

CHILDREN'S TRUST MANAGEMENT GROUP MINUTES

Wednesday 20th February 2008

PRESENT:

Management Group

Sharon Menghini, Director of Children's Services, Herefordshire Council (Chair)

Frances Howie, Associate Director of Health Improvement, Herefordshire Primary Care Trust (Vice Chair)

Shaun McLurg, Head of Safeguarding and Assessment Services, Herefordshire Council

Jane Crysell, Chief Executive, Connexions

Dr Ian Tait, Herefordshire Primary Care Trust

John Sheppard, Headteacher, Wyebridge Sports College

Jon Ralph, Community Youth Service Manager, Herefordshire Council (representing Keith Barham)

Jill Hiscox, Scheme Manager, Homestart, Voluntary Sector

IN ATTENDANCE:

Philippa Granthier, Business Manager, Children's Trust, Herefordshire Council (agenda item 6, 7 and minute taker)

Hilary Hall, Improvement Manager, Herefordshire Council (agenda item 5)

ACTION

1. APOLOGIES:

Keith Barham, Head of Worcestershire and Herefordshire Youth Offending Service

Shadow Board – the meeting was cancelled due to capacity issues within the Youth Service

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

Minutes agreed as correct.

Citizens Panel

Philippa Granthier to clarify with Gill Swaites (Research Officer, Herefordshire Partnership) regarding the percentage of parent representation and whether Children's Trust can use this group for consultation on parents. **PG**

Schools Review

Sharon Menghini informed the Group that the proposals had stopped and that during the present administration there would be no closures of high schools, and primary schools will only close if they meet the Small School's Policy. There are ongoing discussions with schools about value for money and efficiencies; some schools are in deficit and are looking at redundancies. Funding will be looked at through the Schools Forum.

There is an external review underway of data due to be completed on 14 March 2008 which will be reported to Members with the results released about Easter time.

There will be engagement with communities to involve them, and the best way of doing that would be discussed with schools.

The Be Healthy group would like to do some health impact work which they would like to feed into any further developments.

3.20 pm – Jill Hiscox joined the meeting

Jane Crysell circulated a document on Connexions Statutory and Mandatory Requirements for Local Authorities.

Local Area Agreement and Single Pot Monitoring Return

Philippa Granthier will circulate new dates to tie up the Area Based Grant and Performance Indicators reporting timetables. **PG**

- 3. ITEM FOR AOB**
None put forward

3.30 pm – John Sheppard joined the meeting

- 4. PROGRESS REPORT FROM OUTCOME GROUPS**

Be Healthy

(Report tabled at meeting by Frances Howie)

Frances updated the Group on the work of the Be Healthy Outcome Group. Frances outlined some background details, the group met bi-monthly has agreed Terms of Reference and membership and last met on 18th January 2008. Information on the 2007 weighing exercise re overweight and obese children would be published shortly. The group were concerned over the process of the CAMHS and disability strategies; this was on the agenda to discuss. Generally meetings had been well attended with high interest in the work of the group, although in terms of reporting and progressing work it was still early days.

Stay Safe

(Report by Shaun McLurg circulated with agenda)

Shaun updated the Group on progress in relation to the Stay Safe Outcome Area.

Jon asked how the work on establishing a children's sub-group was progressing; Sarah Wilcox (HSCB Business Manager) would be contacting Jon about the mechanics of making it work.

Key areas were the budget and trying to establish a 3 year funding formula that partners could commit to. There is a strong lobby for this to be progressed at a national level.

Agreement had been reached for the appointment of an independent chair; this would be a consultant type role and there needed to be confirmation as to how this role would fit with the processes/governance in place. The chair would need to be a member of the Management Group and Board.

Shaun detailed the current difficulties in recruiting social workers nationally and the effect currently in Herefordshire, where there has been increased turnover of staff since November 2007 and, unchecked, would lead to teams being severely understaffed. The use of an agency has been used but this has caused problems also. Shaun is now putting in place contingencies to staff duty teams over the next 3 months. Hereford compares well in terms of attracting students but more difficult for qualified / experienced staff. Currently looking at retention / staff development and offering market supplements; trip to the USA is about to take place and possibly extending the "grow our own" policy. This issue will affect APA as while we were on target to have 53 social workers in place for March 2008 (57 in March 2009) this is slipping. It was felt that this should be added to the corporate risk register, and is important for all partners to be aware of.

Enjoy and Achieve

No further update from the last meeting.

Positive Contribution

(Report by Keith Barham circulated with agenda)

Jon informed the Group of the issues raised at the meeting of the Positive Contribution Outcome Group held on 6th February 2008. It was felt it was still early days in establishing the group and its remit. They had discussed the new plan and the schools review.

Commissioning, the area based grant and the group's role in this was discussed. Agreed that this is an area that needs to develop over the next 12 months so that the CT is seen as good commissioners in working with providers and developing markets.

Economic Well-Being

(Report by Jane Crysell circulated with agenda)

Jane Crysell updated the Group on the progress of the Economic Well-Being Outcome Group.

The main issue for the group was around membership and ensuring those included were the right people and had something to offer and gain by being there; this needed to be developed in line with the areas within the plan. Priorities were also being discussed at other existing groups / forums and how these should be linked in to the outcome group was considered. This is a learning curve and early days for all groups but there needed to be greater collaboration. Schools needed to be able to take a greater view across all areas of the CT; JS to take the message to HASH.

JS

5. LAA INDICATORS

(Report by Hilary Hall was circulated with agenda)

Hilary updated the Group on progress in relation to the development of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) 2008-2011. Concerns were raised over emotional well-being, CAMHS, and the bullying indicators and how these will be measured, possibly using surveys like Tellus3. There is also a need to agree stretch targets for the performance rewards, and the proxy indicators to be used in the first year. The LAA priorities had now been agreed and the indicators were still open to negotiation with GOWM so there is still time to discuss and influence the final indicators.

6. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2008/11

(Report by Philippa Granthier circulated with agenda)

Philippa went through her report picking up on the consultation exercise and development of delivery plans, and highlighting the main issue around the service management section which is not owned or supported by an outcome / steering group. There was discussion around how this could possibly be picked up through outcome groups, or the Management Group. Many of the issues are those statutorily tasked to the Director of Children's Services although they would need the support of partners to deliver, and therefore the Management Group should oversee this. This discussion led to a further debate about ownership of issues and moved to item 8 on the agenda.

7. CURRENT STRATEGIES IN DEVELOPMENT AND INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS

(Item 8 on agenda)

The discussion carried on from item 6 about progressing significant pieces of work that appeared to have become blocked. The likelihood is that there will be an inspection in the spring of next year and performance this year would be used to base assessments on. At the moment it appears there has been little progress made. There was now a critical need to really move things on beyond a strategy but to action and implementation.

The strategies were a result of the JAR, but now needed to fit under the new children and young people's plan with action / implementation plans. They should be supported and performance managed through the outcome groups, with the Management Group and Board approving them. The difficulty was where the piece of work did not fit specifically within one outcome group, but it was felt that there should then be added flexibility in bringing other expertise into the group.

The group identified leads who are championing this work.

- Children with Disabilities – Marcia Perry
- Parenting – Richard Watson

- CAMHS – Marcia Perry
- Workforce Development – Sharon Menghini and Shaun McLurg
- CAF – Dave Scott
- ICS - Derek Forknall

Sharon informed the Group that a Workforce Reform Manager was likely to be appointed across agencies to push the Workforce Development work through.

Leads to be asked to complete one side of A4 as to issues/way forward/progress for next meeting. It needs to be an honest appraisal and the lead officer should also attend the meeting to present. Philippa and Sharon to pull together some key questions e.g. what is the status of the document, who have they consulted etc. The Management Group would then need to take back the issues to their individual organisations, and come back to the 16 April with a response to agree a way forward.

PG / SM

8. AREA BASED GRANT

(Item 7 on agenda)

(Report by Philippa Granthier circulated before meeting)

Philippa ran through the report and went through each of the proposals for the ABG in turn. Also raised were the issues around giving sufficient notice to providers where funding was likely to stop, and ensuring the CT follow the COMPACT. Jill Hiscox confirmed the Children's Interest Group of the Alliance had voiced their concerns over this.

The Management Group felt that for 2008/09, commitments should probably be honoured but that over the summer term there should be a review of all the activities particularly looking at the impact of their work on outcomes for children and young people. The outcome groups would be tasked with this, by holding a "committee of enquiry"; the group assigned each activity to an outcome area. For the Connexions review by the economic well-being group there would need to be representatives from colleges and schools invited to give a view. This needed to be done to feedback to the Management Group on the 20 May meeting with a view to considering future commissioning.

It was also proposed that Philippa managed the ABG on behalf of the Children's Trust, supplying quarterly monitoring information to assess progress and liaising with the Herefordshire Partnership. The group agreed.

9. EVERY DISABLED CHILD MATTERS CHARTER

(Report by Yvonne Clowsley and supporting papers circulated with agenda)

This item was deferred to the next meeting, to be picked up with the work under the Disability strategy

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

11. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

6th March 2008	12.30 – 2.00	Room 7C, Blackfriars
16 th April 2008	3.00 – 5.00	WRVS, room 5
20 th May 2008	12.00 – 2.00	Room 7c Blackfriars
18 th June 2008	3.00 – 5.00	Room 7c, Blackfriars
8 th July 2008	12.00 – 2.00	WRVS, room 5