

# WIRRAL CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday, 24 September 2010

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	Sheila Clarke (Chair)
	Councillor	Chris Meadon Debbie Mayor Phil Sheridan Jill Billinge Bev Morgan Hazel Thompson Howard Cooper Jane Owens Emma Dodd Ngaire Waine (representing Area Commander John Martin) Richard Longster Shanila Roohi Kathryn Podmore
<u>In attendance:</u>	Officers	Nancy Clarkson Peter Wong Mark Parkinson Ros Free Rose Boylan


## 1 09:00 APOLOGIES

Councillor Tom Harney  
Marie Armitage  
Peter Brandrick  
Sue Brown  
Area Commander John Martin  
Gillian Tomas  
Andy Styring  
Adrian Hughes

## 2 09:00 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Meaden has a daughter who works in the Children and Young People's Department.

Councillor Sheila Clarke noted that it was Hazel Thompson's last meeting representing the Link Forum and on behalf of the board wished her every success for the future.



Howard Cooper also stated that it was a pleasure work with Hazel and that her input had been invaluable.

Hazel Thompson thanked the Board and noted the big strides made through multi-agency working over the last few years.

Councillor Sheila Clarke welcomed Superintendent Ngaire Waine to the Board representing Area Commander John Martin and noted that with the departure of Bob Gittins it was very pleasing that Police commitment will be continued at such a high level.

### 3 **09:05 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

**Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2010 be confirmed as a correct record.**

### 4 **09:10 PROPOSED GOVERNMENT CHANGES FOR CHILDREN'S TRUSTS**

Nancy Clarkson introduced the report regarding government plans to amend the current legislation regarding Children's Trusts. The changes would remove the duty on schools to co-operate and the requirements to have a Children's Trust Board and to publish a joint Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP).

Jill Billinge asked if the role of the headteacher was to represent themselves or their wider community.

Howard Cooper responded that as the Chair of the Primary Heads Consultation Group and Wirral Association of Secondary Headteachers they were representing Primary and Secondary headteachers and that a commitment would be made to go back to their groups to communicate but also being headteachers they would have their own views. He noted that having headteacher representatives on the Board strengthened the Board and could only be of benefit to all children's services to have engagement of all parties.

Phil Sheridan asked what biggest concern was if schools do not co-operate.

Howard Cooper noted that the Council remains deeply committed to the five Every Child Matters outcomes for children and that schools are integral partners to deliver these successfully. Over the past 3 to 4 years schools have been increasingly involved in effective working with partner agencies which has had significant impact on outcomes for children and young people. It is important that schools remain engaged with the whole community in order to improve outcomes for all children and young people. More specifically in the area of safeguarding schools are the biggest initiators of the Team Around the Child. This links to early intervention and prevention and schools are at the heart of that.

Howard Cooper noted that the major barrier to children and young people's learning was what happened in the home, and that partnership collaboration would enhance schools knowledge in this area.

When the duty to co-operate is abolished there is a risk that schools disengage with wider agenda; this will be at the detriment to children and young people and communities. The duty is a strong signal of the importance and benefits of working together.

Phil Sheridan noted that although schools are competitive the clear message for them is that when addressing outcomes for all children and young people it is important to focus Wirral wide.

Jane Owens noted the positive effects of joint working and that sharing information with school governors could only strengthen this as more governors ask more questions and become more aware of the full ECM agenda to the benefit of children and young people.

Howard Cooper noted that the Police view of the reduction in First Time Entrants in to the Youth Justice System was linked to the volume of embedded officers in schools. Howard Cooper believes that embedding services in school can lead to marked improvements for all children and young people and their communities.

**Resolved: The Board agreed the continuation of Wirral Children's Trust arrangements in their current form.**

**Resolved: That the continuation of the involvement of schools is endorsed by the Board and the Director of Children's Services in collaboration with school representatives communicate with schools regarding their continued participation.**

## 5 09:20 PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN

Nancy Clarkson introduced the report which in which the Children's Trust Executive proposed the production of a one year plan to take account of the impact of proposed budget cuts and organisational changes.

Richard Longster noted the difficulties in producing a long term plan under the current proposed large scale government changes. He agreed the Board must be sure it can deliver on any plan produced and ensure engagement is maintained in the development of the plan.

Howard Cooper agreed that the significant changes in health and also the Council regarding how services could be delivered in the future would impact on any plan produced. The changes would not be known before the production deadline of the new plan at 1<sup>st</sup> April.

Councillor Sheila Clarke agreed that producing a one-year plan would mitigate the risk of the changes whilst maintaining a focus for multi-agency priorities and improved outcomes.

**Resolved: That if the regulations for the production of a new Children and Young People's Plan are amended and there is no requirement to publish a**

**three-year plan, the Board approved the production of a refreshed one-year Children and Young People's Plan for 2011-12.**

**Resolved: That the Board agreed to review the development of a future Children and Young People's Plan in 2011.**

## **6 09:30 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT 2010/11 QUARTER 1**

Nancy Clarkson introduced the performance report. In Quarter one a reduced amount of information is available with data for only for 23 indicators. There were discussions regarding a number of indicators.

NI 53 Breastfeeding rates. Bev Morgan noted that the Peer Support Programme supported 400 mothers. The project is working well through agency collaboration. The results of the initiative should feed through into the statistics in Quarter 2 resulting in an improvement.

NI 63 Stability of placements for Looked After Children. Jane Owens noted that there were a high proportion of Looked After Children placed with parents.

Howard Cooper noted that LAC numbers were still high and in terms of numbers LAC per 10,000 are high compared to other comparator authorities. There are also a high number of older young people aged 14-16 who have been in care for longer.

There are a range of placement options including being placed with parents although they are still looked after by the Local Authority. Over the past 6-9 months the Children and Young People's Department have been reviewing the placed with parent LAC in order to ensure best placements for the children. Such active management impacts on the stability of this indicator which is expected to fluctuate whilst the detailed review of the Care Plans was ongoing.

Jill Billinge noted that kinship cases without social care intervention in place were reviewed by schools to ensure appropriate support was provided where needed.

Howard Cooper also noted that private fostering occurred where a child is looked after by not a close relative or friends. The LA only knows about this if it is reported to them. This includes visiting children from other countries. Private foster carers are not on a register. The LA has been active in this area in the last two years but it can be difficult to identify every private fosterer.

Ngaire Waine noted the antisocial behaviour governance meeting has now moved to monthly. Recent data indicates that Quarter 2 targets will be met. Operations are planned for specific nights and the half-term week. Ngaire Waine recognised that the work of the ASB Team has impacted positively on ASB in the borough.

Howard Cooper also noted that although ASB is reducing there are also risks in this area. Of the ASB Team funding 80% is grant or contract based funding; the team is vulnerable to reductions in funding.

Councillor Sheila Clarke noted the importance of this work and the benefits gained from multi-agency approach.

Councillor Meaden asked for more detail on the percentage of incidents linked to children and young people.

Ngairé Waine noted it was difficult to know the ages of the perpetrators unless the perpetrators are stopped at the scene, which does not always occur although the incident will be recorded. There is also practice work in place through problem solving groups to address areas where there are persistent reports. This was an area for consideration as there are different degrees of tolerance for different types of behaviour and this must be taken on board.

Councillor Sheila Clarke requested that a brief note to be circulated to the board be produced regarding children and young people's involvement in ASB.

Howard Cooper noted the improvements in attainment made by Wirral Schools across the borough.

Phil Sheridan noted that his school (Pensby High School for Boys) was part of the National Challenge Programme (NC). He congratulated all the National Challenge schools as their direction of travel has been outstanding. These schools also include Rock Ferry High School, Wallasey School, Park High School and The Oldershaw School. The education value they have added to the children and young people is significant. Pensby High School for Boys is the most improved school for 5+A\*-C including English and maths in the North West; an outstanding achievement. Phil Sheridan also reported that National Challenge support was very challenging but exceptional. At Pensby High School for Boys the exceptional results were a tribute to the staff in the school in particular subject areas English and maths where leadership is very strong.

**Resolved: That the report be noted and a note regarding young people's involvement in Anti-Social Behaviour be circulated to the Board.**

## 7 09:45 LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT 2010/11 QUARTER 1


Nancy Clarkson presented the Quarter 1 Local Area Agreement (LAA) report outlining progress of the LAA indicators.

Jane Owens requested further information regarding NEET and the role of Connexions.

Howard Cooper noted that 8.2% young people NEET in a recession is outstanding. This is a result of a number of initiatives including Wirral Apprenticeships, with over 150 now in place; Future Jobs Fund over 100 young people employed; Wirral Metropolitan College have rolling enrolment to allow young people to enrol at different times.

The population has enormous churn so the 'dwell time' for NEET is an average of 12 weeks. The number of NEET for 20 weeks or more is low.

The NEET Tiger Team was formed to tightly focus on this area and has had an impact. The current economic climate will have an impact on 18-19 year olds due to the employment situation.



Howard Cooper reported on the involvement of Connexions in working with young people who are NEET and that the national role of Connexions is being reviewed.

Shanila Roohi asked about targeted information and families of NEET. Howard Cooper noted that NEET is analysed to street level to identify and target areas for particular support as well as individual support for young people.

Jane Owens noted that a large number of initiatives were underway in schools to develop aspiration for children and young people and there were excellent programmes in place in many schools.

Jill Billinge noted that the 'Ignition Programme' in Primary Schools was excellent in supporting aspiration for children and young people.

Councillor Sheila Clarke suggested that as there was such interest and discussion in this area a NEET report could be presented at the next Board. The Board members were in agreement regarding this.

**Resolved: The Board noted the report and requested a NEET report for the next meeting to scrutinise this area further.**

## 8 10:00 SAFEGUARDING 2010/11 QUARTER 1

Howard Cooper presented the report.

Two Serious Case Reviews are underway. MW case is approaching completion with an extended timescale. The B case does qualify for a Special Case Review but is unusual as there was not multi-agency involvement in this area. This is in the Criminal Justice System notification is required from the Crown Prosecution Service to commence the work.


**Resolved: The Board noted the report.**

## 9 10:30 COMMISSIONING UPDATE

Peter Wong presented a report outlining the NHS Consultation underway. A Consultation document from the Department of Health (DOH) has been published. This report outlines areas of specific interest to the Children's Trust Board.

The responsibilities for GP Consortia were outlined. The consortia themselves will differ across the country and probably the borough. The expectations of the operation of the consortia are outlined with no actual indication of how it will occur from government. There are particular consultation questions, all individuals can respond.

The report recommends the Children's Trust Board respond to the DOH consultation and also submits a collective response for NHS to feed into the work in progress shaping the GP consortia.



Richard Longster agreed with this view particularly as joint commissioning is of benefit for children and young people and it should be high on the GP agenda.

Debbie Mayor noted the opportunity to influence the thinking now before the arrangements are made.

The timescale is 11<sup>th</sup> October for responses to the national consultation. Peter Wong offered to produce a paper and collate responses from the Board.

Howard Cooper noted the different organisations on the Board and their views on a group response.

Ngaire Waine noted that the Police would have specific requirements and that core business requirements may be slightly different.

Richard Longster noted the importance of not diluting the response, as a collective response should be more powerful, it could be done with specific inputs from different agencies.

Councillor Chris Meaden noted the complexities of potentially dealing with a number of consortia with a different agenda.

Howard Cooper suggested that the Trust Board could do a response based on the role of the Board and common areas of concern to the Board. A number were outlined:

- The under-representation of children and young people in priority setting in the NHS.
- The benefit of early prevention should be prioritised.
- The importance of the definition of what should be included in public health and what in GP consortia such as health visiting and school nursing.
- For planning prospects the Children's Trust footprint is the whole of Wirral, the more agencies are fragmented the more difficult it would be to commission services effectively.

Ngaire Waine noted that health inequalities focus should also be included.

Howard Cooper also noted how multi-agency working has had a significant impact on outcomes for children and young people.

Richard Longster noted that the Board should ensure its views are provided to influence the process.

Bev Morgan noted the complexity application process for commissioning Smoke Free Families that made it difficult for VCF agencies to apply. Peter Wong will discuss this with Public Health and contact Bev Morgan.

Howard Cooper noted Joint Director of Public Health Marie Armitage retires today and new Joint Director Fiona Johnstone will commence on 27<sup>th</sup> September. She will be invited to join the Board. The importance of Public Health to the Children's Trust was stressed.

It was agreed that Peter Wong would draft collective responses to both the NHS Consultation and the NHS Wirral process. These will be shared with the Board for comment before submission.

**Resolved: That the Board submits a collective response to the Department of Health consultation.**

**Resolved: That the Board submits a collective response to NHS Wirral with the purpose of being fed into the shaping of the emerging GP Consortia.**

## 10 10:50 NARROWING THE GAP ACTION RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS

Mark Parkinson and Ros Free introduced the report. Mark Parkinson noted Narrowing the Gap was a priority area and that gaps were evident in a range of groups such as LAC, Young People in Youth Justice System, SEN and Deprivation (free school meal proxy).

A range of initiatives in place in schools, with additional input from the Local Authority and National Strategies. The Schools Forum has a working party and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have projects to review this area.

Work is currently underway on the academic year 2009/10 data analysis at a pupil level. Wirral is involved in National Project led by National Strategies; the evidence from this is that Wirral is undertaking the right initiatives.

A number of action research projects were also initiated in collaboration with schools. Good practice would then be shared across schools. Funding was provided to schools to initiate these. A steering group of headteachers targeted the funding at specific initiatives.

Ros Free noted the importance of changing practice and the purpose of the initiatives was to embed this at all levels in schools.

Areas tackled included aspiration raising projects, the 'Ignition' and 'Professor Fluffy' projects. The very positive feedback led to schools now using their own funding to continue these projects and some school clusters are collaborating.


Communication friendly spaces to impact on boys interest in reading and speaking and listening.

Growing to learn has been rolled out to all primary schools to improve children's engagement in learning. This involves collaborative learning and communication. Feedback from teachers is overwhelmingly positive.

Tranmere Rovers journalism programme was specifically targeted at groups of young people.

Richard Longster noted that it was fantastic to hear this report as it was very valuable to understand the extent of the positive work that was ongoing and the innovation and dynamism.





Mark Parkinson noted that the 3-year programme was coming to an end and information would be produced to share the projects and their impact. The action research approach with schools driving the programme has led to its success.

Kathryn Podmore note the funding cuts would impact on this.

Mark Parkinson agreed but noted that schools could fund themselves on their projects of particular value to them. The programme was designed to be self sustaining, with minimal costs shared wherever possible.

Councillor Sheila Clarke asked Mark Parkinson and Ros Free to pass on thanks to everyone involved in these innovative projects with their significant impact on Wirral children and young people.

**Resolved: The Board noted the report.**

11 **11:15 MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE YOUTH ENGAGEMENT**

Emma Dodd presented the report. Merseyside Fire and Rescue is a non-statutory partner that works collaboratively with a range of agencies. A large number of projects are developed and run involving children and young people. They have currently expressed an interest in the new government initiative The National Citizen Scheme.

A PFI project is in place in a number of Fire Stations and state of the art buildings will be developed. There is opportunity for co-location and joint working. There is a designated Youth Engagement Officer and three Fire Liaison Officers will be working one day a week with schools.

Howard Cooper noted the positive beacon status work carried out by the Merseyside Fire and Rescue service.

The Council is involved in the National Citizen Scheme project and would like to work with the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service on this.

Wallasey Youth Hub is situated in Wallasey Fire Station and has had a very positive start. Similar discussions are ongoing regarding a Birkenhead site with voluntary sector and private provider 'Onside'.

**Resolved: The Board noted the report.**

12 **11:35 'WIRRAL'S FUTURE' CONSULTATION PROCESS**

Rose Boylan introduced the Wirral Future Consultation programme which aims to involve Wirral residents in planning for the future.

The process is Task Force based with four task forces, independently chaired including key stakeholders in an advisory capacity. Public consultation started on 13<sup>th</sup> September for six weeks. Task forces then reconvene to review the findings.

There is also staff consultation ongoing. All material is online and there are a wide range of methods through which people can consult.

Jane Owens asked who wrote the consultation questions and noted that they were not child friendly.

Councillor Sheila Clarke noted that consultation with children and young people would occur through the Youth Voice Conference which would address this and there would be other events. She noted the questions did not directly come through the Task Force Group.

Rose Boylan responded that the questions were drafted from the options paper.

Councillor Chris Meaden noted the questionnaire was very time consuming to fill in and the questions were poorly worded.

Ngairé Waine noted that she had not seen questionnaires and what was the process for partner involvement.

Rose Boylan requested that questionnaires were filled in online.

Hazel Thompson noted that she was the Acting Chief Executive of WMO and that although she had requested them the questionnaires had not arrived.

Phil Sheridan reported that Wirral Association of Secondary Headteachers had noted the size of the questionnaire and that they had requested headteachers signpost young people to events rather than completing full questionnaire.

Richard Longster asked how the responses would be analysed.

Rose Boylan note the survey online tool would be used which allows cross referencing analysis to aid interpretation of the data.

Rose Boylan noted the issues raised and agreed to provide a response back to the Board members regarding their queries.

**Resolved: The presentation was noted and Rose Boylan would provide a written response to the queries raised by the Board.**

13 **11:55 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

14 **12:00 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING: 22 NOVEMBER 2010, 09:00 - 12:00**