

Report of Chief Executive, Director of Children's Services and Director of Public Health

Report to Scrutiny Board (Children & Families)

Date: 16 October 2014

Subject: Response to the Scrutiny Inquiry report on Cluster Partnerships (July 2014)

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. Between November 2013 and April 2014 the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) undertook an inquiry into cluster partnership working. The scope of the inquiry is set out in detail in the final report which was published in July 2014.
2. Leeds has as ambition to be a child friendly city and cluster model of locality working represents the key means of achieving this ambition at the local level. Children's Services welcomed the scrutiny inquiry and was pleased to be able to support the Board in it work to establish the value and contribution that cluster working makes to improving the lives of children, young people and their families across the city.
3. The recommendations of the inquiry sought action from the Chief Executive, the Director of children's services and the Director of public health. As such therefore this report represents the joint response of all of the above.

Recommendations

4. The Scrutiny Board is requested to note the responses to the recommendations based on their findings and to endorse the approach outlined below.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report sets out the formal response of the Chief Executive, Director of Children's Services and Director of Public Health to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) inquiry into the Cluster partnership.

2 Background information

- 2.1 Between November 2013 and April 2014 the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) undertook an inquiry into cluster partnerships. The scope of the inquiry is set out in detail in the final report which was published in July 2014.
- 2.2 Leeds has as ambition to be a child friendly city and cluster model of locality working represents the key means of achieving this ambition at the local level. Children's Services welcomed the scrutiny inquiry and was pleased to be able to support the Board in its work to establish the value and contribution that cluster working makes to improving the lives of children, young people and their families across the city.
- 2.3 The recommendations of the inquiry sought action from the Chief Executive, the Director of children's services and the Director of public health. As such therefore this report represents the joint response of all of the above.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 We have taken an overview of the recommendations of the inquiry and feel that a number of them address structural, operational and governance issues. We feel that these would be best addressed by taking a coordinated approach. Therefore we propose to pull together the implementation of recommendations 1, 2, 8, 10, 11, 12 and 14 into a process which will cover all of these areas. The bulk of these proposals are outlined in the response to recommendation 1 with additional content provided as relevant under the other recommendations.

3.2 Desired Outcome – To ensure a system of funding which secures the future sustainability of services provided by Cluster Partnerships across the City

Recommendation 1 – That the Director of Children's Services work in collaboration with Schools Forum to obtain feedback from individual clusters regarding the success of the funding formula implemented and the capacity to provide services. Following this undertake a review of the funding formula for implementation from 2016/17 onwards.

- 3.2.1 The Director of Children's Services accepts this recommendation. We propose to undertake a review of cluster operations which will look into the efficacy of the current funding model and more importantly look at the future funding of clusters.
- 3.2.2 We will also initiate a dialogue with clusters about the future of the funding model going forward post 2016. We held an event with 120 cluster colleagues on the 15th September which represented the first step on this journey. We will be undertaking further events at the cluster and city wide levels and intend to have a new funding model for the post 2016 period in place by the end of July 2015. Part

of this process will involve detailed discussions at the individual cluster level about current funding arrangements and a consideration of the options going forward. Local authority partners will have a key role in this dialogue.

- 3.2.3 As part of this process we will also look to quantify and clarify our own (LCC) contribution to cluster working so that the nature of partner contributions becomes more transparent.
- 3.2.4 We further feel that the overall embedding of the scrutiny inquiry's recommendations would be supported by the implementation of a cluster self-evaluation process which would enable a more granular understanding of the current strength of a number of areas including:
- The efficacy of cluster partnerships and governance arrangements
 - Levels of engagement in partnership working
 - The relationship to other structures e.g. families of schools
 - Consideration of the efficacy of the funding formula and discussions about funding going forward
 - The identification of areas requiring challenge and support
- 3.2.5 We will seek to initiate this process via the Schools Forum Review and Support Group as part of the on-going development of accountability measures to ensure that clusters make progress on delivering better outcomes for children and young people and are able to identify and address the blockers to this. In this regard we will also give consideration to the challenges presented by cross cluster working and seek to establish clear guidelines for this.

3.3 Desired Outcome – To ensure best use of resources which secures the future sustainability of services provided by Cluster Partnerships across the City.

Recommendation 2 – That the Director of Children's Services works in collaboration with the Children's Trust Board and Cluster Chairs to consider the current structure of Cluster Partnership areas to identify if resources could be better utilised if structured differently

- 3.3.1 The Director of Children's Services accepts this recommendation and will expedite this through the actions set out in response to recommendation 1.

3.4 Desired Outcome – To secure services for the benefit of Children, Young People and Families in the longer term

Recommendation 3 – That the Chief Executive, Leader of Council and Director of Children's Services consider if a package of Cluster investment to secure sustainable localised services in the longer term could be facilitated. This should align with future contributions for combined services via the Schools Forum. (see also recommendation 17)

- 3.4.1 The Chief Executive, the Leader of the Council and the Director of Children's Services accept this recommendation and agree with the finding of the scrutiny inquiry which states that 'it is essential to support cluster partnerships to develop

strategies and successfully plan for the longer term by affirming the commitment of resources....' The Director of Children's Services will instigate work to clarify the level of investment (in cash and in kind) both from the City Council and other partners in order to support a more transparent understanding of the level of investment into clusters. This will feed into the work highlighted under recommendation 1 to ensure that a longer term sustainable funding model is in place for the period after March 2016 when the current tranche of Schools Forum funding comes to an end.

3.5 Desired Outcome – a) to ensure the best and most effective use of publicly funded resources which has a significant positive impact and provides best value for money. b) implement support where this is not being achieved

Recommendation 4 – That the Children's Trust Board and Director of Children's Services clarifies within the Governance Framework how the effective use of significant local authority and partnership resources are monitored. In addition also clarify the provision, mechanism and trigger point for supportive intervention in any Cluster Partnership with identified weaknesses in partnership arrangements, structures and performance.

3.5.1 The Children's Trust Board and the Director of Children's Services accept this recommendation. As the report identifies there is no particular governance model that is more favourable than another and we have therefore sought to develop monitoring and accountability processes (based on outcomes based accountability (OBA) principles) which can be implemented across all clusters and focus around three key areas:

- Managing performance locally – what and how much are we doing?
- On-going learning – how well are we doing it?
- Intelligence and performance data – are we making a difference?

3.5.2 The Director of Children's Services is pleased to comment that significant progress around this recommendation is already being made. Working in partnership with the local authority, Schools Forum established a Review and Support Sub-Group in November 2013 whose agreed terms of reference are to ensure that Schools Forum funding is spent in a timely and appropriate way. The sub-group approved a Cluster Assurance Process (CAP) early in 2014 and this was sent to all clusters at the end of March 2014. The CAP sets out in simple terms the accountability processes for clusters and the requirement to produce a 'annual cluster plan' comprising of a business plan (indicating how funding will be allocated) and an action plan (indicating how services and activities will be delivered). The CAP is further supported through budget information in the form of regular budget statements providing an overview of how funding is being spent as well as 6 monthly targeted services update reports and 6 monthly progress updates to the CTB.

3.5.3 Distribution of funding to clusters is contingent on them producing a CAP which demonstrates how:

- the CYPP obsessions are being prioritised
- how they are also focusing on cluster level priorities

- how this year's funding is being spent on children and young people in school now (a particular priority of the Review and Support group)
- linked to the above, excessive balances (i.e. in excess of 20%) are being minimised

3.5.4 There was a high level of engagement in this process with a significant majority of clusters submitting their plans within the required timescale (with others subsequently submitting their plans to fit in with their own governance timetables) and a summary of these was presented to the Review and Support Group in June 2014 for detailed discussion. The outcome of this process was that a majority of clusters whose plans met the above criteria had their funding approved for distribution. Where the Review and Support Group had concerns about plans (particularly around forecast levels of over or under spend) clarification and assurance was sought from the cluster via the Local Authority Partner. This process is on-going and the Director of Children's Services and the Review and Support Group are confident that an important step in improving the monitoring the spending of cluster funding has been taken.

3.5.5 In addition to the above, this work had led to conversations with the SILC cluster with a view to ensuring that they also comply with the CAP process. They currently intend to submit their cluster plan in early October 2014. This extended timetable acknowledges the challenges faced by this cluster which is established more on a virtual than a geographical basis.

3.5.6 In terms of ensuring the effective use of significant local authority and partnership resources, this process is supported by:

- the production of regular performance dashboards with data at a cluster level produced by the Children's Performance Services
- 6 monthly targeted service leader reports which focus on the efficacy of key cluster processes and the associated outcomes
- 6 monthly reports to the Children's Trust Board which provide a progress report on cluster working, locality progress towards achieving the obsessions and other CYPP priorities and looking forward in terms of developing the cluster model
- The cluster Sharepoint site which is now live and provides not only a space to share data and plans but most importantly an opportunity for cluster to 'speak' to each other and share best practice.

Further work will be undertaken as part of the response to recommendation 1 to ensure that the arrangements in place to monitor the effectiveness of cluster partnerships are sufficiently robust.

3.5.7 The Director of Children's Services believes that effective processes are now in place and that as these develop and become more embedded they will also provide effective support and challenge mechanisms where clusters are identified through the above processes as underperforming.

3.6 Desired Outcome – To strengthen relationships between Community Committees and Cluster Partnerships in Leeds.

Recommendation 5 – That the Director of Children’s Services:

a) works in collaboration with the Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) to provide information, advice and guidance to all Elected Member Cluster Representatives about their role

b) provides information to Elected Member Cluster Representatives on the different Cluster Partnership governance structures and voting rights.

- 3.6.1 The Director of Children’s Services accepts this recommendation. Work has already commenced in conjunction with colleagues in the Citizens and Communities Directorate to ensure effective working relationships between community committees and clusters. To this end a number of Community Committee Children’s Champions (CCCCs) have been appointed to form the vital link between clusters and the wider community area.
- 3.6.2 An initial meeting with the CCCCs has now been held in order to start the process of developing relationships and this new way of working particularly to support the dialogue between clusters and community committees. As part of this CCCCs will be provided with a range of information including those aspects highlighted in paragraph 5b above.

3.7 Desired Outcome – To strengthen relationships between Community Committees and Cluster Partnerships in Leeds.

Recommendation 6 – That the Director of Children’s Services and Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) investigates and implements methods of raising awareness about the mutually beneficial relationship that could and should exist between Cluster Partnerships and Community Committees.

- 3.7.1 The Director of Children’s Services and Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities) accepts this recommendation and will take steps to implement it as indicated in the response to recommendation 5 above.

3.8 Desired Outcome – To raise awareness of the value of Cluster Partnerships and the positive impact in the Schools they support. In addition to facilitate dialogue and feedback between School Governors and Cluster Partnerships

Recommendation 7 – That the Director of Children’s Services identifies barriers in communications with School Governors and ensures that School Governors have access to Cluster Partnership information.

- 3.8.1 The Director of Children’s Services accepts this recommendation and undertakes to ensure that all school governors are made aware of the cluster performance information available on the cluster Sharepoint site. In this regard we will request that this information goes on the agendas of governing bodies via the governor support unit.

- 3.9 Desired Outcome – To clarify the role and purpose of ‘Family of Schools’ and Cluster Partnerships to promote understanding and where possible minimise duplication.**

Recommendation 8 – That the Director of Children’s Services and Children’s Trust Board works collaboratively with School Head teachers and Cluster Chairs to review the roles of Families of Schools and Cluster Partnerships to clearly identify and define their purpose and value in terms of outcomes for Children and Young People. Duplication in remit or responsibility should be identified and where possible minimised.

- 3.9.1 The Director of Children’s Services accepts this recommendation and will feed consideration of this issue into the work outlined under the response to recommendation 1.

- 3.10 Desired Outcome – To promote engagement and support of the Cluster Partnership by all the organisations involved.**

Recommendation 9 – That the Director of Children’s Services works with Cluster Managers to inform the scheduling of future meetings to maximise the attendance of Elected Members and non-education based partners.

- 3.10.1 The Director of Children’s Services accepts this recommendation. Officers in Children’s Governance will ensure the distribution of the existing calendar of council meetings to cluster managers to ensure that meetings do not clash. Cluster managers will be asked to take note of this document and make reference to it when planning their meetings.

- 3.11 Desired Outcome – To ensure strong leadership and support structures are in place to ensure fully coordinated management of partnership functions.**

Recommendation 10 – That the Children’s Trust Board as part of their governance review consider the core support structures of each Cluster Partnership to assess the strength of leadership and support and ensure that adequate resources are in place to coordinate and galvanise the work of the partnership.

- 3.11.1 The Director of Children’s Services accepts this recommendation and will implement it as part of the work highlighted in the response to recommendation 1. This will include a review of funding arrangements going forward and clusters will be asked to undertake a health check including a review of partnership strength and effectiveness. Local authority partners will have a key challenge role in the process to ensure that the right resources are in place to coordinate and galvanise work.

- 3.12 Desired Outcome – To strengthen the link between Cluster Partnerships and the Local Authority and provide strategic advice and support.**

Recommendation 11 – That the Chief Executive and Director of Children’s services reviews the provision of Local Authority Partners on Cluster Partnerships with a view to appointing officers from across various

directorates who hold positions which support operation at a strategic level and have a detailed understanding of the council wide contribution to the city's priorities for children and young people. (e.g. Chief Officer level or above.)

3.12.1 The Director of Children's services and Chief Executive acknowledges the spirit in which this recommendation is made and appreciates the intention of the scrutiny board to secure high level strategic commitment to the cluster working model from across the local authority. The Director would like to comment that in his experience it would be very difficult for such senior officers to effectively take on this role due to their other commitments however he is keen to implement a workable solution that supports the excellent work being undertaken by senior officers in children's services in their roles as LAPs and adds depth in specific areas whilst widening cross council support of the model.

3.12.2 The Director therefore proposes a pragmatic approach as follows:

- Discussion of this recommendation at CLT supported by a reiteration of how the model works and its value
- That LAPs are requested to indicate the key issues that they are most often approached about which are not specifically related to children's services and that based on this list children's services approach other directorates for a high level officer who can be approached in the first instance to respond to queries as and when they arise
- That children's services undertake briefings with these officers to inform them of the key aspects of the cluster model and how it works and commits to maintaining an on-going dialogue with them
- That following Cllr Lamb's suggestion during his presentation to the Cluster event on 15 September 2014 we develop a protocol so that clusters have ready access to the wider level of knowledge and support available from within the local authority.
- That where specific issues arise, the appropriate senior office is then invited to become involved on an issue specific basis.

3.13 Desired Outcome – To identify gaps in partner engagement and involvement and ensure that this is minimised.

Recommendation 12 – That the Director of Children's Services collates and maintains partner engagement information to inform the governance review process and identify where participation can be strengthened.

3.13.1 The Director of Children's Services accepts this recommendation. The Director acknowledges that engagement varies from cluster to cluster and over time as people working in clusters change and/or move on. He further acknowledges that promoting active engagement is a priority for all clusters and that therefore continuous effort needs to be made to ensure that partnership working arrangements and engagement remain effective. Consequently we will seek to

implement this recommendation as part of the work highlighted in response to recommendation 1.

3.14 Desired Outcome – To strengthen links between the Health Sector and Cluster Partnerships on a strategic and operational level to secure family focused support for both children and adults.

Recommendation 13 – That the Health and Well Being Board, Director of Children’s Services, Cluster Chairs and Director of Public Health work in collaboration to:

a) consider how partnership arrangements between Health Services and Cluster Partnerships can be strengthened

b) provide a localised more integrated system of health support with Cluster Partnerships to provide family focused support.

3.14.1 This recommendation is accepted. It is widely accepted that the health sector is a key partner to effective cluster working but that current structures and staffing levels mean that while health staff do attend some cluster partnership meetings there is often a need to prioritise front line work.

3.14.2 Part a

Partnership arrangements

There are excellent opportunities for strong strategic partnership links between Clusters and local Health and Wellbeing arrangements. Local Area Health Partnerships are responsible for taking forward the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy in a local area, for needs analysis from a local perspective, and identification of any issues or gaps in meeting the aims of the strategy locally. The JHWS is an all age strategy, and local area health partnerships have been asked to consider in particular the 4 commitments of the JHWS in their local work, which includes the commitment that every child should have the best start in life. The local area Health Partnerships offer an ideal forum with strong engagement from CCGs to which Clusters can contribute to take forward the wider agenda. This is a positive opportunity for Clusters to request membership of Area Health Partnerships.

Public Health partnership work with Clusters

From a Public Health perspective, both School Nurses and Health Visitors are well placed to engage in local strategic partnership work to improve the wellbeing of children and families, and this fits with their public health role at community level. There is a nominated School Nurse link to all strategic cluster meetings and they attend these meetings whenever possible. Health visitors also attend a small proportion of strategic cluster meetings, but are more directly involved in the best start agenda through the integrated Early Start teams in Leeds Children’s Centres. Children’s Centres are represented on the Clusters. Both School Nurses and Health Visitors prioritise attendance at the cluster Support and Guidance Panels with regular attendance at almost all of these.

In addition, a number of exciting new initiatives are being developed to strengthen the public health work in partnership with clusters. These include:

- The development of a Best Start zone in the Chess cluster. This will build on the former Chapeltown Infant Mortality Demonstration site, bringing together a wide range of partners to focus on the city's priority to give every child from conception to age two the best start in life.
- The Healthy Schools team is rolling out cluster OBA planning sessions on the topics of young people and drugs, alcohol and tobacco (DAT) and sexual health to support cluster action plans. These are rolled out to clusters as and when they express an interest and are ready to work on these focus areas which align with the Children and Young People's Plan. For example, current work is ongoing with the Open XS cluster on DAT, Pudsey Cluster on both DAT and Sexual Health, and the ESNW and Farnley clusters have both expressed an interest in working on both focus areas.
- The children's public health team is seeking to strengthen work with clusters on the priority of childhood obesity by developing an offer to support clusters with local action planning and offering a menu of support.

Emotional Mental Health Services partnership work with Clusters

In Leeds there is a complex picture of multiple commissioners (NHS England; CCGs; LA; and 24 School Clusters) that has led to a local system that despite best efforts is fragmented, with too many entry points (referral pathways); and too many hand offs (between a complex picture of service provision). This is confusing and frustrating for children, young people, parents and professionals.

The current economic situation has posed further challenge as partners have identified savings required within children's mental health spend.

However, there are also real strengths in Leeds provision. There is an early intervention service (Targeted Mental Health in Schools (TaMHS)) in every school cluster. This was seed funded by NHS, LA and School Forum partners in the city and is evaluating well in relation to improving outcomes. There has been the establishment of local pilots within two of the CCGs, involving five of the school clusters (Brigshaw, Temple Newsam, Bramley, Pudsey and Aireborough) where the local GP practices can directly refer to this early intervention service. Early views from the GPs involved include:

- Very useful service for GPs
- Patients are seen quickly
- Positive feedback from children to GPs
- None of the children referred have disengaged
- As a practice we have found this service extremely valuable for our patients and received good feedback from patients that have accessed the service.
- The service is easily accessible, user friendly, the referral process is simple and straight forward, the contacts are always readily available and able to answer our queries/concerns in order to get patients quick access to the most appropriate local service.

The above pilots are strengthening and building the relationships between the local GP practices and the relevant school clusters. Further work has also been undertaken in encouraging and advising the safeguarding leads within each GP practice to link with the Targeted Services Leaders and their relevant school clusters so developing the knowledge and understanding of their respective services.

At a strategic level in a recent joint commissioning workshop with partners and key stakeholders, there was agreement because of the difficulties identified for the need to redesign and re-commission the Leeds service model.

A subsequent paper to the Integrated Commissioning Executive (ICE) set out the case for this ambitious transformation of local children and young people's mental health services and the request for programme management officer support, to progress this at pace and scale. There was a comprehensive discussion and a strong commitment from all partners to support this way forward.

3.14.3 Part b

Public Health family focused support

Excellent progress has been made to enhance the family focused partnership work done by front line public health practitioners including Health Visitors and School Nurses Family. Leeds is a national leader in its model of integrated working at locality level between Health Visitors and Children's Centre staff ('Leeds Early Start Service'), whilst for school nursing our monitoring of service performance demonstrates outstanding contribution to partnership processes around safeguarding

Early Start Service: The Leeds Health Visiting Service has been working in an integrated model with the Children's Centres as an Early Start Service since 2011 when Leeds was a national 'Early Implementer' site. This integrated model ensures that local services for children under 5 years and their families are 'joined up' at local level. A joint service description, joint implementation board and joint performance dashboard all underpin the integrated Early Start Service. This model has been maintained through the period since April 2013 when commissioning passed to NHS England. The model will be further embedded, with greater emphasis on local partnership working to provide early help for vulnerable families, when commissioning of Health Visiting transfers to the Local Authority in October 2015.

Specialist Community Public Health Nursing 5-19 Service (School Nursing): The commissioning of Specialist Community Public Health Nursing Service 5-19 (School Nursing) transferred to the Local Authority in April 2015 and is led by Public Health. This transfer provided an exciting opportunity to join up agendas across the Local Authority, underpinned by a strong interface between the Office of the Director of Public Health and the Children's Services Directorate. An emphasis on family focused support in partnership at local level has therefore been made a high priority in the new service specification put in place in April 2014, and is being actively monitored through a performance dashboard which

supports the new specification. There is a clear priority for Specialist Community Public Health Nurses (SCPHNs) to ensure attendance at all child protection initial and review conferences (current performance close to 100%), to attend cluster based Guidance and Support Panels which develop multi-agency support for the most complex families (an audit of attendance to be undertaken by January 2015), to undertake health assessments for children looked after (current performance 93%) and to contribute to Early Help Assessments/CAFs (monitoring being established). This high level of performance reflects a real commitment across the service to strong partnership work at the level of the individual child and family within localities.

Adult Alcohol and Drugs Services: With respect to adult behaviour around drugs and alcohol, the services commissioned by Local Authority Public Health are subject to an ongoing sector review and re-procurement. The new specification requires any new provider to take a 'whole family approach'. Where the service user has children living with them, the assessment and recovery care plan should take account of any impact the service user's substance use and/or support needs are having on the children. The specification requires the service to engage in specific local family focused partnership processes including: CAF and Early Help assessments; Think Family protocol; Families First programme; child protection processes; and Support and Guidance panels.

- 3.14.6 Nonetheless this is a key issue that arose at the Cluster event on 15 September 2014 and is an area that will be subject to further high level discussion over the coming months. The Director of Children's Services will co-ordinate these discussions and will report back to the Scrutiny Board once a way forward has been formulated.

3.15 Desired Outcome – To support budget planning and spending in Clusters Partnerships and ensure that no partnerships is disproportionately financially disadvantaged by cross partnership working.

Recommendation 14 – That the Director of Children's Services works in collaboration with Cluster Chairs to agree and document a clear concordat for cases where cross cluster support is required. This should clarify the mechanism for expected financial and/or resource contribution in such cases.

- 3.15.1 The Director of Children's Services accepts this recommendation. The Director acknowledges that this is a challenging area and notes the conclusion in para 94 of the Scrutiny Inquiry report which states that many practitioners felt that 'cluster partnerships have broken down the previous 'silo mentality' of working...' None the less is it is accepted that due to the variances reporting in paras 107 and 108 further work should be undertaken within the response set out to recommendation 1 to provide clear protocols supported by clearer guidance.

- 3.16 Desired Outcome – To enhance the knowledge of practitioners who work in multiple clusters on the core offer and support available in each cluster area.**

Recommendation 15 – That the Director of Children’s Services works in collaboration with Cluster Chairs to identify and record the core offer in each Cluster Partnership and ensure that this information is accessible to all practitioners supporting Cluster Partnerships.

- 3.16.1 The Director of Children’s Service accepts this recommendation and will request that officers in the directorate’s Partnership Development and Business Support service coordinate this in conjunction with the roll out of the cluster Sharepoint site.

- 3.17 Desired Outcome – To proactively improve practices and service delivery in Cluster Partnerships and reduce the levels of inconsistency in performance and outcomes across the city.**

Recommendation 16 – That the Director of Children’s Services works collaboratively with Cluster Chairs to implement a process which maximises the sharing of strategic and operational good practice across all Cluster Partnerships.

- 3.17.1 The Director of Children’s Services accepts this recommendation. The Director is pleased to report a number of initiatives in support of the recommendation as follows:

- Termly area cluster meetings enable discussion of cross area issues by senior cluster representatives including cluster chairs, managers, TSLs and elected members
- In March 2014 a ‘cluster market place’ event was held with the specific focus of sharing best practice. Approximately 100 cluster colleagues attended for a half day event at which key partners gave table top updates about their work. Best practice case studies were also gathered and distributed.
- The cluster Sharepoint site is now operational. All key cluster personnel have been given access to this site which has been designed not only for the local authority to share information but for clusters to share information with each other. Each cluster has its own space on the site to host its key documents and best practice case studies. There is also an area where questions can be posted for wider discussion. Implementation and use of the Sharepoint site is seen as integral to the implementation of this recommendation and will be supported by a roll out programme to encourage cluster staff to use the site. Regular feedback on the functionality of the site will be taken in order to ensure that it continues to develop and reflects the needs of clusters.

- 3.18 Desired Outcome – To consider the merit and provision of focused support within communities with multiple disadvantage to improve the outcomes for children living in those communities.**

Recommendation 17 – That the Chief Executive and Director of Children’s Services considers the research in the reports ‘Developing Children’s Zones for England’ and ‘Developing Children’s Zones for England, What’s the evidence?’ and reports back to the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) on the potential for establishing and maintaining a Children’s Zone in Leeds which brings a holistic focus and effort in improving a community or place that is experiencing multiple challenges.

- 3.18.1 The Chief Executive and Director of Children’s Services accepts this recommendation. The potential to review and adapt our existing model will be considered as part of the work undertaken in relation to recommendation 1, particularly the work taking place over the coming academic year with clusters to determine the shape going forward.
- 3.18.2 The Director of Children’s Services gives his commitment to provide an update on the outcomes and proposals arising out of this work once it has been concluded.

- 3.19 Desired Outcome – To provide a forum for a high level collaborative focus on the purpose, value and performance of Cluster Partnerships and establish a clear vision for the future of Cluster Partnerships.**

Recommendation 18 – That the Director of Children’s Services organises and provides a high level event which will promote and define Cluster Partnerships. This should clarify their value and purpose and consider future aims and development for governance and accountability, funding and resources, improving performance and future potential.

- 3.19.1 The Director of Children’s Services accepts this recommendation. The Director is pleased to report that an event called ‘Cluster working – the way forward’ took place on 15 September 2014 in the Civic Hall. The purpose of the event was to:
- Identify the ‘ingredients’ that make a successful cluster
 - Share views about taking the model forward particularly in light of the Scrutiny Inquiry (see attached summary of recommendations)
 - Determine the next steps of the journey for cluster development
- 3.19.2 The event which featured key note speeches from the Executive Member for Children’s Services and the Director of Children’s Services was aimed at cluster chairs and managers, TSLs, elected members on clusters, CCCCs and other key partners and attracted in excess of 120. As part of the agenda Cllr Lamb was also able to feed back on the scrutiny inquiry.
- 3.19.3 The key messages from the event are still being analysed however, it is clear that there is on-going high level commitment to cluster working and a commitment to continue to address the challenges of the model. The Director of Children’s

Services summed up the mood of the meeting saying that it's not so much a question of if the model continues as how we ensure that it continues.

- 3.19.4 The meeting also gave us a mandate going forward to continue discussions aimed at securing the long term future of the cluster model as referred to in the response to recommendation 1.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.5 The scrutiny inquiry enabled a considerable amount of local consultation and engagement about the efficacy of the cluster model. Elected members were able to undertake in depth visits to four clusters geographically distributed between different areas of the city including inner and out city areas. This process enable them to obtain a balanced picture of the value and challenges of the model at an in depth level.
- 4.1.6 In addition to this, as noted above, the Director of Children's Services and the Executive Member for Children and Families hosted a major consultation event on 15 September 2014 which attracted an audience of approx. 120 cluster colleagues to engage in a discussion about the future of the model and the funding arrangements. This event is the first in a series of events that will take place over the coming academic year to ensure the on-going future of the model.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 The cluster model acknowledges challenges around enhancing equality by ensuring a local focus on key issues. Whilst all clusters are required to address the obsessions in the children and young people's plan they also have available to them data that supports them in setting more local priorities which take into account the nature and diversity of the local population.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 Clusters are the entities that support the delivery of children and young people's plan priorities at the local level. They are therefore intrinsic to the achievement of council and city priorities particularly in terms of supporting Leeds to be a child friendly city which is the best city for children and young people.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The importance of spending money wisely is acknowledged in this response particularly through the accountability processes that have now been put in place as a result of the introduction of the Cluster Assurance Process. See recommendation 4.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 None

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 None

5 Conclusions

5.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Children's Services and Director of Public Health welcomes the recommendations of the scrutiny inquiry into cluster working and undertakes to ensure the co-ordination of their implementation as outlined in this response.

6 Recommendations

6.1 The Scrutiny Board is requested to note the responses to the recommendations based on their findings and to endorse the approach outlined below.

7 Background documents¹

7.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.