



**NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL  
CHILDREN'S PARTNERSHIP BOARD**

**MINUTES of the meeting held at remotely via Zoom and streamed  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/NottCityCouncil> on 14 December 2021 from 4.00 pm -  
5.36 pm**

✓	Cllr Cheryl Barnard (Chair)	Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People, NCC
	Cllr David Mellen	Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Schools & Communications, NCC
	Catherine Underwood	Corporate Director for People, NCC
	Sue Fielding	Department for Work and Pensions
	Helen Watson	Interim Director of Children's Integrated Services, NCC
✓	Nick Lee	Director of Education, NCC
✓	Jon Rea	Engagement and Participation Lead Officer, NCC
	Charlotte Reading	NHS Nottingham Clinical Commissioning Group/ Chief Nurse
	Amanda Payne	Futures Group representative
	Mohammed Ramzan	Further Education representative (Nottingham College)
✓	Sophie Russell	Head of Children's Strategy and Improvement, NCC
	Maria Ward	Maintained Primary School Governor
	Julie Burton	National Probation Service Nottinghamshire representative
	Tracy Tyrell	Nottingham CityCare Partnership
✓	Sarah Fielding	Nottingham Schools Trust and Virtual School
	Supt. Kathryn Craner	Nottinghamshire Police
✓	Nicky Bridges	Primary Schools' representative (Robin Hood Primary)
	Helene Denness	Public Health, NCC
	Michelle Strong	Secondary Schools' representative (Bulwell Academy)
	Karla Capstick	Small Steps Big Changes representative (Director)
	Karla Banfield	Strategic Commissioning Manager, NCC
	Cheryl Steele	Special Schools' representative (Rosehill School)
	Stephen McLaren	Voluntary Sector
	Claire Perry	Voluntary Sector (Children & Young People's Provider Network)

✓ Indicates present at meeting

**Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:**

Mary-Anne Cosgrove - Head of Children in Care  
Karon Foulkes - CCG  
Lisa Lopez - Commissioning Manager, Children and Families  
Julia Bramble - Service Manager, Early Help Services, Children and Families  
Natalie Baker-Swift - Programme Manager - Violence Reduction and Early Intervention  
Jules Sebelin - Community & Voluntary Services  
Emma Powley - Governance Officer

**56 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Gary Eves (CCG) substituted by Karon Foulkes  
Wilf Fearon  
Karla Banfield substituted by Lisa Lopez  
Helen Woodiwiss (NHS)

**57 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

**58 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 28 September 2021 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

**59 CORPORATE PARENTING INCLUDING RECRUITMENT OF FOSTER CARERS / SUPPORTED LODGINGS**

Mary-Anne Cosgrove (Head of Children in Care) updated the Board and gave a presentation which included information about the current status of recruitment of Foster Carers / Supported Lodgings

Sophie Russell (Head of Children's Strategy and Improvement, Children's Integrated Services) elaborated on the presentation and explained that Supported Lodgings was one of the key projects in terms of meeting Council's Corporate Parenting responsibilities. The following information was highlighted:

- a) Unfortunately the newly recruited Co-Ordinator for Supported Lodgings did not take up the post. However Barnardos has provided support and this has meant that Supported Lodging Host recruitment and training has progressed.
- b) Nottingham City Council has continued to work with Banardos on the 'Place to call Home' project, which is a regional initiative to increase foster placements and supported lodgings for Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC), funded by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

- c) The operating model would take into account lessons learned from the experience as well as other regional projects in order to develop a bespoke solution for the East Midlands.
- d) To date, 4 individuals/couples have been approved at panel, 2 of which were through a 'Place to call Home'. These would provide a positive environment for children and UASC's and meetings were held on a regular basis between the Barnados lead and the Council's Placement Team.
- e) Work was being undertaken to increase the number of hosts and the number of good quality foster placements and to increase the amount of in-house carers by offering support and providing mentoring opportunities.
- f) Currently, there are 250 placements supported by the service and whilst there have been some de-registrations and resignations, the majority have been for positive reasons such as to offer more permanent homes and/or adoptions.
- g) There are 13 approved in-house carers this year since April (2021); 7 are currently in their assessment stage and 3 who are waiting their paperwork to start them in the assessment and the Council is currently meeting on a regular basis in supporting a number of carers groups.

The Chair thanked both the Head of Children in Care and the Head of Children's Strategy and Improvement, for their presentation and emphasised the importance of the role the Council had as Corporate Parents and stressed the ongoing commitment to achieve the best for children in care. There was a continued need for the Council to connect with all partners to try and raise the profile of fostering and supported lodging schemes in order to recruit additional foster carers so that children can live in the City and continue to attend their usual schools whilst living in a thriving, supportive setting.

In response to questions asked, the following information was noted:

- h) Work was being undertaken to recruit far and wide for foster carers as there remained some competition from independent fostering agencies and efforts were underway to ensure that the Council's offer is as competitive as possible, specifically across the East Midlands region with continued efforts to increase the profile of the City's fostering team.
- i) There were continued efforts made to increase the number of Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) foster carers to assist with the provision of a diverse range of carers which included the involvement of Churches and Faith Groups.

## **60 SUPPORTING FAMILIES: FAMILY HUBS IN NOTTINGHAM CITY**

Julia Bramble (Service Manager- Early Help Services) delivered a presentation to the Board and explained that in November 2021 the Autumn spending review – Government announced £82M to support family hubs with first £12M released for the Family Hub Transformation Fund to support 12 local authority areas, who do not currently have family hubs of which Nottingham City Council had submitted a bid. The following points were highlighted:

- a) The Government were committed to championing the introduction of Family Hubs and preferred approach would be to include hub buildings and virtual offers using a 'hub & spoke' delivery model that includes outreach in the community and support in the home.
- b) It is intended that the Family Hubs provide a single point of access to families, offering a 'one-stop shop' of family support services across their social care, education, mental health, physical health needs and other children and adult services. The focus will be on the use of Community venues to offer a blended approach that will not excluded those who are living with digital poverty so that all users can access services.
- c) There would be various key services that would be delivered and despite a reduction in budget, it was considered that the Hub approach would continue to offer much needed support and adjust how the Council delivers its services.
- d) Family Hubs would offer a multitude of services and would bridge any gaps that are currently evident. The services offered would include family counselling, youth work, early help, birth registration, youth mental health hubs which would meet all of the needs throughout the process, without the need to signpost people to other various places.
- e) There were 3 principles underpinning the family hub delivery which were:
  - 1) Access
  - 2) Connection
  - 3) Relationships
- f) In order to deliver the hubs well, it would be necessary for staff to be able to respond to every family and to link them to the appropriate services. There would be co-production with other agencies, not just Local Authorities, but also with the community and voluntary sector.
- g) A key to this success would be on families only needing to their story once. There would also be strength based approach to support resilience and to build on family relationships; this would more likely prevent abuse within families reduce the likelihood of situations escalating into domestic abuse.
- h) It was noted that the funding is for the change process only and not for service delivery. The Board were informed that the funding was to transform to a family hub model of service delivery and open hub(s) by March 2024
- i) The £1m grant would be partitioned with £833K Programme Expenditure to fund a local transition team, local consultation, workforce development, development of a digital strategy/data strategy, marketing and communication with families and a £167K Capital Expenditure which would financially contribute to adapting existing buildings; improving accessibility and to enable multi-agency working. This could include, for example, IT upgrades; new furniture to ensure suitability for older children; and new equipment such as sinks or specialist flooring for clinical use.

- j) The bid would need signing off by the Director Children & Adult Services, Director of Public Health and Health and the Well Being board and the Children's Partnership Board were being asked to agree and support and it was requested that the Board is built into the governance structure for the Family Hubs. They would be provided with updates on the transition and would receive updates and reports on progress, risk and challenges.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions to the presentation and stated that it was key that the Children's Partnership Board support the bid and noted that the governance of the family hubs would be paramount to the success of the hubs. The Chair left the meeting having thanked the Head of Children's Strategy and Improvement for her efforts during her employment, handed over to the Vice Chair.

In response to questions asked, the following information was given:

- k) If funding was approved a Communications and Marketing Officer would be recruited to ensure that the message was delivered about changes to the services; service users would be made aware and signposted correctly as would all partners to maximise cohesion.
- l) The location of the Hubs were not yet established and would have to go out for public consultation, but efforts would be made to make them as accessible as possible to those living in and around the city.
- m) Focus would be placed on the 0-19 year old age bracket rather than the 0-5 years that is currently offered. Work was underway with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) who had been tasked with establishing Youth Hubs both to learn from and to ensure that there was no duplication of work. SEND families would also be involved to add value and insight as part the consultation.

The Vice-Chair thanked everyone for their participation and their hard work and wished them every success in getting a successful bid.

## **61 PARTNERSHIP UPDATE: VIOLENCE REDUCTION UNIT**

Natalie Baker-Swift (Programme Manager - Violence Reduction and Early Intervention) gave an update to the Board on the Violence Reduction Unit. The following information was highlighted:

- a) The Violence Reduction Unit was a Home Officer funded team, reporting to the Police and Crime Commissioner and were one of eighteen in England and Wales. The main focus of the unit was on prevention of violence with regards to offending and re-offending.
- b) Emphasis was placed on prevention and early intervention with focus on children and young people up to 25 years. Recent data showed that there had been a 22% reduction in violent crime in Nottingham but those figures were considered to be an anomaly and likely to be attributed to the pandemic and various lockdowns.
- c) There had been some qualitative research carried out establishing a number of key priorities; there was a need to improve the quality of ethnicity data, align resources

and data sets with partners to support SV Duty and research had been undertaken into how boys' beliefs and behaviours develop in relation to violence. This information would allow the Unit to identify where system-wide changes can reduce the causes of violence and exploitation of women and girls.

- d) Trauma-informed approaches, resilience and contextual safeguarding were identified as a further priority to develop and embed, trauma informed practice through a Trauma-Informed Care Strategy for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and the development of learning tools for practitioners, managers, leaders in the voluntary and community, private and public sectors.
- e) The Youth Endowment Fund had been given £200 million over 10 years from the Home Office Serious Violence Fund to fund and evaluate 'what works' to reduce serious violence. Currently, the unit were bidding for £2m in collaboration with Children's Society to augment 'Next Gen' programme to offer whole family support as well as intensive interventions for at risk Children and Young People.
- f) A new Serious Violence Duty as part of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill 2021 is expected to come into effect in 2022 to 2023 which would provide a collaborative response to Serious Violence. Community and Voluntary Sectors would also be involved in collaborative work to prevent and reduce instances of serious violence and the wider impact that it has.

The Vice-Chair thanked the Programme Manager for her presentation and update.

## **62 PARTICIPATION UPDATE**

Jon Rea (Engagement & Participation Lead Officer) gave a verbal update and gave a summary of the work progressing around the voice of Children and Young People through the participation strategy for the Children's Partnership. The following information was highlighted:

- a) A Partnership Steering Group had been held which had included colleagues from Play, Youth, Safeguarding, Education, Small Steps Big Changes (SSBC), Culture as well as colleagues from the Universities who had identified some of the challenges they wanted to take on as a Partnership Group.
- b) The Council had agreed to enter into a 3-year project with Small Steps Big Changes (SSBC) to achieve a Child Friendly City status for Nottingham. It was explained that this was a commitment to fulfilling the rights of the child where children's voices, needs and rights are integrated in laws, policies, regulations, programmes and budgets. The impact of this would allow children to have greater opportunities to have their voices heard and increase feelings of empowerment.
- c) Work was progressing with the Safeguarding Children's Board aligning more closely with the Children's Partnership Board to ensure shared principles of partners and using the same frame of reference with regards to the rights of the child, the voice of the child and empowering them to articulate their views and opinions.

- d) Nottingham City Council were currently chairing the East Midlands Regional Participation Leads Group working with colleagues from the regional improvement and innovation alliance around 2 work streams - SEND and CIC and Care Leavers to ensure the environment of language structure in the care environment is more organic; de-institutionalize language structures being applied on a regional footprint with ten other Local Authorities within the East Midlands.
- e) Throughout Covid, the work of the Youth Cabinet had continued and had provided and youth leadership forum and the Children in Care Council have been very impressive as a support group to the Council. In the past quarter the CiC Council have worked on key skills for independence developing skills to be able to go out into adult life where they are properly equipped.

Engagement & Participation Lead Officer thanked the Head of Children's Strategy and Improvement, Children's Integrated Services for all her work, stating that she had been instrumental in making sure the voices of children are heard.

The Vice-Chair thanked both the Engagement & Participation Lead Officer and the Head of Children's Strategy and Improvement, Children's Integrated Services for their work and emphasised the importance of the Children in Care Council and the Youth Cabinet and stated how pleased she was to hear young people speak so highly of the work of the Council.

### **63 KEY MESSAGES AND ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

There were no further items or key messages for this item

### **64 FORWARD PLAN AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

The Vice Chair stated that if partners would like to add to the forward plan to contact Constitutional Service with their requests.