

<b>AGENDA ITEM: 5</b>	
<b>Report Name:</b>	Future of the Children’s Trust Board
<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Barnet Safer Communities Partnership Board</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	31 October 2014
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<b>Enclosures:</b>	Appendix A – Children’s Trust Board options paper Appendix B – Children and Young People’s Plan

## Summary

The Children’s Trust Board has been established since 2007 and has had an important role in developing the Children and Young People’s Plan and ensuring partners work together to improve outcomes across a number of priority areas.

Recently, all partners agreed that the Board could be more effective and so a short review was undertaken and it was agreed to develop an alternative governance approach to achieve the partnership’s objectives.

The Safer Communities Partnership Board are asked to oversee the aspects of the Children and Young People’s Plan that relate to community safety as set out in this report and to take partnership decisions for these areas.

## Recommendations

1. That the Safer Communities Partnership Board agrees to oversee the aspects of the Children and Young People’s Plan that relate to community safety and to take partnership decisions for these areas.
2. That the priorities outlined in paragraph 2.5 are incorporated into the Safer Communities Strategy when it is refreshed in early 2015.

### 1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 Barnet’s Children’s Trust Board (CTB) was established in 2007 and is chaired by the Lead Member for Children’s Services, who is now also the Chairmen of the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee.
- 1.2 A number of shared membership arrangements exist between the Health and Well-Being Board, Children’s Trust Board and Safer Communities Board. At the April meeting of the CTB it was agreed that some thought needed to be given as to how best to proceed with the CTB and its Executive Management Group (EMG).

- 1.3 At the July meeting of the Children's Trust Board, decision was taken by the Board to proceed with transferring responsibilities for oversight of the Children and Young People's Plan to the Health and Well-Being Board and Safer Communities Board, subject to agreement by both Boards. The Health and Well-Being Board agreed to this on 18 September 2014.

## **2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 A survey of members of both CTB and EMG has recently been undertaken. Views as to the effectiveness and necessity of the CTB and EMG were mixed, but some of the stronger messages are summarised below:
- The majority of respondents agreed that the business of the CTB could effectively be subsumed into the Health and Well-being Board and the Safer Communities Partnership Board.
  - Just over half of respondents felt that CTB meetings were valuable.
  - The CTB would benefit from more regular senior attendance from all member agencies.
  - Only a third of respondents found the EMG meetings to be valuable.
  - 90% of respondents felt that Barnet does still need a Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP)
- 2.2 Based on the feedback received above, it was agreed to develop an alternative governance approach to achieve the partnership's objectives. Under this option, the quarterly CTB and EMG meetings will cease.
- 2.3 The Children's Trust Board will meet for one or two half day conference sessions per year to review progress on the CYPP and to refresh priorities and targets for subsequent years. These will be attended by senior officers from all statutory organisations together with representatives from Youth Board; CommUNITY Barnet and parent representatives. These will include sessions involving children and young people.
- 2.4 An annual report setting out achievements in improving outcomes for children as set out in the CYPP will be produced, published and reported to the a smaller group at the end of these sessions. The Board will have no programme of work to transact but may make recommendations for action to partner organisations or other partnership boards.
- 2.5 The Safeguarding Children Board, Health and Well-being Board and the Safer Communities Partnership Board are being asked to ensure that the priorities of the CYPP are effectively integrated into their respective work plans. The following priorities have been identified for the Safer Communities Partnership Board to oversee:

Theme	Priority
Early intervention and prevention ( <i>alongside Health and Well-being Board</i> )	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take a whole family approach to improving outcomes for children and young people.</li> <li>2. Strengthen early identification and intervene early to improve life chances for those living in the most difficult situations.</li> <li>3. Reduce the involvement of children and young people in crime and anti-social behaviour.</li> </ol>
Targeting resources to narrow the gap ( <i>alongside Safeguarding Boards</i> )	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Address unhealthy relationships based on exploitation and build aspirations for the future.</li> <li>2. Educate children and young people on how to stay safe and provide support for those who are victims of crime. Taking action to prevent the impact of gang involvement developing in Barnet.</li> <li>3. Protect children at risk of harm and support them to achieve their potential</li> </ol>

### 3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 Two main options were reviewed and included in the Children’s Trust Board paper. The preferred option is to develop an alternative governance approach to achieve the partnership’s objectives (set out in Section 2.5 to 2.9 of this report).
- 3.2 The alternative option considered but not taken forward was to continue with the current governance approach but with a number of changes. These changes would include:
- A challenge session at each Board on a priority area from the Children and Young People’s plan
  - Agenda setting alternating between the various represented at the CTB
  - Re-focusing the EMG on delivery issues, with a reduced membership
  - No substitution for members to be permitted to ensure consistency of attendees

### 4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The decision will be implemented immediately and officers will amend the forward plan of the Safer Communities Partnership Board accordingly.

### 5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

#### 5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 Positive outcomes for children and young people are a key part of the new Corporate Plan and priorities for 2013 – 16 include:
- To create better life chances for children and young people across the borough.
  - To sustain a strong partnership with the local NHS, so that families and individuals can maintain and improve their physical and mental health.
  - To promote family and community well-being and encourage engaged, cohesive and safe communities.

5.1.2 The measures in the Children and Young People Plan are consistent with the Corporate Plan, which provides a statement of the Council's contribution towards the partnership's outcomes.

5.1.3 The Council is a major provider and commissioner of services for children and young people but also has a more significant local leadership role. Through chairing the Children's Trust Board the Council exerts strategic leadership, provides accountability to other agencies working in Barnet and is the driving agent of development in the system.

## 5.2 **Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

5.2.1 There is no budget set aside for the Children's Trust Board. There are no material resource implications of either of the options outlined in the Children's Trust Board paper.

## 5.3 **Legal and Constitutional References**

5.3.1 Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 requires local authorities to make arrangements to co-operate with relevant partners and individuals and bodies who exercise functions or engage in activities with children in their area in order to improve the well-being of children. Section 12A requires local authorities to establish a children's trust board with representation from the local authority and relevant partners. Section 12B confirms that the function of the Board is to prepare and publish a children and young people's plan and monitor the extent to which relevant persons and bodies are acting in accordance with the plan. The Board must publish an annual report about the extent to which those persons and bodies have acted in accordance with the plan.

## 5.4 **Risk Management**

5.4.1 There is a risk that key initiatives within the Children and Young People's Plan will not be carried out, which could adversely impact on the council's reputation. In order to mitigate this risk, any new arrangements will need to ensure a continued focus on achieving the priority outcomes that it sets out.

## 5.5 **Equalities and Diversity**

5.5.1 There is a risk that with the change in governance arrangements the focus on issues affecting children and young people could be diminished, leading to adverse impact for this group. In order to mitigate this risk, any new arrangements will need to ensure a continued focus on achieving the priority outcomes set out in the Children and Young People's Plan.

5.5.2 The Health and Wellbeing Strategy already outlines a clear set of objectives to improve children and young people's health and wellbeing, so the risk that children's priorities will be neglected if responsibility for overseeing them transfers to the Health and Wellbeing Board are slim.

## 5.6 **Consultation and Engagement**

5.6.1 A survey of all members of the Children's Trust Board and its Executive Management Group was undertaken to inform the options set out.

**6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 6.1 Children's Trust Board decision - 24 July 2014  
(<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=456&MId=7948&Ver=4>)
  
- 6.2 Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee decision – 29 July 2014  
(<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=697&MId=7924&Ver=4>)