

## NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

### CHILDREN'S PARTNERSHIP BOARD

#### MINUTES

of meeting held on **25 MAY 2011** at

Loxley House from 4.04 pm to 5.48 pm

indicates present at meeting

Councillor David Mellen	- Chair of the Board and Portfolio Holder for Children's Services	) ) )	
Jane Todd	- Chief Executive	)	
Councillor Jon Collins	- Leader	)	Nottingham City Council
Ian Curryer	- Corporate Director of Children's Services	) )	
Katy Ball	- Head of Early Intervention and Market Development	)	
Gill Ellis (representing Mr Curryer)	- Director of Schools and Learning	)	
Ron Buchanan	- Chair	)	NHS Nottingham City
Shirley Smith	- Assistant Director of Commissioning – Community Services	)	
Paul Scarrott	- Assistant Chief Constable	-	Nottinghamshire Police Authority
Wendy Smith	- Chair	-	CONGA (City of Nottingham Governors' Association)
Jane Geraghty	- Chief Officer	-	Nottinghamshire Probation Service
Heather Sahman	- Regional Change Agent	-	Strategic Health Authority
Graham Sheppard	- District Manager	-	Job Centre Plus
Margaret McGlade	- Chair	-	Local Safeguarding Children's Board
Steve McLaren	- SOVA Project Manager	-	On behalf of the Community and Voluntary Sector
Mike Butler	- Chief Executive	-	Djanogly City Academy

Malcolm Cowgill	-	-	Castle College
Jill Robey	-	Head Teacher	- Nottingham Nursery School and Training Centre
Jane-Belinda Francis	-	Head Teacher	- Springfield Primary School
Andy Sloan	-	Head Teacher	- Rosehill School (Special School representation)
Gareth Owen	-	Head Teacher	- Hadden Park High School
Lauren Dewey	)	Youth Council	
Uzair Hashmi	)		
Aaron Riley	)		

**Also in attendance**

Geoff Jenkins	-	Head of Service – Insight and Improvement	)	
Noel McMenamin	-	Constitutional Services Officer	)	
John Rea	-	Strategic Lead for Engagement and Participation	)	
Heidi Shewell-Cooper	-	Ellis Guilford EIP Manager/Year of Reading Project Officer	)	Nottingham City Council
Chris Wallbanks	-	Head of Aspiration and Life Skills	)	
Dot Veitch	-	Healthy Schools Administrator	)	
John Yarham	-	Director of Economic Innovation and Employment	)	
Darrell Redmond	-	Nottingham Equal		
Sheila Wright	-	Probation Trust		

**Please note: except where otherwise indicated, all items discussed at the meeting were the subject of a report which had been circulated beforehand.**

**84 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mike Butler (Djanogly Academy), Aaron Riley (Youth Council), and Graham Sheppard (Job Centre Plus).

**85 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

No declarations of interests were made.

**86 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 26 January 2011, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair.**

**87 MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN'S PARTNERSHIP SENIOR OFFICERS GROUP (SOG)**

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the Children's Partnership Senior Officers Group dated 10 January, 7 February, 7 March, 11 April and 9 May 2011, copies of which had been circulated, be noted.**

**88 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN REVIEW  
(Corporate Director of Children and Families)**

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report, during which the following key points were made:

- the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) was adopted in May 2010 and, although it was no longer a statutory requirement to conduct a public progress review, it was necessary to update the Plan to ensure its continued effectiveness. The review drew upon recent inspection activity, factored in the changing financial, governance and organisational context, and focused upon progress against the Board's agreed shared principles and priorities;
- it was noted that the City Council was expected to adopt the Labour Manifesto at its full Council meeting in June 2011, that this included a number of pledges in respect of children and young people, and that it would be timely to include these in the final Report due for consideration and sign-off in September 2011;
- the CYPP Year One Review highlighted 16 recommendations, and sought the Board's views on those recommendations before the report went out for consultation, prior to consideration and sign-off adoption, with a particular focus on recommendations 1 and 3 to 8.

The Board confirmed that it was content with recommendations 2 and 9-16. Discussion then focused on recommendations 1 and 3 to 8, during which the following comments and information were provided:

**Recommendation 1:** Performance management through named accountable senior officers be re-affirmed and strengthened. Leads will be tasked with reporting to the Partnership on improvement activity for the Year Two priorities. The aim will be to reduce the number but increase the relevance of indicators reported to the Senior Officers Group and to directly identify partnership actions supported by an Action log.

- Comment and information: while there was support for having accountability defined, several Board members commented that there was a need to identify a 'shared responsibility matrix' for cross-cutting issues, sitting below the 'ultimate' named senior officer;

**Recommendation 3:** That safeguarding should be a Year 2 priority with a focus on actions to increase the impact of the Family Support Strategy in providing alternative pathways to improving outcomes, assessment of the impact of family support on social care referral rates, raising the level of reported domestic violence and developing early intervention processes to mitigate risk of repeat incidents, and working with schools and

young people to develop intelligence on the extent of bullying and develop policies for its eventual elimination.

- Comment and information: discussion initially focussed on the inclusion of the issue of gangs, as gang involvement affected life chances, and those of siblings, profoundly. There was also recognition that some level of bullying was inevitable, and so its elimination was unachievable. After further discussion, it was agreed to amend the recommendation's reference to bullying to refer to developing intelligence on bullying, to inform and enable each partner to have clear ways of dealing with bullying, to help build resilience against bullying and to share best practice.

**Recommendations 4 and 5:** 'That healthy living should be a Year 2 priority' and 'That substance misuse should be a Year 2 priority'. The Board was content with these recommendations.

**Recommendation 6:** 'That attainment should be a Year 2 priority, with a specific focus on support for reading initiatives, active promotion of Science City as a means for widening the horizons of children and strengthening attainment in maths and science, and review and strengthen support 16-19 year olds in further education, particularly those eligible for free school meals'.

- Comment and information: there was general support for the recommendation. However, concern was expressed, both about the impact of the abolition of the Education Maintenance Grant, which several members considered would lead to increased drop-out rates, and the shortfall in take-up by those eligible for free school meals, which would impact on drawing down funding from the proposed hardship bursary system.

**Recommendation 7:** Improving school attendance should be a Year 2 priority. Work with schools and academies to address parental attitudes to school absence, reducing the level of disaffection among secondary pupils with additional needs, and the outcome of public consultation on changes to the school year.

- Comment and information: it was acknowledged that school attendance remained a significant issue in Nottingham. Since family holidays were the biggest single cause of unauthorised absences, it was hoped that the outcome of consultation on revisions to the school year would help mitigate holidays as an issue in future years.

**Recommendation 8:** The progress on embedding the cross-cutting principles be recognised, and that they should be further integrated into working practice through the implementation of the Workforce Development Strategy and other initiatives.' The Board was supportive of the recommendation.

## **RESOLVED**

- (1) **that, subject to amending Recommendation 3 in line with the Board's comments in respect of reference to gangs and to bullying (bullet point 5 above refers), the recommendations appended to the report be approved;**

- (2) **that a consultation and an equality impact assessment be conducted over the summer, and that the findings be reported to the board's September 2011 meeting.**

**89 FUTURE OPERATION OF THE CHILDREN'S PARTNERSHIP**  
(Corporate Director of Children and Families)

Mr G Jenkins, Head of Service – Insight and Improvement, provided a brief update in respect of the future operation of the Children's Partnership, explaining that there was a statutory obligation to establish a Health and Well-being Board. Mr Jenkins advised that a major piece of work was under way to ensure that the necessary organisational and communications structures were put in place. It was intended that detailed proposals on how the City Council and its partners were to meet these new statutory obligations would be submitted to the September 2011 of the Partnership Board for its consideration.

**RESOLVED that the update be noted, and that the Partnership Board's Forward Plan be amended accordingly (minute 94 refers).**

**90 MEMBERSHIP**  
(Discussion item)

The Portfolio Holder introduced a brief discussion item, making the observation that there were several gaps in respect of Partnership Board membership and attendance, particularly in respect of special schools and academies. It was also noted that Mr A Kenworthy, NHS Nottingham City, would no longer be attending Partnership Board meetings.

The Portfolio Holder welcomed Mr D Redmond, Nottingham Equal, to the meeting, and proposed that Community and Voluntary Sector representation on the Board be increased through appointing Mr Redmond to the Partnership Board as the Nottingham Equal representative.

**RESOLVED that Mr D Redmond be appointed to the Partnership Board as a representative of Nottingham Equal, and that he be invited to attend all future meetings.**

**91 LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD UPDATE**  
(Independent Chair, Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Board)

Ms M McGlade, Independent Chair of the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Board, introduced the report, providing the following key information:

- since the most recent update in October 2010, OFSTED and the Quality Care Commission had assessed current arrangements for safeguarding and for looked after services as 'good'. While this represented significant progress over a 3-4 year period, there was a need to maintain focus to achieve delivery of a consistently excellent service;
- this was a period of high risk for the safeguarding function, in that recent progress had been built upon quality inter-agency communications and relations, and it was inevitable that organisational restructures would disrupt current links and relations.

The Independent Chair requested that Board members paid particular attention to embedding inter-agency partnership working in revised arrangements;

- it was acknowledged that most authorities and partner organisations were seeking to avoid impacting direct front-line services. However, the Independent Chair had not seen analysis on the impact on safeguarding of budget reductions and resulting loss of services to vulnerable groups. The work would assist risk and resource management planning, and she requested that this work be brought forward;
- it was reported that the provisional findings of the Munro Review of child protection arrangements had found that systems were overly complex and bureaucratic, at the expense of professional confidence and expertise development. The Independent Chair expressed the view that delivery of the Review's detailed recommendations would be challenging, especially in respect of providing strong leadership within Children's Services at a time of uncertainty.

The following comments and information were provided:

- several partner organisations expressed their support for increasing co-location and prospective joint commissioning to deliver value-for-money service outcomes;
- it was confirmed that the Nottingham City care agenda was imbued with the safeguarding ethos, and that general practitioners were fully supportive of prioritising safeguarding.

**RESOLVED that the agencies represented on the Children's Partnership Board:**

- (a) recommit to achieving excellence in safeguarding on a sustainable basis;**
- (b) be mindful of the risk to safeguarding services for the loss of key personnel with specialist knowledge and experience across the sector, and take steps to ensure that their successors be well supported moving into these key roles, being fully inducted into the partnership relationships necessary to be effective;**
- (c) share with the Nottingham Safeguarding Children Board an analysis of the reduction in services to vulnerable adults and children, to inform risk management and future budget planning.**

**92 CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY**

(Director of Economic Innovation and Employment)

The report was introduced by Mr J Yarham, Director of Economic Innovation and Employment, during which the following key information was provided:

- child poverty was an issue that cut across the whole of the Children's Partnership, and the wider national focus on education and health issues, and not just material deprivation, needed taking into account going forward;
- progress made in improving Nottingham's Indices of Multiple Deprivation rating from 7<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> most deprived local authority would be jeopardised through national

changes to the benefits system, which would have a significant impact on lower impact families in Nottingham;

- the proposed child poverty strategy, which would seek to ensure that the most disadvantaged families in Nottingham would receive support to enter and remain in employment, and have sufficient disposable income and parenting skills, was not intended as a stand-alone or additional strategy. Rather, the objectives would be achieved through joined up working through other existing or emerging strategies, notably the Financial Inclusion Strategy, the Family Support Strategy, the Employment and Skills Strategy and the Early Intervention Strategy.

The following comments and information were provided:

- the Board was supportive of the proposal's structure, and of the suggestion that initial trialling work be conducted in Aspley. The Board was also mindful of the scale of the challenge involved in tackling child poverty, it being noted that families faced multiple changes to entitlements, which could tip significant numbers of low income families into more severe financial difficulty;
- while the introduction of the Pupil Premium was potentially a 'good news' story for Nottingham, concern was expressed, that uptake of free school meals entitlement was lower than, and so did not reflect, actual need;
- there was support for the suggestion that the emerging policy needed a high profile, and that briefing should be passed on to Nottingham's Members of Parliament to assist lobbying at the national level;
- there was a brief discussion on how the emerging strategy sat within the Total Place agenda, and on the future operation of the Partnership. It was noted that the position would be made clearer at the September 2011 meeting of the Board, when an update on the strategy, and on Total Place, was expected.

## RESOLVED

- (1) **that the emerging structure for the child poverty strategy, where links between existing strategies were made, and the proposal to conduct pilot work in the Aspley area to test strategy linkages, be endorsed;**
- (2) **that further consideration be given, and appropriate steps taken, to reduce the impact of the government's welfare reforms;**
- (3) **that the Portfolio Holder write to Nottingham's Members of Parliament, informing them of the emerging strategy, and seeking their assistance in helping mitigate the effects of welfare reforms on child poverty.**

## 93 PROGRESS OF THE YEAR OF READING (Portfolio Holder for Children's Services)

The report was introduced by Ms Shewell-Cooper, Ellis Guilford Education Improvement Partnership Manager and Year of Reading Project Officer, introduced the report, during which the following key information was provided:

- improving literacy levels provided citizens, particularly those in disadvantaged communities, with the opportunity to make the most of their life chances, literate people being less likely to be on benefits, to smoke and drink and to have better mental health;
- an exciting programme of initiatives and activities under the Year of Reading umbrella programme had been developed. This included the roll-out of a Volunteer Reading Scheme, the establishment of a partnership between the City Council, the University of Nottingham, the National Literacy Trust and Samworth Academy to promote literacy pilot projects, a 'Big Book Drop' initiative, a Summer Reading Challenge for children and the pilot implementation of the 'Dolly Parton Imagination Library' book-gifting scheme;
- Liz Asher, Director of PlayWorks, had agreed to become a Year of Reading champion.

The following comments and information were provided:

- additional books were being provided in Nottingham's libraries to coincide with the Year of Reading, and a number of library outreach initiatives were planned;
- the view was expressed that working to a wider range of reading material would help outreach work, in particular in engaging boys.

## **RESOLVED**

- (1) that the proposed and emerging activities for the Year of Reading be actively supported across all departments, with key staff from all departments represented on all working groups;**
- (2) that the need for a 'joined up' approach to literacy across the City Council and with partners be recognised, and that the potential of the Year of Reading to support a longer term strategy be recognised;**
- (3) that consideration be given to additional funding to maximise the impact of the initiative;**
- (4) that the Children's Partnership Board receive regular reports on progress during the Year of Reading, and review evidence and recommendations for the future as the year draws to a close;**
- (5) that it be noted that Liz Asher, Director of PlayWorks, had agreed to become a Year of Reading champion.**

## **94 CHILDREN'S PARTNERSHIP BOARD FORWARD PLAN**

(Independent Chair of the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Board NCSCB)

**RESOLVED that the following items be considered at future meetings:**

### **(1) June 2011**

- **Role of Youth Parliament and Youth Cabinet**



- **Child Poverty**
- **Progress of the Workforce Strategy**

**(2) September 2011**

- **Partnership operation**
- **Children and Young People's Plan**
- **Obesity**
- **Science City**
- **Strategic Commissioning Intentions**

**95 KEY MESSAGES**

The Portfolio Holder for Children's Services highlighted the following key messages:

- the recent Every Colleague Matters Event had been very well-received and attended by City Council colleagues and partners, with 91% of the 448 participants rating it 'good' or 'excellent';
- a Nottingham City Multi-agency Pregnancy Liaison Group had been established to help address the social and health needs of pregnant drug and alcohol misusing women, including those on opiate replacement therapy.

**RESOLVED that the key messages be noted.**