

report



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S BOARD MEETING

Date 21/09/09

Agenda Item 5

REPORT FROM Maggie Pape, Acting Partnership Unit Manager

Partnership delivery unit proposals

Purpose of Report

This report outlines the purpose of a proposed Partnership Delivery Unit, and provides supporting information about the likely benefits and costs of such a unit.

Information and Advice

Background

1. The establishment of a Partnership Delivery Unit was proposed following a joint meeting of the Children and Young People's (CYP) Partnership Board, the Children's Services Executive Group and the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board in March, and initial proposals were presented to the Partnership Board in June. This was part of wider discussions and recommendations about the governance arrangements for the Partnership.
2. The CYP Partnership is the Children's Trust for Nottinghamshire, acting as a planning body, informing commissioning decisions by its partner members and ensuring that resources are made available to implement plans. It is underpinned by the duties in the Children Act 2004 to co-operate in making arrangements to improve well-being for local children. Recent national guidance has clarified expectations on Children's Trusts (*Children's Trusts: statutory guidance on inter-agency co-operation to improve well-being of children, young people and their families (DCSF 2008)*, *Statutory Guidance: The Roles and Responsibilities of the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Director of Children's Services (DCSF 2009)*) and legislation in progress through the *Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Bill* is likely to further strengthen the role of Children's Trusts. This Bill is expected to receive Royal Assent in autumn 2009 and to:
 - Make the Children's Trust Board a statutory body,

- Extend the number of ‘relevant partners’ with a duty to co-operate to promote children’s well-being to include all schools, sixth form and further education colleges and Job Centre Plus,
 - Give the Children’s Trust Board responsibility for producing the CYPP (currently the Local Authority is responsible for producing the CYPP, working with partner organisations).
3. This June meeting of the Partnership Board gave approval in principle to the temporary establishment of a Partnership Delivery Unit, to provide it with administrative and policy support to enable it to fulfil its current and likely future responsibilities, as outlined above, including developing effective working arrangements with new partner organisations. The Board requested further information on the role of this unit and on funding options, which this paper provides.

Suggested Way Forward

4. The Partnership Delivery Unit is proposed as a resource to ensure that business processes and information flow for the Partnership are managed effectively, and to provide support to the Board and its executive groups in developing and implementing policies, strategies and actions. The Unit would support the CYP Partnership in undertaking its existing roles and responsibilities, and in its further development in view of the proposed legislation to extend the responsibilities of Children’s Trusts.
5. Nottinghamshire County Council is able to fund a Partnership Delivery Unit for a period of 18 months. Longer term viability of the unit, in terms of both operational arrangements and funding options, would need to be considered. This would also involve reviewing how the unit operates in relation to the existing support unit for the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB). The Partnership Delivery Unit would initially operate separately of the NSCB support unit, but would need to work closely with it. Further consideration might be given to the potential for the coordination of business processes and alignment of planning work, as well as considering how resources, such as staff time, might be best used or combined.

Proposed Purpose of Unit

6. It is proposed that the Partnership Delivery Unit will:
- support the Trust in operating a cohesive approach to strategic planning which focuses on outcomes for children and young people, and is driven by effective performance management and needs analysis, with the Children and Young People’s Plan being established as the business plan for the Partnership,
 - provide business support and policy advice to the Lead Member for Children’s Services, the Corporate Director for Children and Young People’s Services and the Children’s Trust Board and its executive group, to support them in carrying out their statutory functions as defined in legislation, policy and guidance related to Children’s Trusts and their duty to co-operate to improve the well-being of children and young people,

- support the Lead Member for Children’s Services, the Corporate Director for Children and Young People’s Services and the Board in the production of progress reports, in particular the production of an annual report,
- develop and maintain working protocols between the Board, its Executive and sub-groups, and other groups which have responsibility for aspects of work related to young people. Groups of particular importance are the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board, the Nottinghamshire Partnership and its thematic sub-groups including the Safer Nottinghamshire Partnership and the Health and Well-being Group, as well as district / borough Local Strategic Partnerships.

Proposed Membership of Delivery Unit

7. The Partnership Unit will report to the Head of Strategic Planning and Commissioning, Nottinghamshire County Council Children and Young People’s Services, and will comprise four staff members:

- Partnership Unit Manager,
- Strategic Intelligence Manager,
- Business Development Manager,
- Unit Administrator.

8. The Unit will work together to ensure that the Board receives appropriate support, but each member of staff will have specific roles as defined below.

- Unit Manager
 - To lead on the integration of planning, performance management and needs analysis for the Children’s Trust, and to ensure that the Children and Young People’s Plan is established as the business plan for the Trust.
 - To provide advice on national legislation, policy and guidance, and to support the Board and its executive in developing Nottinghamshire strategies and policies, as required but especially in relation to the Children and Young People’s Plan and the role of Children’s Trusts.
- Strategic Intelligence Manager
 - To develop an agreed multi-agency overview of the needs of children and young people in Nottinghamshire, and of how effectively the Trust and its member organisations perform in meeting those needs, working with member organisations and drawing on the full range of data held by these organisations.
 - To provide the Trust with analyses of this information to support an evidence-based approach to outcomes-focused strategic planning and joint commissioning. This will include producing the children’s element of the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA) and performance monitoring reports for the Children and Young People’s Plan.

- Business Development Manager
 - To provide business and administration support to the Board, the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Corporate Director for Children and Young People's Services to enable them to fulfil their role to provide strategic vision and direction for services for children and young people.
 - To contribute to development activities related to the Children and Young People's Plan and the role of Children's Trusts.
- Unit Administrator
 - To provide administrative support for all the work of the Unit, with responsibility for monitoring project progress, maintaining up-to-date information on web-site pages, and managing events.

Cost-benefit analysis for the Partnership Delivery Unit

Likely Benefits of a Partnership Delivery Unit

9. A Partnership Delivery Unit would be able to work across all groups and boards operating within the Partnership, to ensure that they maintain an outcomes focus by:
 - providing advice on national legislation and policy requirements,
 - supporting the further development and implementation of the Children and Young People's Plan,
 - ensuring that robust information on the needs of children and young people in Nottinghamshire, and the performance of services in meeting their needs, to support strategic decision-making,
 - supporting the CYP Partnership in developing approaches to commissioning and resource allocation to support strategic plans,
 - supporting senior officers/managers in taking forward action, by for example, drafting documents or by communicating information to members of the workforce.
10. The Unit would be able to ensure that the Partnership adopts a value for money approach, by:
 - providing business support to ensure that meetings are conducted efficiently, and to ensure that reporting arrangements promote effective information flow between groups,
 - supporting a review of the number of sub-groups for the Partnership and their Terms of Reference, to avoid duplication of work,
 - providing senior officers/managers with the support needed to make best use of their time.

Estimated Costs of a Partnership Delivery Unit

11. National grant funding is available until 2011, to support the establishment and initial operation of the Unit. This would provide an 18-month time period for the Unit to set up working arrangements and demonstrate

effectiveness. Longer term arrangements for the common funding of these posts by the Partnership Board would need to be explored further. To support these discussions, an estimate of the likely costs for the financial year April 2010-March 2011 is provided.

<u>Estimated Partnership Unit Costs</u>	<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>£184,000</u>
• Partnership Unit Manager		£56,000
• Partnership Intelligence Manager		£50,000
• Business Development Manager		£48,000
• Unit Administrator		£25,000
• Other expenses (travel, IT and office equipment)		£5,000

Note: Costs are calculated using salary maxima, and include £24.2% on-costs based on staff using county council premises.

Comparison of Benefits and Costs of a Partnership Delivery Unit

12. The costs for the Unit are solely the salaries and associated costs for its four members, and the intention is that this relatively small investment in staff costs will support the CYP Partnership as a whole to become more outcomes-focused and efficient in its working.
13. Much of the work to be undertaken by the Unit is work that is required to implement strategy or policy to meet national legislative requirements, or to ensure that the Partnership has effective business support. If the Unit were not created, then it is likely that the local authority or other partner organisations would still need to allocate manager/officer time to support this work, using a range of staff in policy or business support roles. The establishment of a dedicated support team would enable its staff to develop knowledge and expertise to deliver this work efficiently, instead of it being delivered in a fragmented way by a number of officers, possibly detracting from their other roles.
14. A number of benefits have been identified for the Unit; creating such a unit in the form described in this paper would ensure that the Lead Member, Corporate Director for Children's Services and the Partnership Board are supported in fulfilling their responsibilities to improve outcomes for children and young people.
15. Comparison of the benefits and costs therefore suggests that creating a Partnership Delivery Unit would be an effective use of resources.
16. Further work may identify how the Partnership Delivery Unit might work with the NSCB support function, including shared use of resources, which might have implications for potential costs in the longer-term.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Board approves these proposals for the operation and initial funding of the Partnership Delivery Unit, for a period of 18 months.