



Nottinghamshire Children's Trust

BRIEFING: The role of Nottinghamshire County Council's Chief Executive regarding the Nottinghamshire Children's Trust and the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children's Board

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This briefing provides an overview of the role of the Nottinghamshire County Council (the Council) Chief Executive regarding Nottinghamshire's Children's Trust and the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB).

2. Legislative Background

- 2.1 The Children Act (2004) required the establishment of a single, strategic body responsible for ensuring all services co-operate to improve the well-being of local children and young people. Nottinghamshire Children's Trust fulfils this requirement. This statutory requirement has been further reinforced by subsequent guidance such as "Children's Trusts: Statutory Guidance on inter-agency cooperation to improve the well-being of children, young people and their families" (DCSF, 2008) and "The Roles and Responsibilities of the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Director of Children's Services" (DCSF, 2009).
- 2.2 Local Safeguarding Children Boards were also established by the Children Act (2004) to (a) co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the Council and (b) ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for that purpose.
- 2.3 "Working Together" (2006) describes the requirement for Local Safeguarding Children Boards and Children's Trusts to develop and implement an ongoing and direct relationship in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This requirement has also been further reinforced by the guidance mentioned in paragraph 2.1 above, along with "The protection of children in England: A Progress Report, Laming" (March 2009).

3. Relationship between Nottinghamshire Children's Trust and NSCB

- 3.1 The functions of the Children's Trust and NSCB include responsibility and accountability for keeping children and young people safe. Whilst their roles in this regard are complementary, they are also distinct.
- 3.2 The Children's Trust is responsible for the improvement of outcomes across all aspects of children and young people's lives and for the overarching framework for the delivery of these improved outcomes.
- 3.3 The NSCB has a specific role to ensure the Children's Trust pays due regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. A major aspect of the NSCB's function is to challenge and scrutinise individual agencies of the Children's Trust (as well as the partnership as a whole) to ensure they are meeting this requirement effectively and in a co-ordinated way. The Children's Trust has a challenge and

scrutiny role towards the NSCB, including, for example, its scrutiny of the annual report of the NSCB.

- 3.4 Therefore, although the NSCB must operate within the framework of the Children's Trust, it must also maintain a separate identity and independent voice to ensure this relationship of mutual challenge can be implemented effectively.

4. Role of the Council's Chief Executive

- 4.1 The role of the Council's Chief Executive regarding the Children's Trust and NSCB is set out in "The Roles and Responsibilities of the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Director of Children's Services" (DCSF, 2009) and is summarised below. The role is reinforced by "The protection of children in England: action plan. The Government's response to Lord Laming" (DCSF, 2009).

- 4.2 With regard to the Children's Trust and NSCB, the Council's Chief Executive should, along with the Council Leader:

- take responsibility for, and support the Lead Member (LM) and Director of Children's Services (DCS) in, ensuring that Children's Trust and safeguarding arrangements are robust and are integrated into the overall strategic planning of both the Council and the Local Strategic Partnership
- provide support to the LM and DCS in the discharge of their responsibilities
- monitor the performance respectively of the Lead Member and Director of Children's Services in securing better outcomes for children and young people
- at least once a year, as part of the Children's Trust annual report, formally make an assessment of the effectiveness of local governance and partnership arrangements to improve outcomes for children and to support the best possible standards for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

- 4.3 With regard to the Children's Trust and its relationship with NCSB, the Council's Chief Executive should satisfy themselves that the DCS is fulfilling their responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. This includes ensuring that:

- the relationship between the Children's Trust Board and the NSCB is working effectively
- clear responsibility has been assigned within the Council and among Children's Trust partners for improving services and outcomes
- targets for improving safeguarding and progress on them are reported to the LSP and
- they form a view as to whether things are working effectively in practice.

Note on context of this briefing:

1. This briefing is one of a set of four that provide an overview of the roles of the

- Council Leader
- Lead Member for children and young people
- Director of Children's Services

Therefore, the role of the Council Chief Executive is set within the context of the roles of the above.

2. This briefing has been produced prior to the publication of the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act, expected in autumn 2009 and may be subject to subsequent amendment.

3. This briefing has been produced by the Nottinghamshire Children's Trust and NSCB during the development of a protocol to establish an effective communication and relationship between Nottinghamshire's Children's Trust and NSCB. The protocol will outline processes to ensure the role of the Council's Chief Executive, with regard to the Children's Trust and NSCB, is fully operationalised.

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