

WIRRAL CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD – 16th May 2016

Developing the role and function of the Children's Trust Board and the Children's Joint Commissioning Group

1.0 Background

This reports informs board members of the review of the governance arrangements to ensure that the Children, Young People and Families Strategy 2016-2020 is delivered, and requests a decision on the future role and function of the Children's Trust Board in the light of these developments.

2.0 Introduction

The Wirral Plan, published in June 2015, sets out a series of 20 pledges which the council and its partners will work to achieve by 2020, focusing on three key themes:

- protecting the most vulnerable
- driving economic growth
- improving the local environment

A number of strategies have been developed to deliver the Wirral Plan pledges including the Children, Young People and Families Strategy (CYPF Strategy). From 1st April 2016 this supersedes the Wirral Children and Young People's Plan 2014-16. Much of the good work that put innovative practice in place through the CYPF has directly informed the CYPF Strategy. The pledges and priorities for children and young people are now placed firmly in the context of the Wirral Plan 2020. The CYPF Strategy commits all partners in Wirral to signing up to a shared set of outcomes for children and young people; and using budgets, buildings, people and any other resources to achieve the common goals it sets out.

3.0 Joint Commissioning

The Children's Joint Commissioning Group (CJCG) is well-placed to oversee and grip the delivery of the partnership commitments. The terms of reference of the CJCG have been reviewed to ensure a sharp focus effective implementation of the joint commissioning activity required to deliver the ambitions set out in the CYPF Strategy. The CJCG will oversee and monitor the commissioning framework and associated action plans required to translate ambition into action, providing leadership and, where necessary, challenge to partners across Wirral to secure sustained, measurable improvements in outcomes. The revised Terms of Reference for the CJCG are attached at appendix 1.

4.0 Accountability and Governance

Closely involved in the development of the Wirral 2020 Plan, the Health and Well-Being Board (HWBB) has made an unequivocal commitment to improving the health and well-being of children and young people in the borough through the Health and Well-Being Strategy. This is closely aligned with the Wirral Plan and its underpinning strategies as follows:

Health & Well Being Priority	Wirral Plan Pledges	Wirral Plan Strategy	Partnership
A positive Start to Life	Children are ready for school	Children, Young People and Families Strategy	Children's Joint Commissioning Group
	Young people are ready for work and adulthood		
	Vulnerable children reach their full potential		HWBB lead: Julia Hassall, DCS
	Reduce child poverty	Improving Life Chances Strategy	Child Poverty Steering Group HWBB lead: Fiona Johnstone, DPH

Whilst the CYPF Strategy will be reported to the Health and Well-Being Board by exception, the Health and Well-Being Board can call the delivery of the CYPF strategy to account, reviewing performance against the CYPF commissioning framework. In support of this the Health and Well-Being Board can make things happen by unblocking barriers to partnership working as and when these arise.

The Healthy Wirral programme is driving the integration of health and social care across the borough through the Wirral Joint Commissioning Group (WJCG). There will be areas where taking a whole life course approach will be essential to follow the journey of children, young people and their families through the landscape of services and support available – for example in commissioning all-age disability and mental health provision.

The complete governance arrangements that flow out of the Wirral 2020 Plan and its delivery strategies are not yet fully finalised, however it is clear that there is an opportunity for the Children's Trust Board to review and refresh its role and function at the same time, to take stock and consider how it wishes to position itself in the context of the strategic commitments set out in the CYPF Strategy.

5.0 Wirral Children's Trust Board

Although the statutory guidance surrounding Children's Trust Boards has been removed there is a continuing legal requirement for authorities to promote effective partnership working to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families. Indeed, the ambition of joint commissioning to improve outcomes and meet the future financial challenge for public services will not be achieved without effective, robust and transparent partnership working.

There are some important principles committed to in the CYPF Strategy and its supporting documents that require partnership commitment and action. These include:

- Ensuring that the offer for all children and young people is high quality, enables them to grow into successful and fulfilled adults who have high aspirations for themselves;
- Ensuring the voice of children, young people and families is truly heard, and is at the heart of the partnership's work;
- The development of a vibrant and diverse voluntary, community and faith sector across the borough, working together with statutory services to achieve the CYPF Strategy goals;

- Acting as a champion for children and young people, and as a critical friend on their behalf to statutory service providers to ensure value for money at a time of competing priorities;
- Strengthening universal services such as schools, early years and youth provision so children and young people are drawn into services when problems first arise;
- Facilitating meaningful dialogue with service providers, to share best practice, stimulate the local market and ensure that Wirral continues to be seen as an attractive strategic and operational partner.

A Children's Action Network approach could see the Board develop into a multi-agency network of partners that comes together three times a year to take a lead role on the above areas, focusing on narrowing the gaps in health and educational attainment, and ensuring that universal services are supporting children and young people in Wirral who may need additional support – and are able to access and provide this support.

A problem-solving approach, with direct input from young people, practitioners, parents, Headteachers and independent providers, for example, would enable the refreshed Children's Trust Board to keep a solution-focused, impact-driven approach.

The Wirral 2020 Plan and the Healthy Wirral programme are substantially altering governance across the local system. To ensure that the lines of accountability and responsibility are clearly set out for all partners the protocol between the Children's Trust Board, the Health and Well-Being Board, the Wirral Safeguarding Children Board the CJCG and Wirral Joint Commissioning Group should be reviewed and updated to reflect the new commissioning landscape.

6.0 Recommendations:

- That Wirral Children's Trust Board note the refreshed Terms of Reference for the Children's Joint Commissioning Group (at appendix 1);
- That Wirral Children's Trust Board approves the review and refresh of its Terms of Reference, to be brought back to the next meeting of the Board for decision;
- That Wirral Children's Trust Board approves a review of the protocol between the Children's Trust Board, the Health and Well-Being Board, the Wirral Safeguarding Children Board, the WJCG and the CJCG, to be brought back to the next meeting of the Board for decision.

Appendices:

Appendix 1

Wirral Children's Joint Commissioning Group Terms of Reference, adopted 7th April 2016

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