

Report of the Children’s Trust Board

Report to Children’s Services Scrutiny Board

Date: 19 September 2013

Subject: Response to Scrutiny



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

1.0 Purpose of this report

1.1 This report provides an update to the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) on the actions taken in response to the recommendations made by the Board.

2 Background information

2.1 Scrutiny Board received a report on the history and development of the Children’s Trust Board (CTB) and the subsidiary groups, committees, partnerships, boards and forums which support the CTB. Members were also presented with information to assist them in assessing strengths and areas for development for the CTB in respect of the three key questions set out below.

- How successfully are the Board’s partnership arrangements working?
- What contribution is the Partnership Board making to tackle poverty and inequality, and the progress being made against this?
- To what extent are significant benefits being seen from partnership working? How has the partnership ensured increased pace of change to address the issue in hand?

2.2 The following representatives attended the Scrutiny Board’s meeting on 14th March 2013:

- Councillor Blake, Chair of the Children's Trust Board
- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Sue Rumbold, Chief Officer (Partnership Development and Business Support)
- Jane Mischenko, NHS Airedale, Bradford and Leeds
- Dr Sharon Yellin, NHS Airedale, Bradford and Leeds
- Keith Gilert, Superintendent, West Yorkshire Police.

2.3 The Children's Trust Board welcomed Scrutiny Boards comments and recognition of the considerable amount of effort undertaken by Council Employees, Partners and Young People in the preparation and presentation of information. The CTB recognises the complexity of the current meeting structure and has gone some way to address this by reviewing some of the partnership boards and sub-groups.

2.4 This report provides an update to Scrutiny Board on key actions since March 2013.

3 Main issues

3.1 At the meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) on the 14 March 2013 the Board received a report on the history and development of the Children's Trust Board (CTB). In June 2013 the Chair of the CTB received a report from Scrutiny Board with their observations and recommendations. A copy of this report is attached at appendix 1. The recommendations and responses are detailed below.

3.2 **Recommendation 1** – That the CTB further extends membership of the board to incorporate representation from Adult Social Services and private/voluntary sector Early Years Services.

3.2.1 The CTB regularly review their membership and in recent months have allocated a place for a business representative and to reflect the changes in how health services are delivered, there are now representatives from the CCGs and NHS England.

3.2.2 There are no plans at the moment to include a place for a private/voluntary sector early years representative as there is currently a place on the CTB for an early year's representative. The current representative is a Children's Centre Manager who plays an active role in the work of the board. However, we are establishing an Early Years Forum which will give all early year's providers a voice and an opportunity to be involved in shaping early years provision in the city. The terms of reference for this Forum are currently being developed with a view to launching the Forum in the autumn. The CTB will monitor and review the recommendation once the Early Years Forum is established. Furthermore, the Children's Trust recommend that the early years representative for CTB will be part of the Early Years Forum, strengthening linkages between the two.

3.2.3 The CTB agree in principle to an Adult Social Care representative and will consult with the Executive Member and the Director of Adult Social Care.

3.3 **Recommendation 2** – That the CTB undertake to regularly review the effectiveness and purpose of its sub-groups, boards, partnerships and forums to

ensure that they are operationally effective, fit for purpose and contribute to producing significant benefits and outcomes for the children and young people of Leeds.

- 3.3.1 At their May meeting the CTB reviewed the current sub-groups and sub-boards structure to check that these were still relevant and working productively in line with their terms of reference and the aims and ethos of the CTB. As part of this review the board considered the need for the Performance and Management sub-group given that the CTB receive performance reports at every meeting on the obsessions and priorities in the C&YP Plan and the LSCB has a multi-agency performance management sub-group. The board felt that there was duplication of effort and agreed to disband the sub-group.
- 3.3.2 In July 2013 the Commissioning and Finance sub-group reviewed and amended their terms of reference to allow providers greater involvement in the work of the group. The Workforce Development sub-group have also recently reviewed their membership and terms of reference.
- 3.3.3 These sub-groups meet regularly and copies of the minutes for these meetings are included in the agenda pack for the CTB meetings and substantive reports are brought to the board as required.
- 3.3.4 In July Cllrs Blake and Dowson met with officers to consider the future and purpose of the Leeds Education Challenge Board and the various sub-boards. There was an agreement that the LEC has served its purpose well, but that the time is right to bring it to a close and refocus the strategic direction of education in the city to ensure that it can respond to new and changing priorities. Officers are working with key Councillors and headteachers to develop new partnership arrangements. The CTB would be happy to provide Scrutiny Board with details of these arrangements at a future date.
- 3.3.5 The CTB will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the current sub-groups and sub-boards structure to check that these are still relevant and working productively in line with their terms of reference and the aims and ethos of the CTB.
- 3.4 **Recommendation 3** – That the CTB undertake to improve Cluster accountability and governance arrangements across the city, with a view to improving outcomes at cluster level, in order to provide the best possible support for children and young people in the city.
 - 3.4.1 The CTB receive regular reports on cluster activity and spend, including monitoring against targets. At their meeting on the 5th September 2013 the CTB received a report on the governance and performance monitoring arrangements for Clusters. The report reaffirmed the minimum standard for cluster partnerships, which the Children's Trust Board adopted in April 2011 in respect to cluster governance and performance arrangements.
 - 3.4.2 Children's Trust Board's expectations compliment local arrangements and reflect city level minimum requirements. Accountability to Schools Forum is integral to these arrangements. A similar report was taken to the Schools Forum with

agreement on the proposals.

- 3.5 **Recommendation 4** – That the CTB ensure value for money by monitoring the performance of clusters in order to identify if the investment in this methodology is making a difference and effectively meeting the needs of children and young people in the City.
- 3.5.1 At their meeting on 11 July, the Schools' Forum discussed the effectiveness and accountability of Clusters and agreed to the establishment of a sub-group to hold schools to account on spending and monitor performance evidence and impact. This work will be undertaken in partnership with the CTB.
- 3.6 **Recommendation 5** – That the CTB reports back to the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) in 2013/14 on the mechanisms for monitoring and reporting child poverty in the city. This report should also identify how the impact of initiatives put in place to reduce child poverty are measured.
- 3.6.1 The Child Poverty Act 2010 requires all local authorities to have a child poverty strategy. The development and monitoring of the strategy is carried out by the Child Poverty Outcomes Group (CPOG) which is chaired by the Executive Member for Children's Services. CPOG is a multi-agency group. It reports progress to the Children's Trust Board twice a year.
- 3.6.2 Progress is also discussed by the Children and Families Scrutiny Board. In February 2013 they looked at the impact of welfare reform on child poverty. In April 2013 they looked at progress against the recommendations of a scrutiny inquiry into "Combating Child Poverty and Raising Aspirations" published in June 2012.
- 3.6.3 Current figures show that about 23% of children under 16 and 22% of all children experience child poverty (defined as households earning less than 60% of median income). The numerical equivalents of these figures are 30,955 and 35,100. Five wards have over 40% of children in poverty and five wards have less than 10%.
- 3.6.4 The figures do not yet reflect the impact of austerity budgets, particularly the programme of welfare reforms. In Leeds 27,844 children in 14,255 households are affected by reduced council tax support; 1,998 children in 424 families affected by benefits cap; and 4,200 children in 2,496 families affected by under occupancy.
- 3.6.5 Key strands in the Leeds Child Poverty Strategy include work in the following areas:
- targeted work with families needing additional support, particularly as a result of welfare reform;
 - debt and loan advice and help;
 - routes into work;
 - best start in life initiatives such as family nurse partnerships, early education and child care work, infant mortality programmes;
 - work with those at risk from substance misuse;
 - housing initiatives to help prevent family breakdown and provide safe and secure accommodation;

- free school meal initiatives; and
- educational attainment for vulnerable groups.

3.6.6 The strategy is currently being updated to reflect recent trends, particularly the welfare reform agenda, and maximise the contributions of the various partners across the city.

3.6.7 The CTB would be happy to provide a further update as requested.

4 Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

4.1.1 Not applicable

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

4.2.1 Equality and diversity screening was not required as this report is in response to recommendations of the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families).

4.3 Council policies and city priorities

4.3.1 There are no immediate implications for council policy and governance.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 The recommendations will be resourced from within existing resources.

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 CTB will continue on a regular basis to review the governance arrangements, including the review of sub-groups and boards and ensure that the membership of the board fully represents partnership arrangements in Leeds.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Members are requested to approve the proposed responses as outlined in this report.

7 Background documents

7.1 None