

1.0 Background

As defined in the Wirral Children's Trust Memorandum of Understanding the membership of the Board is reviewed on an annual basis. This report outlines amendments to the membership for the Board to consider.

2.0 Statutory Guidance

Legislation in the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act (ASCLA) 2009 built on the Children Act 2004 and strengthened Children's Trusts by placing them on a statutory footing from 1 April 2010. Guidance relating to Children's Trusts was published in March 2010.

The guidance outlines partner agencies to be included in Children's Trust arrangements. There are two categories of partner, some partners having a statutory 'duty to co-operate' and others not. The nature of the engagement of non-statutory partners will vary depending on local circumstances.

The Local Authority has specific responsibility for establishing the Children's Trust Board. Other statutory 'relevant partners' include Primary Care Trusts (PCTs); Strategic Health Authorities (not required to be represented on the Board); Probation; Police; Youth Offending Teams; Schools; Pupil Referral Units; Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges; JobCentre Plus; Connexions.

Non-statutory partners are those which are not legally required but may add value to the local partnerships and can be brought formally into the Children's Trust partnership at the discretion of the LA and on to the Children's Trust Board after consulting its other partners. Although the 'relevant partners' should be regarded as the minimum core membership of the board, non-statutory members should be included and they are no less important than the statutory partners. They include the Third Sector, the Private Sector, General Practitioners, providers of health care, housing sector, adult services, school sector, Sure Start Children's Centres, Further Education and work-based learning sectors, youth custodial establishments, the family justice system.

3.0 Membership

To be effective the Children's Trust Board will have an optimum size which ensures the full range of interests are covered whilst the board remains a workable size. To facilitate this, the guidance allows shared representation: one person representing more than one partner. In this case the representative should have a clear mandate which allows them to speak and act for all the organisations they are representing with authority and to feed back information.

On review, two additional members are proposed to strengthen the board.

The Chair of the Wirral Governor Forum is proposed to strengthen the school sector representation. The current chair is Jane Owens.

A Probation representative is proposed to strengthen the youth justice sector representation. Within the Children's Trust, partners particularly the police, the Youth Offending Team and probation have a key role in commissioning services to help prevent offending and re-offending, and to help children and young people in the youth justice system gain access to the full range of support services they need. The Merseyside Probation Trust has been approached and Sue Brown, Assistant Chief Officer of the Wirral Local Delivery Team has been proposed as the representative.

Two further changes are noted:

A replacement will be sought for Sue Drew, Deputy Director of Public Health who has moved to a new post in Knowsley.

The retirement of Alan Stennard the Director of Regeneration reduces the membership of the board by one.

4.0 Recommendation:

4.1 That Wirral Children's Trust Board approve the addition of two additional members to the Board.

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