Making a Positive Contribution Priority Framework

Appendix 1 Making a Positive Contribution Framework

<p>Children and Young People's Plan Positive Contribution Priorities 2009/10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fewer children and young people are involved in anti social behaviour.• Children and young people have access to a range of appropriate play opportunities which meets their needs.• Children and young people are actively engaged in community and democratic process.
<p>Wirral Council Corporate Plan 2008-2013 Making a Positive Contribution Linked Aims</p> <p>Objective 4 To Raise the Aspirations of Young people</p>
<p>Local Area Agreement Related Indicators</p> <p>NI 111 First –time entrants to the youth justice system NI 110 Young people's participation in Positive activities Local Indicator 1700a –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The percentage of young people participating in youth work.• The percentage of young people achieving outcomes from their participation in youth work.

WIRRAL CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD – 29 MAY 2010

STAYING SAFE STRATEGY GROUP REPORT TO THE BOARD

Introduction

The Staying Safe outcome area within the Children and Young People's Plan aims to improve children's safety and to narrow the gap in outcomes experienced by our most disadvantaged children through the following five priority areas:

- More children grow up in secure, stable families where they belong, either through receiving timely, earlier intervention and support within their communities, or through belonging to permanent substitute families
- The incidence of anti social behaviour, risk taking and harmful behaviour experienced by children and young people is reduced
- More children are safe at home, at school and in the community, including reducing road traffic accidents and bullying
- Children in care are safe and supported
- The Government's action plan in response to Lord Laming's review of the protection of children in England is implemented.

The Staying Safe Strategy Group is chaired by the Head of Branch Children's Social Care, the vice chair is the Strategic Service Manager (Safeguarding & Review). The Group meets on a six weekly basis and has broad multiagency representation across the Children's Trust, with all required agencies attending, each demonstrating great commitment to delivering the plan. Meetings are well attended, with approximately 25 people at each meeting.

One of the main functions of the Staying Safe Strategy Group is to monitor and report on the Staying Safe element of the Children and Young People's Plan including issues regarding the respective National Indicators, LAA targets, allocated task groups and any other locally based targets agreed by the partnership. At each meeting key specified target areas are reported, with a focus on demonstrating the impact on improved outcomes for children and families, and where applicable evidenced through an improvement in local or national indicators. At each meeting members share information from their host agency in the pursuit of improved joined up activity, to achieve intended outcomes and reduce gaps and overlaps in delivery.

The Strategy Group receives information, and where appropriate, reports from the following groups:

- Parenting Steering Group
- Common Assessment Quality Assurance Group
- Kooth.com Steering Group
- Fostering Task Group
- Adoption Task Group
- Anti bullying steering group
- Road Safety Strategy Group
- Multiagency Risk Assessment Committee (MARAC)
- Aiming High for Disabled Children Executive Group
- Operation Stay Safe
- Youth Justice Board

The Staying Safe Strategy Group also reports to the Local Children's Safeguarding Board, to discharge it's broader responsibility to safeguard children who are at risk, and for whom measures are required to increase their likelihood of achieving good outcomes.

A major challenge for the partnership is to safely reduce the numbers of children in care; this is a Council priority, and a target within the Local Area Agreement. In recognition of the fact that a number of major strands of activity affect the improved capacity to support children and young people with their families, in their communities, a new Board has been established to give increased focus to four specific strands of work, this is the Integrated Preventative Services Board. The Board, comprising senior NHS Wirral representation, the Chairs of the LINK Forum (voluntary, community and faith sector), and the three operational Heads of Branch from the Children and Young People's Department has been established and will meet monthly to develop strategies to deliver joined up preventative services on the ground through the delivery of the following projects: Integrated Youth Support, Co-located Area Teams, Children's Centres, and the Parenting Strategy. The Board will both report into the Staying Safe Strategy Group and the Children's Trust Executive.

In addition the Staying Strategy Group is aligned to and informed by the development of the Children in Care Council and the Corporate Parenting Group (which will be in place 2010/11, developing from the former Virtual School Governing Body).

At the last two meetings of the Staying Safe Strategy Group in April and May 2010, there has been a specific focus on evidencing the impact of implementing strategies and policies to intervene in an appropriate way with vulnerable children and families. A recommendation from a recent Serious Case Review has been to undertake a multiagency audit of vulnerable children to determine whether they are receiving appropriate multiagency intervention through the Team Around the Child approach, and whether these children receive appropriate Children's Social Care intervention should their needs escalate. A number of key strategic actions are emerging which will inform future work of the Strategy Group.

The terms of reference determined by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board are to:

- Promote the availability of services on Wirral in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- Ensure all agencies understand their own accountability in relation to safeguarding;
- Raise public awareness of the broader safeguarding issues such as bullying smoking, alcohol and drug misuse;
- Promote a wider preventative programme to reduce environmental harm, such as reducing road traffic accidents, infant mortality and improve safer play areas;
- Report to the Board via the Chair on aspects of promoting child welfare.

Relevant Performance Indicators

The following National Indicators (NI's) are monitored through the Staying Safe Strategy Group:

- NI 59 Initial assessments for children's social care carried out within 7 working days of a referral.
- NI 60 Core assessments for children's social care carried out within 35 days of their commencement
- NI 61 Stability of looked after children adopted following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption
- NI 63 Stability of placements for looked after children: length of placements
- NI 68 Referrals to Children's Social Care going on to an initial assessment
- NI 32 Repeat incidents of domestic violence
- NI 43 Young people within the Youth Justice System receiving a conviction in court who are sentenced to custody
- NI 19 Rate of re-offending by young offenders
- NI 111 First time entrants to the Youth Justice System age 10-17 (reported through Positive Contribution)
- NI 64 Child Protection Plans lasting 2 years or more

- NI 65 Children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time.
- NI 67 Child protection cases which are reviewed within the required timescales.
- NI 70 Hospital injuries caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries to children and young people.
- NI 71 Children who have run away from home / care overnight (measured from 2009 onwards)
- NI 48 Children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents
- NI 69 Children who have experienced bullying
- NI 66 Looked after children's cases which are reviewed within the required timescales
- NI 58 Emotional and behavioural health of children in care (reported through Being Healthy)

Overview of progress May 2010

<p>Key recent achievements</p>	<p>More children grow up in secure, stable placements where they belong, either through receiving timelier, early intervention and support within their communities, or through belonging to permanent substitute families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly data reports produced to monitor the completion of Common Assessments (CAF) for the full year 2009/10 and ongoing (684 recorded during 2009/10), monthly quality audit meetings are held to monitor the quality of CAF's (improvement in those rated good or excellent from 34% June 2009, to 44% in February 2010). A revised Integrated Working Guide has been published. • National Co-location fund secured to co-locate all Area Teams, following successful implementation of CWDC Remodelling social work delivery pilot (ongoing), Area Team structure permanently established with 7.5 Area Team Leaders and 7.5 Information Sharing Co-ordinators now in post. • Youth Rehabilitation Order (YRO) implemented, alongside the Scaled Approach, to increase flexible proportionate responses to young people who offend. • Multi – Systemic Therapy implemented to support children on the edge of care or custody. • Family Nurse Partnership has attached Health Visitors in Area Teams with new health screening to allow for early alert to health, speech and language difficulties. • 21 out of 24 children adopted were placed within 12 months of the decision being made, 87.5%. Overall 48 children have achieved permanence through Adoption or Special Guardianship. • Parenting and Early Intervention Programme Co-ordinator in post since January 2010, providing training to deliver a coherent approach to supporting parents. • The “front door” into Children’s Social Care has been strengthened through the appointment of a dedicated Manager, increased social work capacity, improved systems and processes for receiving referrals and feeding back. <p>Reduce the incidence of anti social, risk taking and harmful behaviour experienced by children and young people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MARAC repeat cases reduced to 12% (NI 32) – nationally 23% (December 2009). Improved information sharing between the Family Safety Unit and the Central Advice and Duty Team.
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- The Risk Taking Behaviour pathway is in place in Arrowe Park Hospital Accident and Emergency Department. Between April > December 2009 80 young people under the age of 16 attended following the ingestion of alcohol, 36 took up the offer of an appointment with Response, 13 engaged with the services, the take up is informing future developmental plans.
- 12 Stay Safe Operations took place between June > November 2009. 3,264 engaged with a variety of agencies. 12 young people were moved to a place of safety, none required the use of legislative powers.
- Merseyside protocol for children missing from home reviewed, endorsed by the LSCB and issued following national guidance. Safer Futures project re-commissioned and awarded to the current provider (Barnardos) – this is a service for children missing from home / care, sexual exploitation and sexually harmful behaviour).
- Safe sleeping guidelines ratified across the partnership and delivered to midwifery and Health visiting staff. Awareness raising event in local shopping centre in October 2009, promotional leaflets given to local residents.

More children are safe at home, at school and in the community including reducing road traffic accidents and bullying.

- 16 workshops delivered for parents and carers on cyber bullying during Wirral anti bullying week. Draft Policy Statement is undergoing stakeholder consultation with a launch scheduled for September 2010.
- 244 children and young people consulted on what would make them feel safe when playing out. Information used to develop training programmes for play staff to promote protective behaviours, road safety and promoting positive behaviour. Opportunities are built into the Youth Voice Conference and Youth Parliament for young people to tell us where they are concerned about safety. Feedback is used to inform programmes in youth clubs and commissioned services. Termly Healthy Schools Pupil Panels are a forum for expressing concerns and contribute to consultation to policy and practice.
- Child Safety Scheme with additional capacity has been delivered from April 2010.
- Road safety strategy continues to be implemented.

Children in care are safe and supported

- Aiming High for Disabled Children short break programme continues to be implemented, which is low risk rated by external regulator due to it's impact and progress being made. A strong parent forum, good governance structure and workstreams are in place. New services have been commissioned with full parental engagement, and services are being delivered to a wider service user base.
- Practice review has been completed at two "adequate" rated residential homes (for children with a disability) by a team external to the homes; improvement plan in progress.
- Adoption Team has increased capacity to deliver permanence through adoption / Special Guardianship, the Team is now the Adoption and Permanence Team. Fostering Service retained "good" ofsted rating, and mainstream children's home continues to be rated "good"
- Independent Placement Panel monitors the use of high cost independent sector residential placements, numbers have reduced from 52 in April 2009 to 47 in April 2010.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-located Transition Team with the Department of Adult Social Services in place from January 2010. At the time of inception 49 young people aged 16 plus allocated to the Team, 116 young people aged 14 plus to receive joint planning from the Team. <p>Implement the government action plan in response to Lord Laming’s review of the protection of children in England.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LSCB has reviewed capacity to deliver local and national requirements: Independent Chair recruited; LSCB Business Manager post established, recruitment underway; independent Chair of Serious Case Review Panel commissioned on a case by case basis, new CAF / QA Manager recruited to replace previous post holder, Lead member now a “participating observer”, Adult Social Services senior representative recruited to the LSCB. • Review of Children’s Trust and LSCB relationship following national Working Together consultation carried out in January 2010. NHS Wirral and WUTH reviewed safeguarding capacity against national guidance (NICE) and capacity increased. • Wirral LSCB taking part in Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) pilot for improving Serious Case Review framework.
Key issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering excellent short break services for Children with a disability within the Aiming High for Disabled Children framework; review the directly provided in house services, within value for money framework. • Fully implement and embed the lessons from Serious Case Reviews to continuously improve safe systems for responding to vulnerable Wirral children. • Develop a robust operating framework for the joint Transitions Team, with a simplified referral pathway to support accessibility and information sharing with young people and their families. • Review and revise the local procedures for responding to Children in Need (Section 17 Children Act 1989) • Continuously focus on what works, incorporating children and young people’s views into each development plan. • Implement the Corporate Parenting Group to oversee the development of improved services to children in care. • Responding to increasing levels of vulnerable children who require services to achieve their full potential. • Delivering coherent locally based multiagency services which reduce the need for children, young people and families to repeat telling their story; strengthening the role of the lead professional, making sure that intervention and services provided are focused and effective in directly responding to needs, in partnership with others.
Key challenges ahead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safely reducing the number of children in care, through timely progression of children’s plans, so that they achieve permanence at home, through adoption or Special Guardianship, or for a small number of older adolescents secure long term fostering placements. • Availability of qualified and skilled practitioners to deliver services, especially qualified social workers. • Recruitment to all new management posts within the new Social Care structure. • Embed the Area Team Model alongside other locally delivered services in geographical localities such as Children’s Centres and Extended Services.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting the increased demand for intervention and support to respond to children and families with complex needs. • Improve information sharing and continue to reduce “silo” working across all agencies to meet the needs of children and families. • Continuously review thresholds for intervention to ensure children and families are receiving the right level of intervention proportionate to their needs. • Continuously strive to deliver safe and effective services which are driven by children’s needs and which are fully compliant with local policies and procedures; national legislation and regulation. • Service redesign within existing resources to meet aspirations for effective and efficient services.
Risks to outcome delivery and proposed actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to recruit to key posts to deliver action plan and shortage of staff in key outcome areas e.g. social workers. Service redesign through implementation of remodelling pilot to increase the time social workers spend with children, by clarifying and confirming the role of Social workers, Team Support Officers, Family Support Workers and Area Team members. • Sustainability and commitment of available funding/resources within core business to drive forward key actions.
Areas requiring further partnership involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint commissioning and service design of provision for children with a disability, which are value for money and support children to achieve good outcomes. • Joint planning and resourcing to meet the needs of the most vulnerable children who are in care. • Development of the Corporate Parenting Plan to respond to the needs of children in care; and joint commitment to delivering the Children in Care Pledge. • Joint commitment to deliver joined up preventative services to respond to children and families when they first experience difficulties. • Increased clarity about roles and responsibilities in responding to vulnerable children’s needs. • Sustaining and further developing a culture of learning, open, transparent and critical challenge, so that we all strive for the very best outcomes for each and every child.
Equalities impact assessment areas for development and progress made	<p>Areas for development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on safeguarding of disabled children • Improve the knowledge and awareness of staff working in children’s social care on equality and diversity issues • Review promotional material to ensure they reflect the diversity of communities in Wirral and especially make disabled children more visible • Children’s wishes and feelings to be included in service planning • Ensure the needs of fathers are included in service delivery • Develop the skills of foster carers to meet the needs of unaccompanied asylum seeking children <p>Progress made</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-agency sub group of LSCB to be set up that will focus on the needs of disabled children • Increased engagement of fathers through groups targeting their involvement and generally creating more male friendly environments • Children in Care Council set up which includes representation of

	<p>disabled, black and racial minorities and gay/lesbian young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children in care have contributed to the development of the children and young peoples plan
Areas for promotion /publicity / communication / engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public engagement in the safeguarding agenda, raising awareness about what to do if you are worried about a child. • Recruitment of foster carers and adoptive parents from diverse backgrounds • Continued engagement with young people about what they feel will increase their safety.

Areas for Reporting Focus

1. NI 68 Percentage of referrals to children's social care going on to initial assessment

It is important that local authorities respond to and address concerns in a timely and efficient way and ensure that all referrals to Children's Social Care are followed up where appropriate. This indicator is a proxy for several issues: the appropriateness of referrals coming into Children's Social Care, which can show whether local agencies are working well together; and the thresholds which are being applied in Children's Social Care at a local level.

The calculation is the percentage of the number of children referred into Children's Social Care during the year. Provisional performance at the end of Quarter 4 is 71.7% (an increase from 60.4% at the end of Quarter 2). Performance shows in year improvement. This is attributable to:

- Recruiting a dedicated Manager to provide managerial oversight at the Central Advice and Duty Team; this Team, receives all incoming referrals. Prior to July 2009 managerial oversight was provided by a rota of Assessment Team Managers. Following review, the dedicated Team Manager post was established since there was concern about the Assessment Team Manager's capacity to sustain this work away from their substantive posts managing locality Assessment Teams, where social workers require on site support, managerial direction and supervision. Also, when the Assessment Team's are pressurised and busy, this may increase the potential for more referrals not to be accepted for an Initial Assessment based on capacity, as opposed to decisions being made based on a clear determination of children's needs against the threshold criteria.
- Recruiting additional social workers, and maintaining, wherever possible, a full complement of social workers in each Assessment Team, through a monthly rolling recruitment programme and providing a safe service by covering maternity leave, and temporary vacancies where required. Providing additional training and supervision for Newly Qualified Social Workers, as part of the Children's Workforce Development Council programme, and closely monitoring caseloads; taking remedial action if caseloads are becoming too high.
- Scrutinising incoming work through a weekly meeting, chaired by the Strategic Service Manager, to determine whether thresholds for accepting work have been applied consistently to all new children referred.
- Re-clarifying guidance about when a contact with Children's Social Care should be determined to be a referral, as opposed to a request for simple information or signposting to a more appropriate service.
- Focusing on continuously improving practice through a fortnightly Contact, Referral and Assessment Meeting, where each Team's action plan is reviewed.

Additional actions to accelerate the pace of change include:

- Continuing to implement the revised Children's Social Care management structure, this includes 4 Principal Team Managers commencing work in their new posts from 1 April 2010, and completing further recruitment activity to fill the remaining 4 posts.
- Implementing increased Area Team Leader capacity from 1 February 2010 (increased from 5.5 fte to 7.5 fte) and rolling out the co-location of Area Teams from 1 September 2010.

This is to increase the support in each Area to deliver early preventative services to children and families who need multi-agency support, (but not at a level requiring Children's Social Care intervention) through CAF and Team Around the Child (TAC). Raising the profile and visible presence of Area Teams in the community and with professionals in each locality.

- Launching the revised Integrated Working Guide across the partnership to ensure consistent understanding of thresholds, and when it is appropriate to refer a child to Children's Social Care.
- Embedding improved casefile auditing processes and in addition, auditing children's cases who are receiving support through Team Around the Child (TAC) and those children receiving support from Children's Social Care, with multi-agency partners. This is to further determine whether thresholds are consistently being applied and that children can re-access Social Care in a timely way should their situation.
- Implementing the revised project plan to strengthen integrated preventative services provision across Wirral; improving clarity about who does what, how services can be accessed and using data to determine how new services are commissioned to respond to identified gaps in service provision.
- Completing the revision of domestic violence protocols, ensuring referrals to Children's Social Care make specific reference to the impact of the adult's behaviour upon the children, further clarifying which referrals can be appropriately dealt with through Area Teams.
- Steering the full implementation of the Integrated Children's System (ICS) through the re-launched ICS Project Board, so that the system supports best social work practice, and assessment activity is recorded in a timelier manner. This will be supported by the additional capacity provided by 4 new Data Officers, working with the ICS Project Manager.

In 2009/10 clear improvements have been made in this area and there are 3 key strands of activity which will support the delivery of this LAA National Indicator target, and which will improve overall safeguarding activity. They are:

1. Ensuring that all agencies working with vulnerable children are completing Common Assessments and using the Team Around the Child Model to respond to children's additional needs. Making sure that Area Teams are leading and driving early preventative work with children.
2. Scrutiny and intervention by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board to ensure that all agencies are clear about thresholds, clear about how to make appropriate referrals and how to escalate concerns, so that children receive the right level of support.
3. Improving training, expertise and support to manage referrals where there are child welfare concerns and in particular concerns about children's safety. Focusing on the importance of high quality, experienced social workers undertaking key management and supervisory roles in intake/duty teams. This includes system support through the development of ICS.

2. Remodelling Social Work Delivery Project

The Children and Young Peoples Department is keen to trail blaze a programme of change which will improve outcomes for children and families, ensure we comply with the Children's Act 2004 in developing and delivering integrated service provision and will review the way we use our Human Resources to ensure the best possible levels of service. The Remodelling Social Work Delivery Pilot funded by the Children's Workforce Development Council provided an opportunity to build on work that had already been underway in developing preventative multi-disciplinary Area Teams. The pilot objectives are:

- Explore processes that will support improved multi agency, evidenced – based social work practice that allows staff to use their expertise more widely and in new ways

- Freeing social worker time to enable more direct work with vulnerable children, young people and their families as well as more effective assessment and planning, leading to improved outcomes for service users.
- Provide effective administrative support for social work staff to enable the above.

The project has brought together the Multi Agency Preventative Area Team, consisting of an Area Team Leader, Area Family Support Workers, Area Social Workers, Education Social Workers, Youth Workers and Connexions Workers which had previously been a virtual team and the Childrens Social Care Assessment Team. This has resulted in the role of the Social Worker in the Area Team developing alongside the other roles in the Area Teams. Social Workers have supported other agencies in delivering co-ordinated services, family support workers have been involved in early intervention direct service delivery. Education Social Worker, Youth Worker and the Connexions personal advisor have all contributed to the delivery of the preventative services.

The change model has involved detailed analysis of the role and function of Team members, workshops and experiential learning by Team members, and whole Team visits to other pilot authorities to view and discuss different practice models. The Team members have piloted different methods of recording information, through for example, digital pens and 3g cards.

Benefits

- The Common Assessment Framework, Lead Professional Working and improved information sharing; the philosophy of the ‘Team around the Child’ is better supported and more established, particularly in schools.
- Improved delivery of joined up co-ordinated responses to children & families. Key element of this was the ease with which staff and managers could communicate as a result of co-location.
- Children & families needs met as early as possible. Managers are able to jointly decide the response to those children and families who move between having additional and complex needs.
- Improved links with the local neighbourhood and more effective engagement with the community and partner agencies. Particularly an increased understanding and appreciation of roles across agencies. The sustained development of an effective District Board and Thematic Group, which have significant role in overseeing and providing governance for the Area Teams role in meeting the targeted needs of local children and families.

The project is now focusing on other areas of Children’s Social Care and building on the learning from the first stage. It is hope that we will be able to evidence the impact in terms of the nature of the work being undertaken by Social Workers - they should be meeting the most complex needs but fewer children should have complex needs, by virtue of their emerging additional needs being responded to effectively by the Area Team.

Brief SWOT Analysis of the Outcome Area

Strengths	Weaknesses:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Active committed members with clear areas of responsibility and accountability 2. Five clear priority areas with majority of outcomes achieved or in progress. 3. Sharing good practice and ideas 4. Improved outcomes for children and young people 5. Children’s views informing the agenda (Kooth.com; Children in Care Council; Youth Parliament etc.) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Plethora of different project / steering groups, constant challenge to ensure effective co-ordination of activity, with clear accountability for action. 2. Overload of priorities impacting on capacity to deliver 3. Significant numbers of children receiving statutory services; in some areas still need to achieve greater cultural shift to intervene earlier and demonstrate the impact of earlier intervention upon outcomes.
Opportunities:	Threats:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Multi agency working to deliver cross cutting outcomes 2. Potential for alignment of budgets/resources to achieve outcomes 3. Partnership commitment to the agenda 4. Multiagency training and job shadowing opportunities. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Availability of skilled and experienced staff to deliver services eg. social workers 2. Budget constraints and potential impact on early intervention and preventative services. 3. Increased identification of vulnerable children (which is good) leading to capacity issues in some areas of work, resulting in slower progression of plans.
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Summary

Across the Staying Safe outcome area we have made good progress in delivering this element of the Children and Young People’s Plan and in meeting the relevant national indicators relating to this outcome area.

Recommendations:

That Wirral Children’s Trust Board endorse the report.

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