

WIRRAL CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday, 11 September 2009

Present:

Councillor	Phil Davies (Chair)
Councillors	Sheila Clarke Jean Quinn
Officers	Howard Cooper Peter Brandrick Hazel Thompson Emma Dodd Alan Stennard Paula Dixon Bob Gittins Thelma Wiltshire Richard Longster Kathryn Podmore Andy Styring Debbie Mayor Hazel Thompson Peter Brandrick

In attendance:

Officers	Nancy Clarkson Tracy Little
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Apologies

Officers	Tina Long Shanila Roohi
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1 APOLOGIES

Tina Long – Director of Strategic Partnerships Wirral PCT (D Mayor representing)
Shanila Roohi – General Practitioner

2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Cllr Davies declared an interest in Item 15.
Hazel Thompson also declared an interest in Item 15.

3 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Cllr Davies gave a welcome to the Board and thanked everyone for attending.

4 NEW CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Cllr Davies outlined the memorandum of understanding which sets out the role of the Children's Trust Board (CTB) and how it relates to the various other organisations and trusts.

Howard Cooper gave a background to the formation of the CTB, noting the integrated working that has already taken place and the strong partnerships that have been forged. He outlined the recent changes to legislation that have made Children's Trusts a Statutory obligation on Local Authorities with a duty to cooperate on selected partners, including police and PCT and now this also includes GPs and Job Centre Plus. It is these recent changes to legislation that have led to the evaluation of the previous Children's Trust arrangements and a reorganisation to the current structure. Howard noted that the role of this Board is to be a commissioning body.

The CTB will also be the owners of the Children and Young People's Plan. Finally, Howard noted that the synergy the group creates ensures that collectively partners can produce better outcomes for children and young people.

Cllr Jean Quinn asked about the role of District Boards in the role of commissioning and the CT. Howard noted that district boards were formed to stimulate a better connection between local level and the council. The level of success of the district boards is varied. Work and the role of the district boards are being examined in order for them to be more effective.

Andy Styring noted the disconnection of organisation of boundaries. The PCT and Adult Social Services split Wirral into 3 working areas, CAMHS is split over 5 and Children and Young People's Department (CYPD) service boundaries are split over 4 areas. Howard Cooper noted that the CYPD service boundaries are in line with the parliamentary constituencies and no plans are in place to change these.

5 APPRENTICESHIPS, SKILLS, CHILDREN AND LEARNING BILL UPDATE

Cllr. Davies updated on the bill that is currently in parliament, currently in the House of Lords.

In relation to Children's Services the bill notes that, section 10 of the Children Act 2004 is amended to include new relevant partners who must co-operate with the LA. New relevant partners will include: Schools, FE institutions, non-maintained special schools, city technology colleges, city colleges, academies and JobCentre Plus. This is to give new partners is to give them a stronger voice within the arrangements to improve children's well being, greater influence over the local strategic direction taken, and better support from other partners.

Under Clause 185, relating to Children's Trust Boards the bill notes that LAs are required to set up Children's Trust Boards as part of the arrangements to improve children's well being.

The Children's Trust Board (CTB) may also include other persons or bodies that the LA thinks appropriate. One or more people are allowed to represent more than one CTB member or a group of CTB members. Relevant partners can provide staff and other resources to each other and other relevant partners of another local authority.

The funding of CTBs, the supply of information to CTB and the need to have regard to the CYPP when exercising its functions are added to the list of relevant functions of a LA. This allows the Secretary of State to intervene in LAs in connection with their CTB and CYPP activities.

With regard to the role and function of Children and Young People's Plans (CYPP), the duty of preparing and implementing Children and Young People's Plans is transferred from LAs to the CTB. The CTB must adhere to government regulations in the preparation and publishing of CYPP. The CYPP will continue to be the single strategic overarching plan for all local services for children and young people. All partners are under a duty to have regard to their local CYPP when exercising their functions. This includes maintained schools not represented on the CTB.

The CTB will monitor partners' progress in implementing the CYPP and report annually on how well CTB partners are acting in accordance with the strategies set out in the CYPP.

The new functions relating to CTB and CYPPs are added to the list of functions of a Director of Children's Services.

Schools forums have a duty to have regard to the CYPP produced by their local CTB

The Board note the report.

6 CHILDREN'S TRUST MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

Cllr Davies outlined the proposed CT meeting structure; standard agenda items are to include updates on Contact Point, Safeguarding, LAA and Performance Management. Annually there will be a review of Memorandum of Understanding, membership of the Board and the Children and Young People's Plan. There will also be updates from each outcome group on a regular rotation basis.

The Board note and endorse the schedule.

7 CONTACT POINT

Mark Ellis updated on the latest position with regard to Contact Point. He gave an introduction to Contact Point and noted that it is being developed to help practitioners quickly identify children and to determine whether that child is in receipt of universal services. It will enable earlier identification of needs and other professionals involved with these children. Overall it is a tool to encourage and support better communication between professionals and practitioners.

Contact Point includes the following information about children

- Name
- Address
- DOB

Also details are stored for parents and carers, school, GP and professional involvement with the children.

Contact Point is now live and is being used by a number of "early adopters" are using it fully. Wirral are currently going through accreditation from the DCSF and also carrying out data

cleansing. It is expected that full accreditation will be gained by the end of September 2009. It is anticipated that partners in health will be the next organisation to become accredited. GPs and schools require individual accreditation, these organisations will follow. Roll out to practitioners is due to be completed by January 2010.

The Board note the report.

8 SAFEGUARDING UPDATE - QUARTER 1

Howard Cooper noted the actions that have been conducted and overseen by the Wirral Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

These include:

- A rapid appraisal of all children subject to a child protection plan by District Managers which included an analysis of social work visits and actions outstanding on the plan.
- A small sample of children were seen and spoken with about their view of safeguarding arrangements for themselves, as well as their carers who were asked about their knowledge and involvement in plan.
- PCT and Acute Trust produced a written report to the LSCB on health action on child protection plans and their own compliance with planned action. Further to this the NHS partnership has undertaken a review of their safeguarding arrangements following the Quality Care Commissions national review and will report to the LSCB in September. This review will include the capacity of the Trust to support the work of the LSCB and its sub-committees.
- Merseyside Police with the 5 LSCB's undertook an audit of 66 randomly samples cases across Merseyside that had been referred by police operational staff. A full report and Executive summary was produced with an associated Action Plan for a Learning Together Partnership day in June 2009. Each LSCB will report to the Governance Group, chaired by Assistant Chief Constable and consisting of the DCS's, on their respective action.

Independent chairing of the LSCB- was a recommendation from Lord Lamings report 'The Protection of Children in England – a Progress Report'. Wirral LSCB agreed to tender for an independent chair and an appropriate level of funding was agreed by the Board in June 2009. Interviews will be held in October for this position.

Howard noted that the law in relation to LSCBs has changed since the Serious Case Review (SCR) of Baby Peter. These changes include the recruitment of an Independent Chair and the presence of the Lead Member of Children's Services on the Board (to take place in December). As the linkage between the CTB and the LSCB is strong a report will be presented on a quarterly basis.

With regard to SCR's there should also be an independent chair and information that is to be published should be completely anonymous. Wirral have had two SCR's assessed. The JSC has been rated as outstanding and is being used as an example of good practice. A second

review on AP was assessed as an adequate. SCR is underway on child CF which has met delays due to criminal proceedings.

Howard noted that work has been carried out across Merseyside to ensure threshold levels are consistent. He added a comment on the interaction of criminal law and family law in such cases, and which takes primacy.

Howard outlined the complexity in producing management reports that support SCRs. He noted the difficulties in finding the right person to produce the report. It requires someone whom has enough subject knowledge to produce a comprehensive report but also a degree of separation from the case.

Cllr Sheila Clarke asked about “full disclosure” of SCRs and who may be entitled to that information. Caroline McKenna replied that there are no plans to introduce “full disclosure” however there are plans to make the executive summaries more comprehensive and the lead member will also be sat on the Safeguarding Board so will have more details of the case. Howard also added that SCRs are exempt from Freedom of Information requests.

9 **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT YEAR END AND QUARTER 1**

Nancy Clarkson outlined the performance pack that was distributed to the Board. The pack contains both 2008/9 year end position and also the latest outturn for the 2009/10 quarter one reporting period.

Nancy noted that quarterly performance reports will be submitted to the group on a regular basis along side outcome specific updates that will cycle through the year.

10 **LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT QUARTER 1**

Howard gave an update on Safely Reducing the numbers of Children. This has reduced from over 700 in 2006. Current figures are 618. An increase in LAC occurred over the autumn of 2008, these were largely made up of older teenagers. It is thought that this is an impact of the recession and increasing economic pressures on families. With regard to NEET, Howard noted that, year on year, the NEET figure has reduced, in an unstable climate. However it remains below the LAA target.

The Board noted the report.

11 **COMMISSIONING OF YOUTH HUBS**

Peter Edmondson presented a report to the Board on the Commissioning of Youth Hubs.

On the 11 November 2008, the Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee presented its findings from its review of Youth Outreach, in the report entitled ‘Youth Outreach Scrutiny Review – Final Report’. Recommendations one and thirteen recommended that there should be a restructuring of outreach services with the aim of providing a Hub or key contact point in each district and current facilities for young people should open more evenings.

The recommendations in the Overview and Scrutiny report and the work to find a My Place nomination acted as a catalyst for the proposals presented to Cabinet in the Reconfiguration

of the Youth Service report on 23 November 2008. Cabinet approved the move to the development of four main hubs, one in each district.

Key to the offer was ensuring that facilities would be available over six nights and particularly at the week-ends and available to young people who might otherwise take part in anti social behaviour. Cabinet also requested that a consultation with stakeholders be undertaken to test out the proposals and to finalise the commissioning criteria.

Meetings to identify hubs took place at district level and involved the Youth and Play Service and other providers.

Maureen McDaid noted that commissioning has been successful for four Youth Hubs, some in each of the four districts, including Eastham Youth Club, Wallasey Fire Station, West Kirby Youth Centre and Shaftesbury.

Cllr Sheila Clarke commented that O&S were very supportive of this service

Cllr Jean Quinn asked how this would affect current provision within the Borough. Peter Edmondson noted that the satellites will be supported and use of overall resources will be reviewed annually. Thelma Wiltshire requested that the impact this may have on districts should be communicated at District Boards. Maureen noted that she would be happy to attend district boards to go through impacts.

Paula Dixon declared an interest due to her involvement with Tranmere Together. She asked how Shaftesbury was identified as a Hub. Peter Edmondson noted the procedure and bids for the My Place Bids. Shaftesbury was the prime selection; it was commissioned and not tendered for.

Cllr Davies requested that feedback on the impact of the Hubs is brought back to this Board and the District Boards.

The Board endorse the report.

12 **ACTIVITY FUND COMMISSIONING REPORT**

As part of the Aiming High proposals, additional money has been made available to local authorities under Positive Activities for Young People. (PAYP) This funding has previously been routed through Connexions and was used to provide a number of support packages for young people at risk of truanting, offending, negative peer group pressure and associated health risk. Specific activities were commissioned to engage young people during the school holidays.

These activities complement the delivery of Hubs. Activities also link with YSS, to provide targeted youth support to vulnerable young people.

The contracts will operate from 1st October 2009 until 31 March 2011. The Activities provided are to enhance the Youth Offer in the districts. A key aim of the process was to increase the range of partnership working and where possible to identify new providers. The outcome of the commissioning process is that the three organisations submitting tenders, Birkenhead Youth Club, Blossom Inspiration and Wirral Youth & Play Service and Partners, have been recommended by the commissioning panel as approved providers for the activities

The commissioning criteria were agreed at Cabinet on the 23 April. Maureen noted that the commissioning process was now under review with the Link Forum to make the process and supporting documentation more user friendly.

Debbie Mayor asked what the plans are beyond March 2011. Maureen noted that future provision will be shaped by monitoring and review of current provision.

The Board endorse the report.

13 **AIMING HIGHER FOR DISABLED CHILDREN COMMISSIONING REPORT**

Julia Hassall gave an update on progress on the Wirral Local Area Implementation programme for Aiming High for Disabled Children in relation to Short Breaks provision, further to reports provided in January and March. The Government are requiring the Council and NHS Wirral to provide for a stepped change to short breaks services and to deliver on what is termed the Full Service Offer, designed to meet the needs of all groups of disabled children. The report advises on action taken in meeting the reporting and performance requirements set out by Together for Disabled Children, who are administering the Short Breaks programme on behalf of the DCSF; over the next two years to March 2011.

The approach seeks to transform services across sectors to provide support to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people with disabilities and enable children and their families to live ordinary lives. Over the next two years, as the funding and programme reforms take effect, the Government expects local authorities to realise the ambition that:

- Disabled children will have the same opportunities to develop and fulfil their potential as all other children.
- Families with disabled children will get the support they need, when they need it.
- Universal children's services will be more genuinely inclusive of disabled children, including those with complex needs.
- Disabled children will be at the heart of the ongoing change programme for children's services.

The new national indicator, NI 54 on services for disabled children will measure the experience of families with disabled children; and will involve an annual survey of 200 families within each Council area.

A Project Manager has been appointed for the 2 year period to oversee the delivery of the programme and Transformation Plan. Three further fixed term posts have been created within the project team to provide for capacity to ensure the programme now moves forwards at pace, in line with reporting requirements.

New services have now been commissioned using the Joint Strategic Commissioning Framework ; designed to ensure that services are planned and secured to meet the needs of children, young people and their families and provide best value (considerations of quality and cost). A report on the process and outcomes will be presented to the next Cabinet in October.

Andy Styring asked how inclusive the provision is. Julia noted that the activities planned are based on family inclusion and creating environments that are inclusive and mainstream. .

Bob Gittins asked about the impact of not winning a tender may affect providers and the effect of provision for disabled children. Peter Edmondson replied that commissioning is set against the needs and requirements of the children involved.

The Board endorse the report.

14 LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN ADVOCACY SERVICES

Julia Hassall outlined the background to the Looked after Children's Advocacy Service. The service is a statutory requirement under 1989 Children Act and clarified in the Adoption Act 2002, which should be provided at arms length from the Council. Its purpose is to ensure that "*Children who are looked after have trusted people to whom they can speak on their behalf to local authorities and others.*"

The Advocacy service for Looked After Children and Care Leavers is intended to help and support in giving them a voice, this includes support around complaints. The service is available for all Looked After Children and Care Leavers living both on Wirral and outside of Wirral.

Generally such services are provided by Third Sector organisations or Social Enterprises. The proposed provider will make provision for the service to be available to children who are currently Looked After or have been Looked After. The service provider will also carry out information gathering in respect of the views and wishes of Looked After Children to inform the Council's planning for the provision of services to this group.

The Children and Young People's Department Social Care Branch in partnership with allied commissioning agencies and service providers, has reviewed and re-commissioning the Third Sector services it purchases on behalf of children and their families. Two major exercises in respect of such services have already been carried out in 2009; leaving a small number of previously contracted services to be dealt with on an individual basis.

In line with this a commissioning process was used to identify the prospective providers. The service was advertised in the usual way and tenders were invited from suitably qualified organisations. A commissioning panel was established to identify a successful applicant from amongst the submitted applications that passed an initial, short-listing stage.

A total of two tender documents were received by the closing date. Both applications were of a high standard and passed the Pre Qualifying Questionnaire. There was a gap of only 3 points between the applicants.

At the next stage of the process both organisations had been asked in advance to prepare a ten minute presentation. Both organisations were also asked the same set of questions which were intended to draw out the knowledge and understanding of the organisation in respect of the requirements of an Advocacy Service for Looked after Children. Each organisation was scored on the presentation and the questions.

The commissioning panel recommended that that the identified preferred provider; SCS Kinder be awarded the contract for one year. There is an option to extend the Contract for a second year upon satisfactory completion of the first year's provision of the service. The unsuccessful bidder is given feedback.

The Board endorse the report.

15 **PARENTING AND PREVENTION COMMISSIONING 0-19 RACIAL MINORITY ETHNIC FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES**

Julia Hassall outlined recommendations for approval to procure a Family Support Service for Racial Minority Ethnic families (RME) for 2009/11 to support children, young people and their families. The commissioning and procurement of this service will complete the parenting and prevention commissioning process which was approved by Wirral Council Cabinet in April 2009.

This recommendation has been robust, multi-agency (including voluntary and community sector involvement) and inclusive of parents, children and young people.

The service will provide Family Support to Racial Minority Ethnic Children, Young People and their Families by offering direct support and to ensure access to the range of preventative services. The service will support these families across a broad age range (0-19) working within the CAF/Team around the Child framework and will offer flexible support. It will also provide parenting groups using the evidence based programme Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities. This service will have a particular focus which is inclusive of those parents who are less likely to engage with mainstream services.

This joint commissioning process joined up the planning and commissioning of prevention and parenting services across agencies from identified existing funding streams currently used on commissioning services.

This process does not seek to pool funding. Any existing funding conditions would remain intact with the associated funding stream. The process was led by the Parenting/Prevention Commissioning Manager, Children and Young People's Department and the Procurement Team which lead the procurement process working with the Business Manager within Strategic Partnerships (Wirral NHS).

A total of two tender documents were received by the closing date and only one application was of a high standard and passed the Pre Qualifying Questionnaire. The successful application to be referred to the next stage was from Wirral Multicultural Organisation (WMO). The panel recommended that the identified preferred provider Wirral Multi Cultural Organisation be awarded the contract valued at £40,000 until March 2011.

The Board endorse the report.

16 **ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN**

Howard noted the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) had been refreshed for 2009/10. The refreshed plan had been circulated to the Board.

Emma Dodd noted that it would be useful to appendices the supporting documents such as plans and strategies that are referenced within the CYPP. Nancy Clarkson noted that these were in the three year CYPP. The Children's Trust website will have links to supporting documentation. Cllr. Davies and Howard Cooper thanked Nancy Clarkson for her work in coordinating the refresh of the plan.

The Board note the report.

17 **COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT**

Howard Cooper gave a brief update on the progress of the CAA.

The CAA will focus on areas not just organisations, outcomes for communities and local priorities as well as national targets and likelihood of future delivery. The CAA itself is made up of two components the Area Assessment and the Organisational Assessment.

For the Area Assessment evidence will come from a number of sources, including performance against LAA outcomes and national indicators, local performance management, any inspection work, other regulatory regimes, partnership self-assessment, place survey and other consultation work and any other relevant sources of data.

The area assessment is not scored; it will contain a narrative judgement on the area and include red and green flags. Green flags will be awarded for any areas of exemplary good practice that should be shared with other partnerships. Red flags will be attributed to areas where desired outcomes are not being achieved and if the partnership does not have realistic and effective plans in place to tackle them.

The Organisational Assessment is an assessment of value for money and performance management and merges earlier 'direction of travel' and 'use of resources' assessments. The assessment will be scored. Ofsted's annual performance rating of council's children's services will contribute to this score.

A decision on Wirral is due in November. He added that a potential red flag has been identified around the area of NEETs.

The Board note the report.

18 **NHS WIRRAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMPARATIVE INDICATORS 2008/9**

Debbie Mayer gave an overview of the Children's Services Health indicators for 2008/9. Indicators that are achieving below expected are as follows:

- Alcohol: rate of admission to hospital
- Breast feeding initiation
- Substance misuse: rate of admission to hospital

Low rates of breastfeeding initiation have been identified and are being addressed (through a number of initiatives) as part of the Strategic Plan (2008-13). Work is being taken forward by Wirral DAAT to develop services to address the rates of admission for alcohol and substance misuse.

Cllr Davies requested that details of corrective action are brought to a future meeting.

The Board noted the report