

# report



## NOTTINGHAMSHIRE CHILDREN’S TRUST BOARD MEETING

20 September 2010

agenda item number 7

### REPORT FROM

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## Review of Nottinghamshire’s Children’s Trust

### Purpose of item

1. To outline changed national drivers impacting on Children’s Trusts and to make recommendations about Nottinghamshire’s response to these changes.

### Information and advice

### Background

#### National Policy and Planned Legislative Changes affecting Children’s Trusts

2. On 22 July 2010, the Secretary of State for Education announced his intention to:
  - remove the duty on schools to co-operate through Children’s Trusts via the forthcoming Education Bill,
  - remove the requirement on local authorities to set up Children’s Trust Boards and the requirement on those Boards to prepare and publish a joint Children and Young People’s Plan at the first available legislative opportunity,
  - revoke the regulations underpinning the Children and Young People’s Plan and withdraw the statutory guidance on Children’s Trusts, in the autumn.
3. In the press release announcing this intention, it was stated that national Government supports effective local partnerships, but wants to reduce the bureaucracy surrounding Children’s Trusts, allowing them to develop innovative local solutions. The basic duty on organisations to co-operate (as set out in the Children Act 2004) will remain, but the list of statutory partners will be reviewed. A copy of the press release is included in Appendix 1.

4. As well as this policy change, which has a direct impact on Children's Trusts, a number of other announced policy intentions are relevant to the operation of Children's Trusts. These include:
  - the announcement in the Queen's Speech in May 2010 to introduce a Devolution and Localism Bill to devolve greater powers to councils and neighbourhoods and give local communities control over housing and planning decisions,
  - the scrapping of Comprehensive Area Assessments in June 2010,
  - the cancellation of Tellus Survey of children and young people in July 2010 and the Place Survey in August, and statements suggesting that there will be reduced requirements for performance measures to be reported to national Government, with performance measured locally and responding to the views of local citizens,
  - the proposed changes to the National Health Service, outlined in the July 2010 White Paper, including the replacement of PCT commissioning by GP commissioners and the transfer of public health responsibility to local authorities (although these changes will not come into immediate effect),
  - the closing of Contact Point in August 2010,
  - the announcement in August 2010 to disband the Audit Commission, with its research functions ending and its audit functions transferred to the private sector. Inspection of services for adult and children's social care will remain,
  - the comprehensive spending review, to be published in October 2010, which will have a large impact on how public services are delivered, alongside already announced in-year budget cuts for public services.
5. In some policy areas, national Government appears committed to priorities previously identified. These include:
  - the reduction of child poverty,
  - early intervention for children facing multiple disadvantages. An independent commission into early intervention will report by the end of January 2011 on the issue of best practice with an interim report on funding. A final report on funding will be produced by May 2011.
6. There have been no announcements regarding the requirement on local authorities and PCTs to produce a Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA), as described in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (2007).
7. For Nottinghamshire Children's Trust, the main implications of these announcements are listed below.
  - The duty on key statutory partners to co-operate remains, but there is now the flexibility to develop arrangements that best meet local needs. There is no longer a requirement for a formal Children's Trust Board to manage co-operation between partners.
  - There is an opportunity to develop local arrangements for identifying priorities and delivering joint activities, instead of adhering to the strict

legislative requirements and guidance that formerly existed in relation to the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP).

- There will be reduced requirements to report on performance nationally, and alongside this there will be fewer pre-defined national performance measures, but there may still be a need for local partners to demonstrate that any co-operative working is effective and efficient, and to provide assurances to the public that it is having an impact on the quality of service delivery. There may be a need to develop local impact measures and associated data collection methods instead of relying on national performance measures (for example, the scrapping of the Tellus survey and Place Survey has had an impact on the current CYPP, which used these indicators for some of its performance management).
- There will be much reduced public sector funding, with implications for how services are delivered by partner organisations, either individually or in partnership. This will require closer scrutiny of the effectiveness and efficiency of co-operative working, and is likely to mean that there will be reduced resources to provide administrative support for this work.

### **Suggested approach**

8. While partner organisations will retain a duty to co-operate, there is now much more flexibility in how this co-operation may operate. Therefore, the key question for Nottinghamshire is:
  - What arrangements should the partners within the Children's Trust now adopt to manage co-operation and, where appropriate, joint planning and co-ordinated delivery of services?
9. There are three main options open to partners:
  - remove all meeting structure and governance arrangements in relation to the Children's Trust, discontinuing the Board and its Executive, with councillors or senior officers/managers meeting to make decisions about specific initiatives where co-operation might be needed,
  - retain the existing meeting structure and governance unchanged,
  - maintain some formal arrangements for the joint oversight of co-operative working but revise existing arrangements, possibly retaining some aspects of the existing Children's Trust Board, but reviewing its structure and governance, including terms of reference, membership and sub-groups and also considering if and how the CYPP should continue.
10. Potential benefits and risks of each option are outlined in the table below.

Option	Potential Benefits	Risks
Remove all meeting structure and governance arrangements	Reduction in time dedicated to formal meetings, including senior officer time, business support and associated costs.	<p>Potential increase in hidden costs of informal meetings, with officer time and administration required for a larger number of meetings about specific issues.</p> <p>Fewer opportunities to discuss cross-cutting issues, to identify related areas of work and link strategic planning and action around related areas.</p> <p>There is a continuing need for partnership working, scrutiny and challenge in relation to safeguarding. Having no formal meeting structure risks a loss of accountability for this work.</p> <p>Loss of transparency about decision-making and of public accountability, as discussions and decisions about co-operative working would no longer be routinely published.</p>
Retain existing meeting structure and governance arrangements unchanged	<p>No resources need to be committed to planning change.</p> <p>Existing arrangements are known to partner organisations, with the relationship of Children's Trust Board and its Executive clearly identified, including responsibility for decision-making and performance management.</p> <p>Joint meetings and planning arrangements allow for identification of potential efficiency savings by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reducing duplication,</li> <li>• identifying where coordinated or complementary activities can be undertaken by partner organisations,</li> <li>• using shared resources for needs analysis or monitoring performance .</li> </ul>	<p>Current arrangements are no longer consistent with national guidance and anticipated legislation, particularly regarding the involvement of schools, planning arrangements (based around CYPF) and performance management, and it is likely that membership will need to be further reviewed.</p> <p>The 2010 Ofsted/CQC Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children in Nottinghamshire has identified that existing arrangements do not provide sufficient scrutiny and challenge.</p> <p>Financial restraints on the public sector mean that current arrangements may not be feasible (e.g. officer time for the Children's Trust Board, Executive and sub-groups).</p>

Option	Potential Benefits	Risks
<p>Maintain some formal arrangements for joint oversight of co-operative working but revise existing arrangements</p>	<p>Enables Children’s Trust to develop in response to new national policy, and to develop arrangements that meet local need. Existing arrangements will have to change in some ways (e.g. change in statutory membership) – this approach involves a planned response.</p> <p>Provides the opportunity to develop new, more streamlined, arrangements for co-operative working, to replace the current CYPP and performance management arrangements.</p> <p>The 2010 Ofsted/CQC Inspection has identified that Nottinghamshire needs to strengthen its partnership working in relation to safeguarding, and its scrutiny and challenge in these areas. Revision of the Children’s Trust arrangements can take this into account.</p> <p>Joint meetings and planning arrangements allow for identification of potential efficiency savings by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reducing duplication,</li> <li>• identifying where co-ordinated or complementary activities can be undertaken by partner organisations,</li> <li>• using shared resources for needs analysis or monitoring performance</li> </ul>	<p>Requirement for resources to be committed to making changes (possible impact on other areas of work).</p> <p>Partner organisations and their workforce may not be committed to continuing the Children’s Trust or may question why governance arrangements are being reviewed within one year of previous review (risk could be mitigated by effective joint planning and communication strategy).</p>

11. In view of these potential benefits and risks, it is suggested that Nottinghamshire continues to operate some formal arrangements for the joint oversight of co-operative working. This would provide robust and publicly accountable arrangements to manage joint working, to ensure effective partnership working to safeguard children and to take forward initiatives in early intervention.

12. It is further suggested that the current operating arrangements are revised, to ensure their appropriateness in the changed national environment and to improve their efficiency and cost-effectiveness.
13. The following table identifies suggested revisions to operating arrangements. These suggestions have been developed following discussions by the Children's Trust Executive group at their September meeting.

<b>Proposed Revision</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
That the name 'Nottinghamshire Children's Trust' is retained to describe the collective co-operative activities of partners.	There is already an awareness within partner organisations of the Children's Trust name, and this is still consistent with national policy
That the role of the Children's Trust Board is reconsidered. It is suggested that this develops into a Children's Trust network, representing a broad range of partner organisations, which meets perhaps twice a year to review the overall strategic direction of the Children's Trust.	<p>A more streamlined meeting approach would be cost-effective, but twice-yearly meetings would still enable partners to identify shared interests.</p> <p>Fewer organisations will be formal partners under proposed arrangements for the Children's Trust, but a wide range of organisations may have an interest in joint activities. This approach would enable them to participate without excessive time commitment.</p>
That the Children's Trust Executive continues to meet regularly (six-weekly as at present), and that its purpose is to develop action to deliver on joint priorities, concentrating on those activities where co-operative action is needed and where it is considered this action will be most effective.	<p>This would make best use of officer time, and ensure that action is taken forward. Officers would be able to monitor progress in co-operative working and to quickly identify any shared risks and take mitigating action.</p> <p>This would provide a robust meeting structure to respond to challenge and scrutiny in relation to safeguarding, and would enable the Children's Trust to drive forward its development of early intervention working (part of safeguarding work, and a means of reducing service delivery costs by reducing demand on high-cost specialist services).</p>
<p>That membership of the Children's Trust Executive is rationalised, so that it is a small group of senior officers from key partner organisations.</p> <p>That it continues to be chaired by Nottinghamshire County Council's Corporate Director for Children and Young People's Services and has representation from health services, the police, and the voluntary sector.</p>	<p>A small, highly-focused group of senior officers would be best placed to make decisions, commit to action, and ensure that action is delivered.</p> <p>A smaller group would require less commitment of officer time across all partner organisations.</p>

Proposed Revision	Rationale
<p>That sub-groups and reporting groups for the Children's Trust are further revised and rationalised, ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any working sub-groups are time-limited with a clear remit</li> <li>• Where partnerships exist for specific purposes (e.g. 14-19 partnership, Integrated Youth Support Board), these share information and reports only as needed to take forward identified actions</li> </ul>	<p>Working groups only exist where needed, and make minimum use of officer time and administrative resources.</p>
<p>That existing arrangements for involving schools in partnership working (the Education Trust Board) are built upon and revised if necessary to ensure that they are relevant to schools.</p>	<p>There is no longer a duty to co-operate placed on schools, but that they may still wish to engage in some co-operative working promoting learning and achievement.</p>
<p>That further use is made of ICT, including using web-sites and e-mail, to share information with partners</p>	<p>This would provide more time at face-to-face meetings to focus on decision-making and action.</p>
<p>That the Children's Trust continues to produce a strategic action plan, identifying its key priorities and the joint activities it will undertake, but that this a shorter and simpler document than the current CYPP.</p>	<p>There will no longer be a statutory requirement for a CYPP or associated reporting, therefore the Children's Trust can develop a plan which meets its own needs and that focuses on local action.</p>
<p>That further consideration is given to how the impact of co-operative action can be demonstrated and reported to the public, including the development of local impact measures and data collection.</p>	<p>While there will no longer be large numbers of national performance indicators, there will still be a need to demonstrate that any work done is effective, and uses resources efficiently.</p>
<p>That the children and young people's chapter of the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA) continues to be maintained and updated, to be used as a basis for local planning of service delivery.</p>	<p>An in-depth understanding of local need provides an evidence base for decisions about priorities for joint working and individual service delivery.</p> <p>There is currently a legislative requirement to produce the JSNA.</p>

14. Some of these outlined proposals would need further development before they could be implemented. In addition, further announcements on national policy are expected in autumn 2010, which may have implications for the work of Children's Trusts and may result in modification of these proposals. In particular, it is anticipated that the Devolution and Localism Bill and the comprehensive spending review are likely to have significant implications for local authorities and their relationships with partner organisations.

15. It is therefore suggested that, if these proposals are accepted in principal, the Children's Trust Executive then undertakes further work to:
- identify membership of the Children's Trust network,
  - review the arrangements for engaging schools the work of the Children's trust,
  - rationalise Children's Trust Executive membership, remit and sub-groups,
  - produce a concise strategic plan, identifying priorities and proposed joint action for the Children's Trust,
  - identify and develop any local impact measures needed,
  - respond to further national policy announcements.
16. The Children's Trust Board and its Executive have already done some preliminary planning at a workshop in July to identify potential strategic priorities for the Children's Trust. (This was linked to the development of the CYPF 2010-14, when this was believed to be a statutory requirement.) A summary of these workshop discussions is included in Appendix 2. It is suggested that this work is used as a basis for the identification of priorities for the Children's Trust, and in developing a strategic plan for joint activities.

## **17. RECOMMENDATION**

18. That Nottinghamshire continues to operate formal arrangements for the joint oversight of co-operative working in order to provide a robust and accountable mechanism, retaining the name 'Nottinghamshire Children's Trust'.
19. That these Children's Trust arrangements are revised to ensure both their appropriateness in a changed national environment and to promote effective and efficient joint working.
20. That the proposals outlined in paragraph 13 are adopted as revisions to the Children's Trust arrangements.
21. That the Children's Trust Executive, supported by the Children's Trust Unit, further develops the detail of these outlined proposals, aiming to have completed this by January 2011.

### **MAGGIE PAPE**

Lead Officer, Strategic Planning (Children's Trust), Nottinghamshire County Council

## **APPENDIX 1: Press Release from the Department for Education**

### **Reform of Children's Trusts**

**Date: 22 July 2010**

Strong local partnerships are crucial to meeting the needs of all children, but a one-size-fits-all approach will not work. That is why this Government intends to remove much of the bureaucracy surrounding children's trusts and allow schools to choose how best they may engage. The Secretary of State has indicated that he proposes to:

- remove the duty on schools to co-operate through Children's Trusts via the forthcoming Education Bill
- remove the requirement on local authorities to set up Children's Trust Boards and the requirement on those Boards to prepare and publish a joint Children and Young People's Plan, at the first available legislative opportunity
- revoke the regulations underpinning the Children and Young People's Plan and withdraw the statutory guidance on Children's Trusts, in the autumn.

### **Further information**

#### **Does this mean Children's Trust partnerships are no longer a priority?**

No, the Government supports effective local partnerships and is freeing them to address local issues with innovative solutions. The basic duty to co-operate will continue but the list of statutory partners will be reviewed.

#### **What will the proposed changes mean for schools?**

Teachers and head teachers will be able to concentrate on teaching and learning. This is part of a wider programme of measures for reducing bureaucracy which we intend to communicate to schools and local authorities in the autumn.

#### **When will the new arrangements come into force?**

We intend to introduce legislation to remove the duty to co-operate from schools, revoke the regulations and withdraw the guidance in the autumn. The other proposed legislative changes to children's trusts will follow as soon as possible.

#### **What does this mean for the new CYPP due in April 2011?**

Once the regulations are revoked there will be no requirement to produce a new CYPP in April 2011 unless the local area wishes to do so. Also, how the plan is put together and what it contains will be for the local partners to decide.

### **Background**

Children's trusts are local partnership arrangements to improve children's well-being (the five outcomes). They are not defined in legislation but are underpinned by a 'duty to co-operate' in section 10 of the Children Act 2004. The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 amended section 10 by bringing schools, colleges and Jobcentre Plus under the duty to co-operate and requiring all local areas to have a children's trust board, which had to prepare and publish a jointly owned Children and Young People's Plan by April 2011.

[www.education.gov.uk/news/news/childrenstrusts](http://www.education.gov.uk/news/news/childrenstrusts)

## **APPENDIX 2: Feedback from Children's Trust Board and Executive Workshop on Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) Priorities, 6 June 2010**

**Given the current evidence (JSNA, performance information, safeguarding and looked after children inspection) how relevant are the 10 improvement priorities that were identified for the CYPP 2009-11?**

### table 1 (Kate Allen facilitating):

- Emotional well-being is really an issue in schools now, manifesting itself very much in behaviour, especially in the band below the most needy
- JATs/CAFs are not very popular among headteachers – seen as bureaucratic
- Obesity is not as shocking as death by road accidents but it's killing a lot of people

### table 2 (Derek Higton facilitating):

- Does JSNA really identify really local issues – pattern of need within districts is lost in county level summaries (note – more detailed JSNA information is on web)
- Priorities should be better linked with geographical need – better local priorities
- Educational attainment needs to focus on older age-group – especially achievement and outcomes at age 18 (what has education led to? Are young people in education or employment at 18? – Nottinghamshire has low NEET rate for 16-17 year olds but it increases after this age – why?)
- Needs to be a link between CYPP and economic development partnerships (LEPs?)
- Should focus on families (fits with government priorities)

### table 3 (Sally Moorcroft facilitating)

- Yes they are still relevant but really need clarification as to what do they 'really' mean.
- Potentially could be one overarching statement (that doesn't forget those CYP that are vulnerable, at risk and generally 'labelled') supported by 3 or 4 more encompassing statements (priorities)
- Question – what value does the plan add?

## Should any of these priorities be removed or revised for 2011-14?

### If so, why?

#### table 1 (Kate Allen facilitating):

- Sexual health questionable
  - is it being picked up anyway and have we actually sorted it pretty well?
  - if we sort out aspirations, emotional health and substance misuse, teenage pregnancy and chlamydia rates should improve
- Smoking is important – substance use could expand to include this

#### table 2 (Derek Higton facilitating):

- Positive activities needs refining if still included – wording lacks sophistication – it should be about children and young people taking part in activities/accessing services (not necessarily providing more services)
- By emotional well-being do we mean mental health? Can we make a difference here as a partnership or is it a health issue predominately?
- We need to prioritise – focus on areas where we can make a difference (obesity and sexual health may be changing/improving as a result of wider societal changes – what evidence is there that our action is making or will make a difference?)
- Education needs to be linked with economic productivity

#### table 3 (Sally Moorcroft facilitating)

- There is opportunity to group some of the existing priorities together as below with some generic headline. e.g.
  - 2,3,4            Participation and Achievement
  - 8,9,10        Health & Well-being
- May need to clarify some other priorities:
  - 7                Drugs and Alcohol. Need to understand if it is use of or exposure to.
  - 6                Crime - Question - Does this priority imply that society needs to be protected form CYP

**Are there any new strategic priorities that need to be considered for 2011-14?  
What are the reasons for considering these?**

table 1 (Kate Allen facilitating):

- E-safety is a growing issue (including cyber-bullying)
- Homelessness
- Teen abuse and violence within families

table 2 (Derek Higton facilitating):

- Child poverty – related to other issues identified – attainment/aspiration/economic well-being

table 3 (Sally Moorcroft facilitating)

- The one overarching statement could read something like....  
*Every CYP should have access to baseline/standard services and are entitled to a good education, quality health care ...etc*  
This ensures that the plan is for all of our CYP's and just that target audience.
- Other priorities could be:
  - Improve the recognition of CYP as a positive part of our community
  - Targeted/universal intervention (through pre-school) around parenting support (Think Family)
  - Equality Issues – disabled children seem to be missing
  - Child Poverty – not just financial poverty but aspirational poverty
- We need to know what additional action is needed and coordinate it across agencies.
- Question – Who can say which of these priorities are no longer important?

## Any other comments or suggestions?

### table 1 (Kate Allen facilitating):

- Principle – where are things not as bad as they look and where are things we're doing not working?
- Who is the audience for the CYPP? – really strategic planners rather than the public
- Make it more accessible to the workforce
- Make outcomes real rather than simplistic data such as number of CAFs filled in
- Evidence collated and conclusions have to show real impact rather than just output stats
- Should you only go for things where you can evidence you're making a difference, or should you try anyway even if you can't prove it?  
on balance, with limited resources, should not do nebulous things but need to be able to draw the line directly to evidence that what we're doing works
- Need to consider really local need – and how to get into this

### table 3 (Sally Moorcroft facilitating)

- The plan should ensure that we make the biggest difference to the largest amount of people.
- It is important that the priorities make it clear about what is encompassed in each one. What is actually being 'done'?
- What is the baseline service delivery/expectation for all CYP? From this point we can identify target areas and priorities.
- A basic responsive Child Protection Service – we need to improve and maintain a good quality service
- Support vulnerable groups
  - Missing children
  - Disabled children
  - Those exposed to substance misuse, Domestic Violence and mental health issue of their parents
  - E-safety (cyber bullying, grooming etc)
- We WILL see economic benefit from intervening earlier and more effectively. But we must invest in order to do it well and to see the later benefits (reduction in looked after children etc)
- Better support those that have been through frontline Child Protection Services. Adoption needs to be efficient and effective (timescales) and Care plans need to be quickly put into place and delivered.
- We must be able to deliver good quality services in a mixed economy – effective commissioning.
- The Golden Threads that need embedding are
  - Think Family approach
  - Child Poverty
  - Equality