

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Agenda Item No. 6
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Report of the Director of Children’s Services

Report Author – Stephen Sutherland

Contact Details – stephen.sutherland@peterborough.gov.uk

CHILDREN’S TRUST DEVELOPMENTS

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 For the Creating Opportunities and Tackling Inequalities Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise and comment on the progress and impact that the Children’s Trust has made on the provision of services to children and young people.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To scrutinise and comment on the progress and impact that the Children’s Trust has made on the provision of services to children and young people and make any necessary recommendations.
- 2.2 To determine the frequency with which the committee would wish to review and scrutinise the progress and impact that the Children’s Trust is making.

3. LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

- 3.1 The Children’s Trust Partnership Board is the statutory partnership responsible for ensuring the delivery of all outcomes for children and young people, with a particular focus upon those within the Sustainable Community Strategy, Local Area Agreement and statutory Children and Young People Plan.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Statutory duties in the Children Act 2004 require every local authority to work with partners, through Children’s Trust arrangements, to devise and implement strategies to improve outcomes for children aged 0–19 years (25 for those with additional needs).
- 4.2 Children’s Trust arrangements refer to the totality of change needed to deliver better and more responsive integrated services – including arrangements for integrated working, comprising joint planning and commissioning, integrated processes and integrated front-line delivery for improved outcomes for children, young people and families. Children’s Trust arrangements set out accountabilities for decision making and spending, and involve children, young people and families in doing so.
- 4.3 In order to meet these requirements, Peterborough established a Children’s Trust Partnership Board in April 2008, underpinned by a formal Memorandum of Agreement. A wide range of partners are represented on the Board, including the local authority, primary care trust, police, schools and voluntary and community sector representatives.
- 4.4 The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill 2009 (which received Royal Assent in November 2009) makes the establishment of a Children’s Trust Board a statutory requirement for all areas.

- 4.5 The role of the local authority's overview and scrutiny function in relation to Children's Trusts is highlighted within new DCSF draft guidance published in November 2009:

"A local authority overview and scrutiny committee may review or scrutinise decisions made or actions taken with or in connection to the discharge of functions which are the responsibility of the executive or the authority, which include the delivery of children's services. In doing so, the Scrutiny Committee can request information from the children's Lead Member and LAA (Local Area Agreement) partners and make reports or recommendations to the authority or executive on matters relating to children and young people in the area, **covering the full range of services for children and not just those commissioned or provided by the local authority itself.**"

5. KEY ISSUES

- 5.1 Detailed below is a summary of key decisions and developments made at the Children's Trust Partnership Board since April 2009:

- The Board have agreed a new integrated processes framework for the city. The framework will be launched in January 2010, and sets out how practitioners can use the Common Assessment Framework to ensure children and young people receive services that meet their needs. (December 2009)
- The Board have agreed new Safeguarding Commissioning Standards – these ensure that all commissioned services meet minimum criteria for Safeguarding, and will be applied to all contracted services. The board is recommending the standards be used as an assessment for all services. The standards will be launched at the Children's Trust Conference in January 2010. (December 2009)
- The Board have agreed a programme of events to involve children and young people in Children's Trust Board Meetings (November 2009)
- The Board have agreed new Safer Employment Standards for all trust partners (November 2009)
- The Board have engaged in a review of local practice in relation to Safeguarding following the Lord Laming Enquiry. The Board approved a final report and accepted recommendations from the Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board (November 2009)
- The Board have approved and endorsed the 14-19 Education Plan (September 2009)
- The Board have established a task group to review cohesion concerns amongst young people in Central Ward (September 2009)
- The Board have agreed an Equality Impact Assessment process for all Children's Trust decisions. They have requested the production of an Equality and Diversity Framework for the Trust (May 2009)
- The Board have agreed the 2009 Children and Young People Plan, setting out a clear vision for children and young people in the city, shared priorities and key areas of focus for the year 2009/10 (April 2009)
- The Board have agreed a Strategic Joint Commissioning Framework for the Children's Trust (April 2009)
- In addition, the Board have monitored the implementation of a range of projects and programmes, including:
 - The Children's Services Transformation Programme / Delivering through Localities
 - The Family Information Service
 - Organisational arrangements within Peterborough Community (Health) Services
 - Aiming High Project
 - Information Sharing and ContactPoint
- Finally, the board have been regularly monitoring and challenging performance in relation to Children's Services National Indicators. In addition, they have been monitoring local preparations for the Comprehensive Area Assessment.

- 5.2 Detailed below is a summary of major upcoming agenda items and decisions for the Children's Trust Partnership Board in early 2010:
- 2010/11 Children and Young People Plan Annual Review
 - Children's Trust Equality and Diversity Framework and Strategy
 - Young Runaways Action Plan
 - Workforce Development Strategy
 - Update on Multi-Systemic Therapy project
 - School Sports Partnership – Vision and Strategy
 - ContactPoint Protocols
 - Children's Trust Value for Money Framework
 - Children's Trust / Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board Governance Proposals (following a Lord Laming recommendation)
 - Young People's Accommodation and Housing Related Support Strategy
 - Review of Children's Trust arrangements in light of new statutory guidance
 - Update on 21st Century Schools developments
- 5.3 In November 2009, the DCSF published new draft guidance relating to the function of Children's Trusts. Key features of this guidance include:
- The Children's Trust Board is now a statutory requirement. It has new responsibilities for the production, resourcing and delivering of the Children and Young People Plan (previously a local authority responsibility).
 - There are new statutory partners to the Children's Trust, including schools, colleges, academies, pupil referral units and Job Centre Plus.
 - There are additional partners who are recommended to be members of a Children's Trust Board, including representatives from Children's Centres, diocesan boards of education and private sector providers.
 - The Children's Trust Board has a new power to request information from partners relating to the fulfilment of its functions.
 - The guidance sets out new expectations in relation to the joint funding of Children's Trust functions.
 - All new areas are required to produce 'new-style' Children and Young People Plans by April 2011. There are new requirements relating to the content of the plan.
- 5.4 In light of the new expectations placed upon Children's Trust Boards, the development of locality based services and the review of the Greater Peterborough Partnership arrangements, the Children's Trust Partnership Board will continue to monitor and review its operations to ensure that the partnership is improving outcomes in the most effective and efficient way possible.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 As outlined above, the Children's Trust Partnership Board is now statutory. The Board is responsible for ensuring the delivery of improved outcomes for all children and young people within the city.

7. CONSULTATION

N/A

8. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- 8.1 Creating Opportunities and Tackling Inequalities Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise and comment on the progress and impact that the Children's Trust has made on the provision of services to children and young people.

9. NEXT STEPS

- 9.1 It is recommended that the Creating Opportunities and Tackling Inequalities Scrutiny Committee receive regular reports relating to the work of the Children's Trust at an appropriate frequency.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

None

11. APPENDICES

None