

HEREFORDSHIRE CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD MINUTES

Wednesday 23rd January 2008
2.00 pm – 4.00 pm at Blackfriars

PRESENT:

Cllr Jenny Hyde, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People,
Herefordshire Council (Chair)
Chris Bull, Chief Executive, Herefordshire Council/PCT
Mark Turner, Divisional Commander, West Mercia Constabulary
Sharon Menghini, Director of Children's Services, Herefordshire Council
Sue Mead, Non-Executive Director for Children's Services, Herefordshire Primary Care Trust
Sharon Gray, Executive Director, Learning & Skills Council
Helen Horton, Chief Executive, Voluntary Sector Alliance

IN ATTENDANCE:

Philippa Granthier, Business Manager, Children's Trust, Herefordshire Council
Notes taken by Julie Teague, PA to the Children's Trust, Herefordshire Council
Shaun McLurg, Head of Safeguarding and Assessment Services, Herefordshire Council
(agenda item 6)
Malcolm Green, Finance Manager, Herefordshire Council (agenda item 10)
Jon Ralph, Community Youth Service Manager, Herefordshire Council (agenda item 9)

ACTION

1. APOLOGIES:

Tamar Thompson, Chief Executive, Herefordshire Primary Care Trust

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and are to be circulated with the agenda. **PG**

Matters Arising

It was noted that CAF was not an agenda item at this meeting.

Migrant Workforce Figures

Sharon Gray to send the full report to Helen Horton of the Migrant Workforce Figures for Herefordshire. **SG**

3. SCHOOL REVIEW

(item 4 on agenda)

(A report from George Salmon was circulated with the agenda)

Sharon Menghini on behalf of George Salmon informed the Board about the decision to have the original proposals withdrawn which was announced by the Leader of the Council. A report will be submitted to Cabinet in February with an action plan. In the meantime George Salmon is still talking to the schools and responses are being collected.

Mark Turner joined the meeting

Chris Bull informed the Board about the timeline, subject to Cabinet approval. Proposals will be put out in September which would give 6 months to involve a range of people including commissioning of external verification of data and external advice on the process of review to give people some assurance that This needs to be done nationally.

Cllr Hyde informed the Board that at Children's Scrutiny Committee the Members felt that they should have had more involvement in the proposals. It was important that headteachers were informed first but that there should be more Member involvement and as a Member she felt that this was the correct way forward.

Sue Mead queried the status of proposals and Sharon Menghini explained that in 2006, Cabinet agreed the principle that they would support officers in developing proposals. There had been dialogue with headteachers about the issues and it had been discussed at School's Forum, which began the debate that large schools are supporting smaller ones. Sharon explained the process had begun for the informal consultation and that they would continue to hold dialogue.

Helen Horton thought that there were no immediate issues for the Voluntary Sector except maybe wider community issues.

Sharon Gray considered there needed to be a critical look at the school and cluster approach. She is involved in Shropshire's School Review as well and the hard facts are that this is not going to change.

Cllr Hyde informed the Board that the figures for inward migration was not going to have the impact in Herefordshire as suggested and needed to be looked at again. She felt the next set of proposals was still going to outrage people.

Chris Bull emphasised that it was important that next time key stakeholders needed to be signed up to the proposals for consultation before being made public.

Cllr Hyde wanted Sharon to thank George for all his hard work.

4. HEREFORDSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD (HSCB)

(item 6 on agenda)

(A report from Shaun McLurg was circulated with the agenda)

Shaun McLurg informed the Board that HSCB was making good progress and the action set in the Business Plan have been achieved or are on track to be achieved by the end of the year. This is the first year of the Business Plan and next year there will be a more strategic three year plan which fits in with the timescale of the Children and Young People's Plan.

Shaun highlighted the key issues in the report that a budget of £180K was agreed in principle by HSCB including the appointment of an Independent Chair. A funding formula had been agreed and contributions from the Council, PCT, West Mercia Constabulary, LSC and CAF/CASS are all secure with confirmation outstanding from Connexions and YOS and that sufficient funds are available to sustain an Independent Chair.

Shaun informed the Board that the Probation Service had reported that they are unable to fulfil their 5% contribution, although this was not a criticism of the Probation representative. Shaun was going to write a strong letter from the HSCB so that they are seen to have challenged this for the future.

The Board discussed the funding formula and Helen Horton suggested that 'in kind' contributions should be reflected. Shaun agreed that withdrawal of 'in kind' contributions would add to running costs and Chris Bull agreed that the formula should take account of the 3rd sectors time and commitment.

Sue Mead felt that HSCB was clearly making progress and was interested to clarify if and how the Children's Trust Board will keep in touch with major child protection practice and issues and the roll-out of Common Assessment Framework (CAF).

Sharon Menghini endorsed what had been said and informed the Board that the Outcome Leads were in the infancy stage as to what was required from them and perhaps a formal report from HSCB was needed to get a collective view from the county.

Sharon Menghini informed the Board that in November an away day had been held to discuss CAF and Team Around the Child (TAC), she felt professionals were frustrated about what this will actually mean. She is in the middle of re-organising the structure of her directorate and looking at TAC, Clusters and Children's Centres and how CAF fits in around this. Sharon explained she needed to take an overview and had asked Dave Scott who is leading on TAC to develop a small working group from various agencies to come back to her after a month with a model for consultation.

Action:

Sharon Menghini to bring a plan of CAF implemented across authorities to the next meeting of the Board. SM/PG

Shaun McLurg assured the Board that when the Independent Chair was appointed they will become a regular member of the Board so will help ease the feeling of detachment and suggested bringing the Business Plan for discussion at a future meeting. Sue Mead felt this was a positive suggestion and wondered if a dataset on some headlines of practice could be produced to ensure the Board was not left exposed.

Shaun explained that the annual report which is part of the Business Plan would have this data which would give an overview.

Shaun informed the Board that he is in the process of an independent audit of all agencies and would bring outcomes and findings at a future meeting.

He commented to the Board that the HSCB was also the Stay Safe Outcome Group for the Children's Trust and the priorities for the HSCB are the same as in the Children and Young People's Plan.

Concern was raised from the Board about the performance management of the Independent Chair and Shaun explained that they will be very clear about what their role is in Herefordshire. Chris Bull stated that independent does not mean not accountable, Shaun agreed stating that as well as reporting arrangements to this Board there is also a direct link with the Director of Children's Services.

The Board were happy to endorse the contents and recommendations of the report.

Action:

Shaun McLurg to bring HCSB Business Plan, Audit of Agencies Safeguarding Arrangements and Annual Report to future Board meetings. SMc/PG

5. ITEMS FOR AOB

(item 3 on agenda)

Sharon Menghini and Philippa Granthier raised items for AOB.

6. WEST MERCIA CRIME AND SAFETY SURVEY UPDATE

(item 2 on agenda)

Mark Turner highlighted the headlines of the survey which the Board discussed. Sharon Menghini thought that as the trends develop it would be useful to have the figures to see if there was a correlation between the Teenage Lifestyle Survey. Sharon suggested a possible meeting with the Shadow Board to discuss the survey.

Action:

Mark Turner to send the report and presentation to Philippa Granthier for circulation with the minutes. MT/PG

Philippa Granthier to talk to Andy Preedy (Assistant Community Youth Service Manager) regarding a possible meeting between Mark Turner or one of his colleagues to meet with the Shadow Board to talk about the Survey. PG

7. PROGRESS ON OUTCOME GROUPS AND SHADOW BOARD

(item 5 on agenda)

(Report by Philippa Granthier circulated with agenda)

Philippa Granthier informed the Board on the progress made in the Outcome Groups and the Shadow Board. She explained the issues around supporting the young people of the Shadow Board to attend meetings as there is currently a capacity issue within the Youth Service. It is hoped this will be resolved by Easter 2008 as the Shadow Board members are keen to get involved and are enthusiastic and vocal in the meetings they have attended. They are currently meeting monthly and have been involved in the draft Children and Young People's Plan and sponsoring the design competition. They are keen to raise awareness of Every Child Matters and the Children's Trust in schools and are looking to increase their membership from schools not currently represented, including special schools.

Helen Horton wanted to know how to engage younger children. This is an area for development and would be raised with Jon Ralph under item 11.

Philippa Granthier informed Helen that the Voluntary Sector is represented on nearly all of the Outcome Groups and was being actively followed-up.

Sharon Menghini informed the group that headteachers were represented at the Outcome Group level as they had considered this appropriate at the review of the original Partnership Board in the summer of 2007. Philippa Granthier informed the Board that Herefordshire Partnership had received a letter from the Primary Headteacher's Forum stating that they wanted a representative on Herefordshire Partnership Board and the Children's Trust Board. After discussion it was felt that the headteachers are already well represented within the Children's Trust and that the Board should run for a year before reviewing the situation.

Action:

Philippa Granthier to circulate the updated Children's Trust membership. PG

8. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN (C&YPP)

(item 7 on agenda)

(The draft Children and Young People's Plan was circulated with the agenda)

Philippa Granthier explained that the new C&YPP was out for consultation and outlined the background behind deciding priorities, which was steered by the Management Group. Philippa encouraged the board to respond to it and informed them about the launch of the design competition with children and young people for the new plan.

The Board agreed for partner's financial information to be inserted into the section on Financial Arrangements. Sharon Menghini stated that in terms of commissioning this was important.

Other points raised by the Board included:-

- Links with other strategies.
- Financial information including ABG plus LAA and indicators.
- Joint Commissioning – need better idea of what this document does cover.
- Performance Management processes.
- Children with disabilities needs more focus.
- Schools Review section was well written.

Philippa agreed to amend the plan accordingly. She made the Board aware that this is a strategic document not an action plan, which she will make clearer in the document. The section in the plan 'Outcomes into Action', had been assigned to Outcome Groups to look at as this will be going into the Delivery Plan.

Philippa explained that a children's version will be published.

Action:

Partners to provide to Philippa Granthier financial information on 08/09 ALL budgets allocated to children and young people.

9. REVIEW OF THE 2007/08 DELIVERY PLAN

(item 8 on agenda)

(Report and Delivery Plan circulated with agenda)

Philippa informed the Board that this document was delayed due to problems in getting data. The review had been steered by Management Group and approved at the last meeting. The red/amber sections are being picked up in the 2008/09 delivery plan and the format of this document will be changed for 2008/09.

The board discussed the delivery plan and was concerned about the action planning process and a clear relationship on how the actions link back to the Outcome Groups. Sue Mead would like to see more areas which are challenging and will email Philippa her queries and comments on the document.

Philippa informed the Board that the Family Support Strategy will be part of the Children and Young People's Plan and not a separate document. The underpinning strategies of the Family Support Strategy ie Parenting, Children with Disabilities and CAMHS were progressing and would have supporting action plans. The other element around integrated teams would start with the Children and Young People's Directorate re-organisation. Helen Horton made the Board aware of the frustration of providers, and a clear message was needed. Sharon stressed the need for staff to bring proposed plans through the Children's Trust Board to prevent strategies being developed in isolation which have no funding agreed. Sue Mead added that the connection between plans and commissioning needs to be transparent.

The Board approved the review document.

Actions:

Sharon Menghini encouraged partners to give support to Philippa Granthier and Hilary Hall (Improvement Manager) who are tasked with getting information for the Plan and the LAA. ALL

Sue Mead to email Philippa Granthier her queries/comments on the review document. SME

10. THE ALLIANCE: ACQUA ACCREDITATION

(item 9 on agenda)

Helen Horton tabled her report at the meeting and made the Board aware of the progress with the implementation of acquA and resource implications. She wanted the Board to note the key issues to be resolved and consider the process for the way forward. Helen gave the background to acquA, its purpose and next steps and felt a strategic approach was needed to address wider issues.

Sharon Menghini asked how this was to join up in the Commissioning Unit. Chris Bull informed the Board that the PCT/Council were the commissioning lead and in the short term Children's and Adults needed to join up. A new post of Director of Integrated Commissioning has been advertised today to support this work. Helen made the Board aware of a new post at the Alliance for Adult Services.

Action:

Helen Horton to send the details of the new post for Adult Services in the Alliance to Sharon Menghini. HH

11. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

(item 10 on agenda)

Sharon Menghini reported that the draft Performance Digest had not been approved by Children and Young People's Directorate Management Team and therefore could not be brought to this meeting. The reporting cycle to be synchronised for future meetings. PG

LAA Single Post Monitoring Return

(Report by Malcolm Green circulated with agenda)

Malcolm Green discussed the financial report with the Board. The reported overspend of £74,773 is projected largely because of a withdrawal of £57,610 budget by the Herefordshire Partnership in quarter 1 and will be met by the Children & Young People's Directorate.

Malcolm explained that next year the LAA was going into the Area Based Grant (ABG) to be run through the Children's Trust.

Sharon Gray asked about the process of agreeing the budget for next year and informed the Board that she was a Board member of Connexions. At the Chief Executive Group they said that there was to be redundancies and that there was instability amongst external bodies.

Sharon Menghini was aware of disrupting any service delivery in the school year, but that we can't keep rolling budgets over if we wanted to do new things to achieve the priorities in the plan.

The Area Based Grant proposals would be an agenda item at the Management Group on 20th February and an agenda item at the next meeting of the Board.

Action:

Area Based Grant proposals to be an agenda item at the next meeting. PG

12. YOU TALK WE LISTEN REPORT AND ACTION PLAN

(item 11 on agenda)

(Report and action plan circulated with agenda)

Jon Ralph informed the Board on the consultation with young people held in October 2007 half term and the priorities for action.

The consultation event was commissioned as part of the Herefordshire Connects Transformation Programme for the Children and Young People's Directorate with particular emphasis on targeting young people who may not traditionally be involved in consultation exercises. These included young people with special education needs, teenage parents, the traveller communities, eastern European communities as well as primary school aged children.

Jon Ralph informed the Board that a conference report and separate action plan have been created containing a full summary of the event and actions. These are being negotiated and implemented through identified managers and where possible integrated into other work plans.

Jon outlined a summary of the key priorities:

- Transport and access to facilities, events and services.
- More information and communication, how young people can get involved and young person friendly language and formats.
- A greater range of consultations and venues so that as many different groups of young people can be involved.
- Improve safety of young people.
- Training and induction of staff – young people to be involved.
- Political leaders being more involved with young people.

Sharon Menghini made the Board aware that she had had discussions with Shaun McLurg regarding Corporate Parenting. Helen Horton raised her concerns that it was important to manage the young people's expectations from the event.

Jon Ralph informed the Board that he would like to come back to the next meeting to discuss his action plan.

Action:

Jon Ralph to bring his action plan to the next meeting and Philippa JR/PG Granthier to make sure he is one of the first item on the agenda.

13. AOB

(item 12 on agenda)

Sharon Menghini made the Board aware that Tamar Thompson was leaving the Primary Care Trust and would need to elect a new Vice Chair at the next meeting.

Action:

Philippa Granthier to draft a letter for Cllr Hyde to approve and sign to Tamar Thompson thanking her for her support with the Children's Trust. Election of Vice-Chair an agenda item at the next meeting.

PG

PG

The Board agreed a request from Philippa Granthier that Sarah Wilcox the Business Manager for the HSCB attends the next meeting as an observer.

14. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

12th March 2008, 1.30pm – 3.30pm at Blackfriars

15th July 2008, 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm at Blackfriars