

Review of Strategic Governance Arrangements Children and Young People – Central Bedfordshire

PURPOSE

1. To set out the proposals for a new set of strategic governance arrangements to drive forward the integration of services in communities and support the delivery of improved outcomes for children and young people in Central Bedfordshire.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. That Board Members consider and support the proposals for a new set of governance arrangements (**Appendix B**).

PUBLIC/EXEMPT: Public

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BACKGROUND

3. In order to improve outcomes for children and young people, there is a need to ensure that governance arrangements are in place which enable effective decision making, oversight and accountability.
4. Appendix A sets out the way in which partners in Central Bedfordshire currently work together at a strategic level to understand need, determine priorities, challenge and monitor progress.
5. Under the current set of arrangements it is recognised that there is duplication with similar strategies, visions, reports and performance scorecards being received by a number of Strategic Boards such as the Health and Wellbeing Board, Children's Trust Board, Community Safety Partnership, Partnership Vision for Education Board and Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board. There is also some crossover in membership – which results in repetition for those partners who are members of more than one strategic board.
6. In view of this there is scope to streamline these arrangements and develop a leaner, more responsive partnership strategic leadership structure which would better support partners in responding to current areas of focus and challenges. Appendix B sets out a proposed model for future partner engagement.
7. The benefits of the proposals set out in Appendix B include:
 - A leaner, more agile model improving focus and effective oversight of key, current issues.
 - A model which supports more effective decision making and accountability.

- Reduced duplication in terms of reports and performance scorecards being considered by different Boards, (and Board membership).
 - Arrangements that more effectively support and drive an approach to integrated working.
8. Board Members will note that there is still a requirement for local authorities and partners to have Children's Trust Board arrangements in place to ensure that partners are meeting their duties to co-operate to improve children's wellbeing as set out in the Children's Act 2004. This has been taken into account in the formation of the proposed model. The Health and Wellbeing Board, the Children's Leadership Board, the Stakeholder Forum and task and finish groups or workstreams provide the arrangements to deliver statutory duties to co-operate to improve children's wellbeing as set out in Section 10 of the Children's Act 2004.
9. Many local authorities have reviewed their Children's Trust arrangements. Research commissioned by the Local Government Association found that most Children's Trust Boards have:
- Taken advantage of freedoms and flexibilities
 - Streamlined arrangements
 - Refocused and reduced priorities
 - Made sure work complemented and not duplicated the work of other Boards
 - Promoted joint commissioning
10. The proposals set out in this report do not include changes to the (independent) Local Safeguarding Children Board or its sub groups. However, due to a national government review of Local Safeguarding Children Boards, the arrangements for Central Bedfordshire will need to be reviewed and considered by Summer 2018.

PROPOSED STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

11. Under the proposals the current Children's Trust arrangements (including the Children's Trust Board and sub groups) would be replaced with the following:
- A **Children's Leadership Board**. The Board would provide strategic leadership to improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people in Central Bedfordshire. The Board would align with the **Health and Wellbeing Board** (current Terms of Reference included as Appendix C).

Core membership would include directors /equivalents (Clinical Commissioning Group, Police and Public Health and Children's Services) and a school representative from the Education Partnership Vision Board. Other additional members may also be invited as needed to drive the business forward. This is not proposed to be a public meeting and will meet six weekly.

The current Children and Young People's Plan is due to come to an end in March 2017 and the Children's Leadership Board is considered to be best placed in the proposed structure to review and determine (with stakeholder engagement) the local vision and associated priorities for children and young people from April 2017.

This will directly influence the priorities for the Health and Wellbeing Board as the Health and Wellbeing Strategy is being refreshed. It is proposed that the strategic priorities will be reflected in the revised Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

- The Children's Leadership Board would be supported by a **stakeholder forum** – enabling engagement with a wider range of partners and interested parties on key issues. Stakeholders and partners will continue to be involved in the various partnership Boards and Groups already in existence, and schools are now developing new arrangements through clusters to support action around improvement priorities and representation at strategic planning meetings.
- A **Children and Young People's Board** to ensure that children and young people can influence strategies and services and provide challenge to partners.

EMERGING KEY PRIORITIES FOR THE CHILDREN'S LEADERSHIP BOARD

12. Driving integrated working in localities is a key priority for the proposed Children's Leadership Board. This Board plans to meet six weekly to deliver this ambitious programme of integration. It is also expected that there will be a number of work streams created to support delivery of these new operating arrangements such as workforce, commissioning, performance, infrastructure and systems development.
13. Under the proposals the following existing boards / partner groups would remain including:
 - **Support and Aspiration Programme Board** – aimed at driving improved and integrated support to children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities, and their families, from birth to 25.
 - **Partnership Vision for Education Board** – aimed at improving educational attainment and progress for children and young people. Representatives of this Board will now be nominated from the clusters of schools.
 - **Children's Emotional Resilience and Mental Health and Wellbeing Task and Finish Group** – recently set up to focus on improving children's emotional health and wellbeing, this work is still in development.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

14. The proposed governance structure Appendix B – sets out the proposed partnership arrangements to better respond to the current issues facing children and young people and to improve outcomes. It is therefore recommended that Board Members consider and support the new partnership arrangements (Appendix B), and the approach to driving forward integration of services to improve outcomes for children and young people in Central Bedfordshire as detailed under Paragraph 11 of this report.

15. It is proposed that items currently on the Children's Trust Forward Plan would be taken forward by the following:

- Task and Finish Group updates on securing improvements in the mental health of young people – **Children's Leadership Board and Health and Wellbeing Board.**
- Updates on work experience opportunities, and exclusions – **Partnership Vision for Education Board.**
- Joint Targeted Area Inspection – **Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board.**
- Domestic abuse update – **Safeguarding Children Board, Community Safety Partnership.**