



meeting	NOTTINGHAMSHIRE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTNERSHIP BOARD	
date	15 June 2009	agenda item number 4.

PARTNERSHIP DELIVERY UNIT

Purpose of report

1. This report proposes the establishment of a Partnership Delivery Unit in the light of the draft statutory guidance on Children's Trusts issued by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

Information and advice

Background

2. The key changes set out in the DCSF guidance at the end of last year (and ahead of planned legislation in the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill recommended as good practice) are that each Children's Trust should:
 - have a board responsible for a range of functions, to be defined by statute, including the publication of an annual report
 - extend the "relevant" key partners under a duty to cooperate to include schools, sixth form colleges and colleges of further education and Job Centre Plus
 - takeover the legal responsibility currently held by local authorities for producing, and providing resources for securing delivery of, the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP)
 - monitor the extent to which partners are acting in accordance with the plan
 - inform and influence the work of the Local Strategic Partnership so that the CYPP is consistent with the strategic vision of the Sustainable Community Strategy and help drive its delivery
3. On 20 March 2009 a Partnership event was held to develop a shared understanding of the current arrangements for the Partnership as well as the key drivers that will influence its development and future focus. Members of the Partnership Board, the Children's Services Executive (CSEG) and the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board considered two specific areas:
 - the future direction of the Partnership, including key relationships and inter-actions
 - the components and shape of the Partnership's future structure.

4. From the meeting it was agreed that CSEG would produce an options paper for a revised Partnership structure to the Children and Young People's Partnership Board in September 2009. There was also overwhelming support in principle for an administration and delivery unit to support the Board and its Executive.
5. A major challenge for the Partnership is the implementation of the CYPP. As part of the preparation for the production of the current CYPP, a small team was created from secondments from within the County Council's Children and Young People's Services department. This team consists of a FTE Band E post ((approx £45K), a FTE A band C post (approx £35K) and a FTE Scale 3 admin post (approx 18K). Discussions within the Children's Services Executive Group (CSEG) and with the County Council's Human Resources department have recognised the high level of similarity between the work of the current CYPP team and the work that would need to be undertaken by an administration and delivery unit. Funding has therefore been identified from within the Children and Young Peoples Service's budget to enable continuation of these posts until 31 March 2010 to provide some short term capacity for such a unit.
6. These posts would provide the capacity to service the business of both the Partnership Board and CSEG and ensure that the implementation of the current CYPP links closely with the processes involved in the development of the next CYPP. Consideration of the potential transfer of other key partnership posts into the unit would also need to be considered once the Partnership structure is approved. For example, some support was expressed at the meeting on 20 March 2009 for a joint arrangement with the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board.
7. Longer term arrangements for the common funding of the unit by the Partnership Board would need to be explored further to enable continuation of these posts. Some form of common funding arrangements would be appropriate for the smooth operation of administrative business in the Partnership which would necessarily involve some small financial costs in addition to salaries. There are a range of flexibilities in financial arrangements for the public sector that would enable this but "Section 10" agreements arising from the Children Act 2004 may be the simplest for dealing with the relatively small financial matters involved. These agreements do not require formal pooled funding but rather they provide a common fund from which expenditure must only be drawn by the partner with the relevant function.

RECOMMENDATION

8. It is recommended that the Board:
 - approves the formation of the administrative and policy unit on a temporary basis as outlined above
 - identifies a process for undertaking the review and future funding of such a unit.

Les Cowling

Head of Strategic Planning and Commissioning, Children and Young People's Services