



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE CHILDREN’S TRUST BOARD MEETING

3 February 2011

agenda item number 4

REPORT FROM

Maggie Pape, Lead Officer, Strategic Planning (Children’s Trust)

Title

Future of Nottinghamshire Children’s Trust and the Development of its joint strategic plan 2011-12

Purpose

1. To make recommendations on changes to Nottinghamshire Children’s Trust governance arrangements and on the development of a joint strategic plan for 2011-12.

Information and advice

Background

Recent national policy and legislative changes impacting on the Children’s Trust and the Children and Young People’s Plan

2. The main legislation underpinning the Children’s Trust is Section 10 of the Children Act 2004. ‘Relevant partner’ organisations named within the Act have a ‘duty to co-operate’ with the local authority responsible for children’s services (in Nottinghamshire, the County Council) in order to safeguard children and to promote their well-being.
3. Under the previous national administration, additional legislation and statutory guidance extended this duty to co-operate to schools, colleges and Jobcentre Plus, and required each Children’s Trust to have a formal Board which would produce a detailed Children and Young People’s Plan.
4. The Secretary of State for Education has announced his intention to remove all of this additional legislation and guidance, while maintaining the ‘duty to co-operate’ as defined in the Children Act 2004, with the expectation that local authorities should continue to lead partnership arrangements. Children’s Trust’s will continue to exist, but with much greater flexibility in how they operate.
5. As of December 2010:

- Statutory guidance on Children’s Trusts has been revoked, meaning that there is no requirement to produce a Children and Young People’s Plan.
 - The forthcoming Education Bill will make provision to remove the legislative duty for schools and colleges to be relevant partners. Further legislation is planned for the next Parliamentary session to remove the requirements for there to be a Children’s Trust Board and for Jobcentre Plus to be a relevant partner (this is likely to be in 2012).
 - ‘Relevant partners’ will continue to be:
 - district councils
 - strategic health authorities
 - primary care trusts
 - youth offending teams
 - police
 - probation services
 - persons providing Connexions services
 - Jobcentre Plus (until planned legislation in 2012).
6. In addition, the removal of the National Indicator Set and changes to performance requirements mean that there is a substantial reduction in the amount of performance information that needs to be collected and reported by the Children’s Trust and its partner organisations.
 7. The national policy position is outlined at: <http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/inthenews/a0066362/more-freedom-and-flexibility-a-new-approach-for-childrens-trust-boards-children-and-young-peoples-plans-and-the-duty-to-cooperate>
 8. The role of the Children’s Trust will also be influenced by planned changes to the National Health Service, including the transfer of commissioning to GP consortia, and the changing role of local authorities. Under the Health and Social Care Bill 2011 local authorities will be given the lead for strategic planning and coordination of NHS, public health, social care, and related children’s services. These duties and responsibilities will be ultimately discharged through statutory Health and Well Being Boards which will be committees of the local authorities. Subject to Parliamentary approval, the Boards must be in place for 2013, running in shadow form from 2012, although as yet there is no detailed plan for the establishment of the Health and Well Being Board in Nottinghamshire.
 9. It might be argued that these new arrangements offer the opportunity to streamline high level governance and therefore could have a fundamental impact on the viability of the Trust, particularly given that the Health and Well Being Board will have a statutory basis. Feasibly, the current Executive of the Children’s Trust could report to the new Health and Well Being Board, with any wider Trust either being disbanded or remaining as a wider professional and consultative network for the sector. As a consequence, it is proposed that the recommended arrangements for the Children’s Trust set out in paragraph 15 be reviewed when there is more detail about the establishment of the Health and Well Being Board for Nottinghamshire.

Suggested way forward

10. As a result of national legislation and policy changes, there is much greater local discretion in how partnership arrangements are operated, but there is still a requirement for the Children's Trust to exist in some form. It is anticipated that there may be further changes in national policy which the Children's Trust will need to accommodate, while for the foreseeable future it will be operating in an environment where efficiency and value for money are essential.
11. At its 20 September 2010 meeting, Nottinghamshire Children's Trust Board discussed its response to the changed national and local situation, and tasked the Children's Trust Executive with the further development of proposals on operating arrangements.
12. The Children's Trust Executive has now produced a recommended governance structure for the Children's Trust. These revised working arrangements are intended to be more streamlined, flexible and resource-efficient. The recommended arrangements are summarised below.
13. The recommendations include an outline of the proposed approach for joint strategic planning. Legislation no longer requires Children's Trusts to produce a Children and Young People's Plan, but the Executive recommends that:
 - the Children's Trust produces a new strategic plan, to replace the existing Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) when it expires in April 2011,
 - that this plan be called the 'Nottinghamshire Children, Young People and Families Plan', recognising the importance of working with whole families to achieve improvements in children's lives,
 - that this plan is a much shorter and more focussed document than the existing plan, updated annually, and identifying key activities that add value to partnership working.

Proposed new Nottinghamshire Children's Trust operating arrangements

14. The Executive proposes that the Children's Trust maintains its current vision that '*We will work together to provide integrated services for all children and young people in Nottinghamshire to improve their life chances and to help them maximise their potential*', but that it restates its purpose as:
 - *The Children's Trust enables partners to co-operate to safeguard children and to promote their well-being. Some organisations are required to do this, in the Children Act 2004. Other organisations may choose to become involved in the Children's Trust.*
 - *The Children's Trust will identify where the joint planning of activities will be of value, and where joint commissioning or integrated delivery arrangements are appropriate. It will oversee specific change management or improvement activities in these areas, and will ensure that key information about joint working is communicated to all partners.*
15. It is proposed that the Children's Trust reporting structure is revised, reducing the staff resources committed to meetings. The proposed structure is that:
 - The Children's Trust Board will meet less frequently (twice a year), becoming a strategic network to share information and discuss

priorities. It will comprise all Children's Trust relevant partners (plus others by agreement), and will be open to the public/media

- The Children's Trust Executive will continue to report to the Board. It will include representation at a senior level from key partners, to include the County Council, PCTs or representatives of health organisations, and the police. It will be an officer group responsible for the partnership management of those areas of activity where joint planning, joint commissioning, or integrated working are required.
 - The number of groups reporting to the Children's Trust will be reduced. Remaining groups will either fulfil a statutory function or be task-finish groups
 - Each District/Borough in Nottinghamshire will have a Children's Trust District Management Group. These groups will be responsible for district-level planning and delivery of partnership activities, including the development of integrated working. These groups will be accountable to the Children's Trust Executive for the delivery of integrated working to support children, young people and families.
16. The Children Act 2004 assigns the County Council the lead role in managing partnership arrangements. Current arrangements are that :
- The Children's Trust Board is chaired by the Lead Member for Children's Services
 - The Children's Trust Executive is an officer-led group, chaired by the Corporate Director for Children Families and Cultural Services.
17. It is proposed that these chairing arrangements are maintained. They are in line with current statutory guidance, and national policy statements suggest that there are no plans to repeal the legislation on the requirement for local authorities to appoint lead members and directors of children's services, although this may be reviewed at some stage.
18. Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board will continue to scrutinise the safeguarding activities of the Children's Trust. As defined in the 'Working Together' 2010 statutory guidance, it will do this through an annual report to the Children's Trust Board, plus interim exception reporting to the Children's Trust Executive if any urgent issues are identified.
19. A draft of revised Governance and Terms of Reference document for Nottinghamshire Children's Trust is attached as Appendix 1.

Nottinghamshire Children's Trust approach to developing Nottinghamshire's new Children, Young People and Families Plan (CYPF Plan)

20. There is no longer a legislative requirement for Children's Trusts to produce a Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). National Government has given Children's Trusts the responsibility to choose whether or not to have a joint strategic plan, and to define the content and scope of any such plan. However, it is recommended that Nottinghamshire Children's Trust produces a new joint strategic plan, to replace the existing plan when it expires in April 2011. The Children's Trust Executive recommends that this is known as the 'Nottinghamshire Children, Young People and Families Plan (CYPF Plan)', as this name maintains some continuity with the previous name, but recognises the importance of work with parents/carers and families.

21. The Children's Trust Executive is taking the lead responsibility for the production of the CYPF Plan, and for the evaluation of the impact of activities within it. It will be presented to the Children's Trust Board for approval prior to publication. Other partnership groups may be consulted in its development, to provide evidence about the needs of children, young people and families or about partnership activities or services.
22. The Children's Trust Executive's proposals for the new-format CYPF Plan are that:
 - The CYPF Plan will not attempt to describe or monitor all partnership or joint working, planning or commissioning in Nottinghamshire, but will identify areas of work where there needs to be additional joint action, over a time-limited period, to improve the effectiveness of services for children and young people. The focus will be on identifying and making specific improvements, not on all the 'business as usual' partnership activities where current performance is already good or acceptable.
 - The CYPF Plan will set an overall direction for the partnership, expressed through four key themes:
 - Child Protection
 - Achievement and Attainment
 - Participation in Society
 - Health and well-being
 - The CYPF Plan will identify a small number of partnership priorities for action. These priorities will be reviewed and updated annually, to reflect changing circumstances and to ensure that the CYPF Plan remains relevant.
 - Within this new approach, performance analysis will be streamlined and will identify the desired impact of development activities together with specific milestones or indicators to demonstrate progress. This should reduce the work required to analyse performance, while ensuring that essential information is still produced.
23. This planning work will need to be supported by effective and up-to-date analysis of the needs of children and young people and of how services are performing in meeting those needs. This information will be needed to enable the Children's Trust to make decisions about where to prioritise its joint working, planning and commissioning.

Outline Content of Nottinghamshire Children, Young People and Families Plan 2011-12

24. The content of the new CYPF Plan is being developed by the Children's Trust Executive, supported by the Children's Trust Unit. This work builds on discussions at a workshop activity in July 2010, when the Children's Trust and Executive met jointly to consider priorities, after reviewing evidence from the Children and Young People's Refresh of the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA), plus performance reporting and inspection findings.
25. The diagram in Appendix 2 shows the proposed annual priorities for action for 2011-12 and how they relate to the four key themes of the Children's Trust.

Further action needed to produce Nottinghamshire Children, Young People and Families Plan 2011-12

26. The next stage in developing the new CYPF Plan is to identify how each development activity will be achieved. It is proposed that about 5 objectives will be associated with each activity and that each objective will have an action plan for its delivery with associated evaluation and progress measures.
27. To take this forward, the Children's Trust Executive has identified lead individuals or groups for each activity. It is proposed that Maggie Pape (Lead Officer, Strategic Planning (Children's Trust) and Geoff Hamilton (Children's Trust Intelligence Manager) will work with the Children's Trust Executive and these leads to develop this work, in preparation for the publication of the 2011-12 CYP Plan early in the 2011-12 financial year. (Suggested leads are identified in Appendix 3).

RECOMMENDATION

28. It is recommended that the Children's Trust Board agrees:
 - the proposed changes to Nottinghamshire Children's Trust governance arrangements,
 - that these arrangements are kept under review as the arrangements for Nottinghamshire's Health and Well Being Board are developed,
 - the approach adopted for the development of its new Children Young People and Families (CYPF) Plan for 2011-12,
 - the outline content of the CYPF Plan.

Maggie Pape, Lead Officer, Strategic Planning (Children's Trust)
January 2011

Nottinghamshire Children's Trust

GOVERNANCE

and

TERMS OF REFERENCE

2011-2012

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DRAFT Version 3
26 January 2011

These governance arrangements and terms of reference are published on the 1st April 2011 and are current until 31st March 2012. They were approved by the Children's Trust Board and will be reviewed annually.

1. Our Vision

We will work together to provide integrated services for all children and young people in Nottinghamshire to improve their life chances and to help them maximise their potential

2. Our Purpose

The Children's Trust enables partners to co-operate to safeguard children and to promote their well-being. Some organisations are required to do this, in the Children Act 2004. Other organisations may choose to become involved in the Children's Trust.

The Children's Trust will identify where the joint planning of activities will be of value, and where joint commissioning or integrated delivery arrangements are appropriate. It will oversee specific change management or improvement activities in these areas, and will ensure that key information about joint working is communicated to all partners.

3. Our Principles

- We will work together to achieve our vision, building mutual trust, respect and openness
- We will seek the views of children and young people, families and communities when planning partnership activities.
- We will be clear about partnership priorities and base our joint planning or commissioning of services around them.
- We will work flexibly and adapt our plans and activities to changing circumstances.
- We will always seek to maximise value for money, both in the partnership activities that we develop and in our meeting or information-sharing arrangements.
- We will ensure that decisions are based on clear evidence about local needs and about the likely impact of planned activities.
- We will communicate about what we do, with our staff in partner organisations and to children, young people, families and communities.

4. Our Partners

All those organisations identified as relevant partners in the Children Act 2004 are partners within the Children's Trust. These are::

- Nottinghamshire County Council, as the 'Children's Services Authority', which has statutory responsibility to make arrangements to promote co-operation to improve children's well-being (Children Act 2004)
- Ashfield District Council
- Bassetlaw District Council
- Broxtowe District Council
- Gedling District Council
- Mansfield District Council
- Newark & Sherwood District Council
- Rushcliffe District Council
- Bassetlaw PCT
- Nottinghamshire County PCT
- Nottinghamshire Police
- Nottinghamshire Probation Service
- Nottinghamshire Youth Offending Service
- Jobcentre Plus.

Other organisations may also have significant contributions to make to partnership working. Any organisations that work with children, young people or families may be invited to become partners within the Children's Trust, or may apply to become partners. They may become partners if the Children's Trust Board agrees to this, using its usual decision-making process.

5. Our Structure

The Children's Trust includes a number of groups that have been set up to agree priorities or to manage activities.

These groups are:

Children's Trust Board

This is a strategic network, meeting twice-yearly, which shares information and discusses priorities. All organisations that are partners within the Children's Trust are represented on the Children's Trust Board. The Chair of Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board is a participant observer.

Children's Trust Executive

This group reports to the Board. It is responsible for the partnership management of those areas of activity where joint planning, joint commissioning, or integrated working are required. The group meets every 4-6 weeks and includes representatives of key partners within the Children's Trust.

District Management Groups

Each District/Borough in Nottinghamshire has a Children's Trust District Management Group. These groups are responsible for district-level planning and delivery of partnership activities, including the development of integrated working. These groups are accountable to the Children's Trust Executive.

Associated Partnerships.

A number of partnerships exist to achieve specific purposes. These include:

- Nottinghamshire 14-19 Strategy Group
- Integrated Youth Support Development Board.

These groups are not directly accountable to the Children's Trust Executive. However, the Executive may delegate responsibility for the achievement of specific activities to one of these groups. In this case, the group will be accountable to the Executive for this activity, and will be expected to provide it with progress reports.

Task-Finish Groups

The Children's Trust Executive, or District Management Groups, may choose to set up task-finish groups to implement or monitor specific activities or projects. Each group will have a clearly defined, time-limited list of tasks to achieve, and will provide regular progress reports. The lifetime of each group may vary from a few months to over a year, but all groups will be reviewed at least annually to ensure that they still have a purpose.

Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) is the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for the County, responsible for delivering robust safeguarding arrangements across the County.

The core objectives of the NSCB, set out in section 14 (1) of the Children Act 2004, are to:

- co-ordinate what is done by partners for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area,
- ensure the effectiveness of what is done by partners for that purpose.

The Children's Trust Board and the NSCB operate independently, so that each may challenge the activities of the other, but with ongoing communication to avoid duplication or gaps in policies or services.

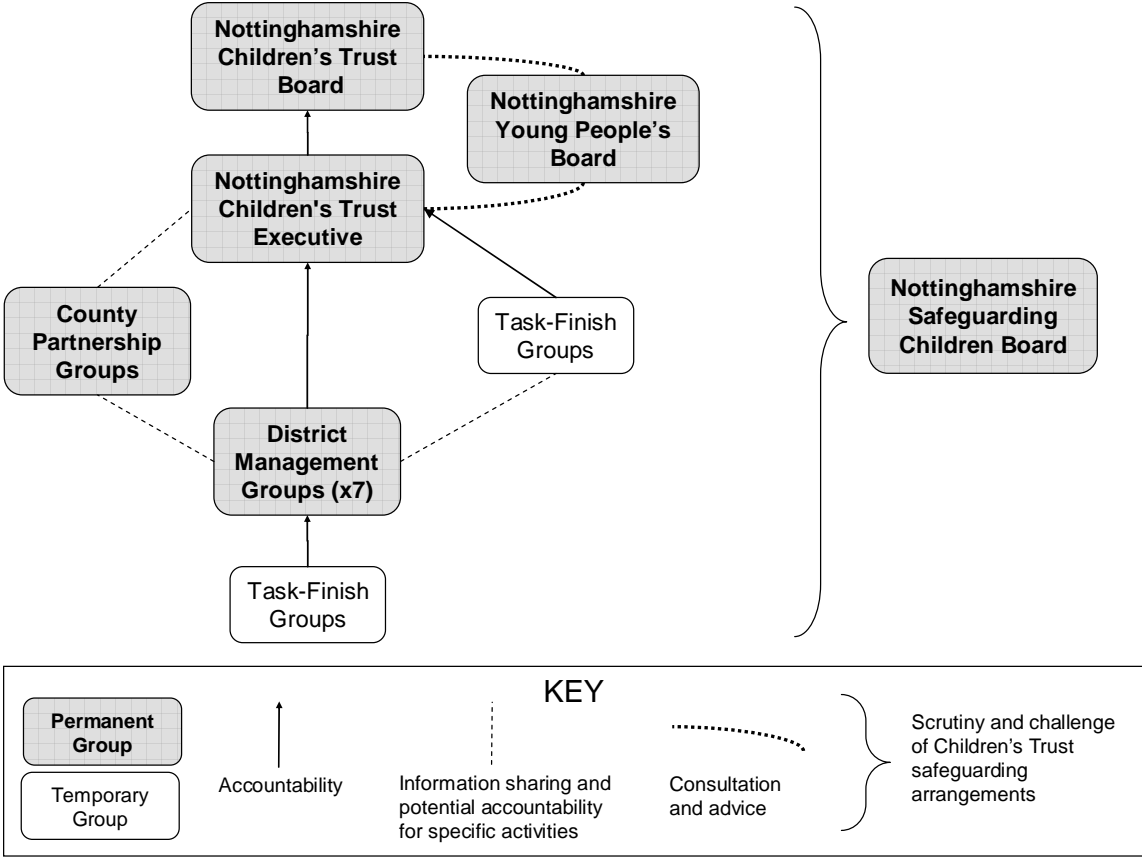
Details of the role and function of the LSCB are set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children* (2010). It is recognised in this that the Board operates within the framework set out by the Children's Trust Board. A protocol describing in detail the relationship between the two Boards and how they work together has been produced and is provided as an appendix to these Terms of Reference

Consultation Arrangements

Nottinghamshire Children's Trust is committed to seeking the views of children and young people, families and communities when planning partnership activities, when seeking evidence of local needs and when assessing the impact of planned activities.

The Children's Trust is linked to Nottinghamshire Young People's Board, building on the work of the County and District Youth Assemblies and involvement of children in schools councils.. Additional consultation activities may be arranged by any of the groups or organisations in the Children's Trust.

6. Diagram mapping relationships between groups in Nottinghamshire Children’s Trust



7. Children’s Trust Strategic Planning Arrangements

The Children’s Trust will produce a joint strategic plan, updated annually. This plan will be called the ‘Nottinghamshire Children Young People and Families Plan. Its content and scope will be defined by the Children’s Trust, and will be different from that of previous CYP Plans (which were formerly subject to national statutory guidance).

The plan will not attempt to describe or monitor all partnership or joint working in Nottinghamshire, but will identify:

Key themes that underpin all partnership working,

Annual priorities for action. These will include specific activities that will enhance the effectiveness of partnership working. They will have associated impact measures which will be performance-monitored.

The Children’s Trust Executive will be responsible for producing this plan, and evaluating the impact of activities within it. The Children’s Trust Board will approve the plan annually. Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board will be consulted about the priorities and content of the plan. Other partnership groups may be consulted during the development of this plan, to provide evidence about the needs of children, young people and families or about partnership activities or services.

8. Terms of Reference: The Children's Trust Board

Purpose

This is a strategic network which shares information and discusses strategic priorities for the Children's Trust.

Membership

All organisations that are partners within the Children's Trust are represented on the Children's Trust Board. This includes all relevant organisations as defined by the Children Act 2004. Other organisations may become partners if the Children's Trust Board agrees to this, using its usual decision-making process.

The representatives of partner organisations should be at a level of seniority that enables them to have an understanding of the full range of activities of the organisation, partnership or sector that they represent.

The Chair of the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board is a participant observer of the Board. S/he will attend meetings and receive all written reports. S/he will take part in discussions, seek clarity and ask questions, but will not be part of the decision making process.

Responsibilities

The Children's Trust Board will:

- share information about work being undertaken with children, young people and families in Nottinghamshire,
- share information about national legislation or policy, or relevant national or local research or evaluation activities, that may influence how work in Nottinghamshire should be undertaken,
- provide a forum for the discussion of shared priorities for partnership working, or integrated delivery of services,
- approve the content of an annual joint strategic plan, produced by the Children's Trust Executive, which will outline priorities and activities for joint working,
- receive reports from the Children's Trust Executive on its management of partnership working, and comment on this work,
- receive, and comment on, an annual report from the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board, which will scrutinise the safeguarding work of the Children's Trust and challenge it on any performance issues.

Members of the Board will:

- represent the views of their organisation, partnership or sector,
- ensure effective two way communication between the Children's Trust and staff at all levels in their organisation or partnership,
- make decisions on behalf of their organisation, within agreed delegated powers or seeking prompt ratification of Board decisions.

Chairing and meeting arrangements

The Chair is Nottinghamshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services, and the Vice-Chair is Nottinghamshire County Council's Corporate Director for Children, Families and Cultural Services.

The Children's Trust Board will meet twice a year and meetings will be open to the public/media. A minimum of six months notice of meetings will usually be given, except where meetings need to be convened or re-arranged due to unforeseen circumstances.

The meeting agenda and papers will be published on Nottinghamshire County Council's web-site one week before each meeting. Minutes of each meeting will be published in draft form after they have been approved by the Chair or Vice-Chair, prior to formal approval at the next meeting.

Decision making process

The Children's Trust Board has no quorum, If a member of the Board cannot attend, a deputy or alternative representative may attend in their absence.

Decision making will normally be by consensus. However, if the Chair considers that consensus is unachievable, a decision may be made by vote and will be binding if:

- it has been agreed by 60% of those agencies present,
- the proposed actions fall within the statutory and regulatory framework governing the operation of partner agencies,
- it is within the delegated decision making powers of the board,
- any decision relating to increased expenditure for individual partners is only taken with their consent.

9. Terms of Reference: The Children's Trust Executive

Purpose

The Children's Trust Executive reports to the Board.

It is responsible for the partnership management of those areas of activity where joint planning, joint commissioning, or integrated working are required.

Responsibilities

The Children's Trust Executive will:

- review the activities of partner organisations and identify where the joint planning of activities will be of value,
- identify where services are, or could be, jointly commissioned by all or some of the partners within the Children's Trust and provide strategic direction of joint commissioning arrangements,
- ensure jointly planned or commissioned activities are based on an understanding about the needs of local children and young people, and on evidence that any planned or commissioned activities are likely to achieve the desired impact,
- produce an annual joint strategic plan that identifies specific change management or improvement activities that will enhance the effectiveness of partnership working
- oversee the implementation of this plan, delegating responsibility to other groups where appropriate, and monitor evidence of its impact,

- provide updates to the Children’s Trust Board about the joint management of partnership working, and provide advice on shared priorities for partnership working, or integrated delivery of services,
- ensure that information about partnership activities is communicated across all partners and that staff at all levels within partner organisations understand the strategic direction of the Children’s Trust and how it impacts on their work,
- review the annual report of the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board, identifying action that the Children’s Trust should take in response, and ensuring that action is implemented.

Membership

Members of the Executive include representatives of key partners:

- Nottinghamshire County Council,
- Bassetlaw PCT,
- Nottinghamshire County PCT,
- Nottinghamshire Police,
- representation of the views of the voluntary and community sector.

Representatives will be at a level of seniority that enables them to lead strategic change within their organisations and to commit organisational resources.

The Executive may invite representatives of other organisations to become members, on a permanent or temporary basis, using its usual decision-making process.

Chairing and meeting arrangements

Meetings will be chaired by Nottinghamshire County Council’s Corporate Director for Children, Families and Cultural Services. A Vice-Chair will be agreed by the group using its usual decision-making process.

The Children’s Trust Executive will meet once every 4 to 6 weeks.

Meetings will not be open to the public/media and agendas, minutes and papers of the Executive will not routinely be made available to the public or press. A briefing on the work of the Executive will be provided to each Children’s Trust Board meeting, and will be published on Nottinghamshire County Council’s web-site, together with the other papers for the Board meetings.

Decision making process

Meetings of the Children’s Trust Executive will be quorate when the County Council, the Primary Care Trusts and at least one other partner are present. If a member of the Board cannot attend, a deputy or alternative representative may attend in their absence.

Decision making will normally be by consensus. However, if the Chair considers that consensus is unachievable, a decision may be made by vote and will be binding if:

- it has been agreed by 60% of those agencies present,
- the proposed actions fall within the statutory and regulatory framework governing the operation of partner agencies,

- it is within the delegated decision making powers of the board,
- any decision relating to increased expenditure for individual partners is only taken with their consent.

10. District Management Group Arrangements

Each District/Borough in Nottinghamshire has a Children's Trust District Management Group.

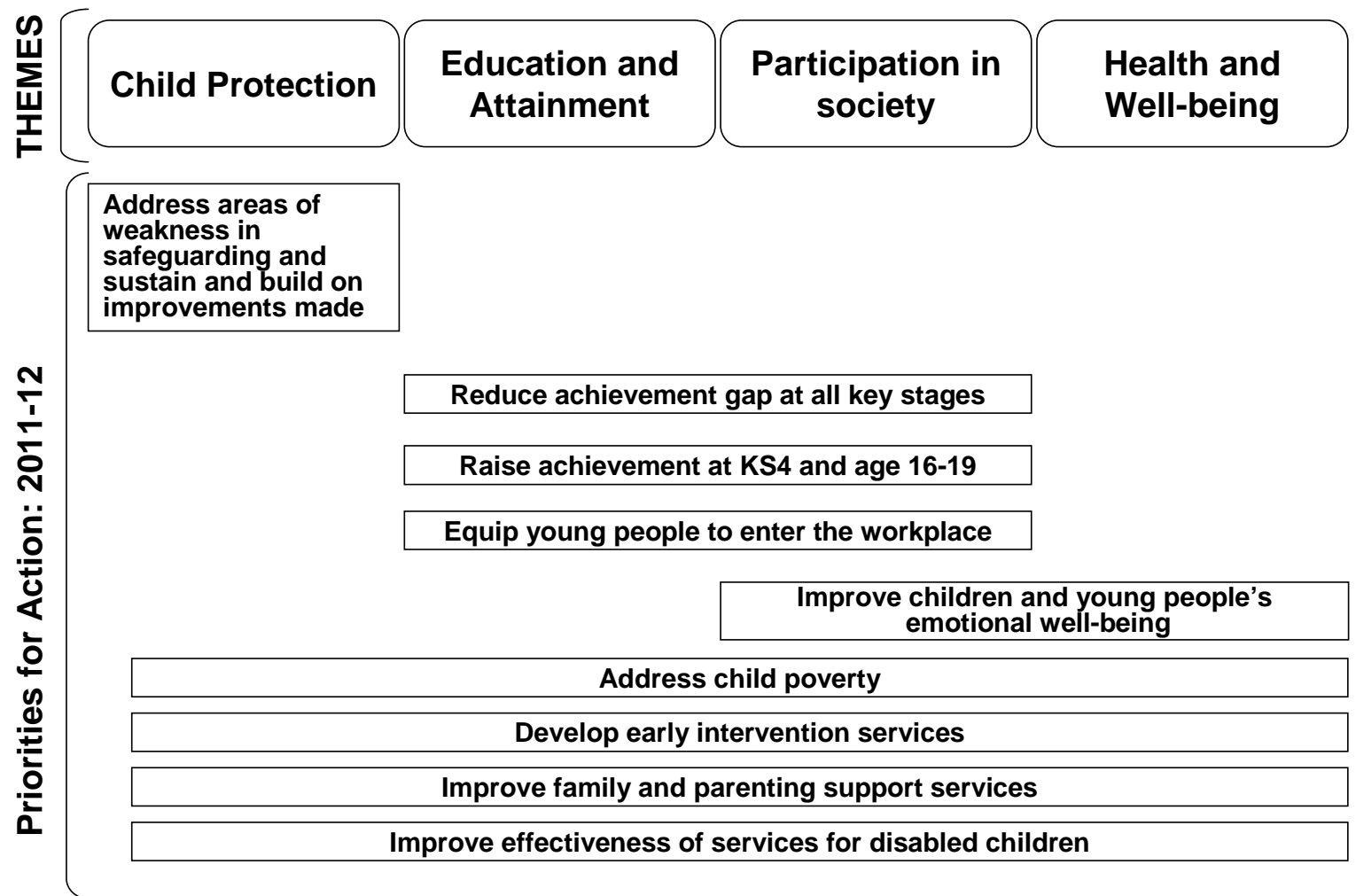
These groups are responsible for district-level planning and delivery of partnership activities.

The District Management Groups are accountable to the Children's Trust Executive, and have delegated responsibility for the planning and delivery of specific work areas, including the development of integrated working arrangements.

Membership of each group includes organisations identified as relevant partners in the Children Act 2004, plus other organisations by agreement locally. Representatives are at district manager level from each organisation.

Each group will agree its own Chair, who will be from one of the partner organisations represented on the group

APPENDIX 2: Nottinghamshire Children Young People and Families Plan: Annual Priorities for Action



The development of the Children’s Trust role in joint commissioning arrangements has also been identified as an activity for 2011-12, but as this is regarded as way of working rather than a specific priority for action, it will be reported on separately within the CYPF Plan.

**Appendix 3:
Lead Individuals for each Development Activity for the
Children and Young People's Plan 2011-12, identified by the
Children's Trust Executive Group**

Joint Activity	Lead Individuals/Groups
Address areas of weakness in safeguarding and sustain and build on improvements made	Steve Edwards Social Care Divisional Leadership Team
Reduce achievement gap at all key stages	John Slater / Trevor Bean
Raise achievement at KS4 and age 16-19	John Slater / Trevor Bean / Terry Laws
Equip young people to enter the workplace	John Slater / Terry Laws
Improve children and young people's emotional well-being	Samantha Watson
Address child poverty	Irene Kakoullis
Develop early intervention services	Derek Higton / Chris Jones / John Thorn
Improve effectiveness of services for disabled children	Steve Edwards/Fran Arnold
Develop joint commissioning arrangements	John True