

Staffordshire Children's Trust Board

Terms of Reference

September 2008



Staffordshire Children's Trust
Working together to improve the lives of children and young people

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To improve the well-being of children and young people who are born, raised, educated or find work within the administrative area of Staffordshire County Council, by working together to achieve the five outcomes which matter most to children, young people and their families (Every Child Matters , 2004):
- being healthy;
 - staying safe;
 - enjoying and achieving;
 - making a positive contribution;
 - achieve economic well-being.
- 1.2 Staffordshire's Children's Trust Board exists to improve outcomes for children in the administrative area of Staffordshire County Council by commissioning services from within the children's service authority, National Health Service, voluntary and community sector and other service providers in order to meet needs, maintain high standards and value for money and keep children safe from harm.

2. Function

- 2.1 The Staffordshire Children's Trust Board is a commissioning partnership and will improve outcomes for children and young people by working with and through those who provide services including schools, hospitals, community health services, educational support teams, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) school improvement services, social services teams, Staffordshire Youth Offending Service (SYOS), Connexions, children's centres, General Practitioners, police, housing associations, voluntary agencies, post 16 providers, businesses and more.
- 2.2 It is 'developing an overall picture of children's needs within an area and developing provision through public, private, voluntary and community providers to respond to those needs'.
- 2.3 Commissioning involves measuring and agreeing need, understanding expectations, agreeing priorities and plans, measuring and reviewing performance and holding providers to account in order to improve outcomes.
- 2.4 Commissioning includes influence and negotiation, agreement of service plans and service-level agreements, contracting, grant making and procurement of service.

3. The Staffordshire Children's Trust Board will:

- 3.1 Develop the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) and review it, amending it regularly to take into account changing needs, progress with priority schemes, new priorities and opportunities.
- 3.2 Ensure that successive draft CYPPs are subject to consultation and that the annual calendar of meetings is designed to allow time for consultation through

partners, children and young people and families and other stakeholder groups.

- 3.3 Base decisions on systematic, objective research into needs and the evidence of performance rather than on the status quo or short-term opportunism. In particular in being responsible for the development of the CYPP will liaise with the Local Strategic Partnerships and appropriate other sub-regional and local bodies, to obtain information about local needs and priorities for inclusion into the Plan so as to enable delivery planning at the district/borough level.
- 3.4 Take into account the requirements of central government and respond to external review and inspection.
- 3.5 Ensure that joint commissioning agreements between the NHS North Staffordshire, South Staffordshire Primary Care Trust and the Staffordshire County Council are, where appropriate and agreed, in place and regularly reviewed.
- 3.6 Ensure that mainstream and mandatory funds and additional funds such as the Area Based Grant (ABG) are used to improve outcomes for children, families and young people.
- 3.7 Maintain excellent relationships with providers including schools, community health services, the criminal justice system, youth services and the voluntary and community sector etc.
- 3.8 Monitor the performance of the service providers so as to ensure improvement of outcomes for children, young people and their families.
- 3.9 Be responsible for the Local Area Agreement (LAA) for children, young people and family related outcomes. In particular in undertaking this responsibility to look to delivering cohesive plans for the administrative area of Staffordshire.
- 3.10 Report to the Staffordshire Children's Trust as required and disseminate information to others as appropriate.
- 3.11 Meet at least four (4) times a year.
- 3.12 Ensure that all services for children and young people in administrative area comply with the appropriate commissioning/conflict of interest standards and:
 - 3.12.1 promote social inclusion;
 - 3.12.2 aim for high standards and continuous improvement;
 - 3.12.3 involve children, young people, their families and carers in their development and delivery;
 - 3.12.4 are planned in partnership;
 - 3.12.5 are equitable and non-discriminatory;
 - 3.12.6 are based on evidence and best practice;

- 3.12.7 allow scope for innovation;
- 3.12.8 promote family life through appropriate support and early intervention;
- 3.12.9 demonstrate best value and effectiveness in improving the well-being of children and young people;
- 3.12.10 work closely with the Local Safeguarding Children Board, accepting their advice to ensure that all agencies working with children are applying effective processes and the highest possible standards to keep children safe from harm;
- 3.12.11 ensure that children, families and young people are involved in making decisions about their lives and the support they need – through all those who work with children, families and young people in the administrative area of Staffordshire County Council;
- 3.12.12 ensure that services work appropriately with diversity of families in the administrative area of Staffordshire County Council so that there is equality of access and opportunity;
- 3.12.13 work in accordance with the CYPP and Sustainable Community Strategy and report to other appropriate bodies, organisations, etc, (including the Staffordshire Strategic Partnership, Staffordshire County Council Cabinet and Scrutiny, Primary Care Trust Boards, etc);
- 3.12.14 takes into account the European Union Convention on the Rights of the Child.

4. Partnership Membership

- 4.1 The Staffordshire Children's Trust Board will consist of representatives of the commissioning and providers element of children and young people and families services. Current membership will therefore be a mixture and where voting is determined to be appropriate due to financial implications and in other appropriate instances provider representatives accept they will not have full voting rights.

Membership will include, but not be limited to:

- The Lead Member for Staffordshire County Council's Children Services;
- A representative of the District/Borough Councils;
- Staffordshire Police Authority;
- NHS North Staffordshire;
- South Staffordshire PCT;
- Connexions;
- Staffordshire Consortium and Infrastructure of Organisation (SCIO);
- Staffordshire County Council's Children Services x 3 (including the Director for Children's Services and Chair of Children's Trust Executive);
- A District Children's Trust representative;
- Commissioner for Children;
- Commissioner for Parents;

- Learning and Skills Council;
- Schools (via the Chair of the Headteachers' Forum and Chair of the Primary Headteachers' Forum);
- Adult Services Representative;
- Colleges (via the Chair of the Association of Staffordshire Principals ASP);
- Supporting People Representative;
- Chair of Staffordshire Safeguarding Board

4.2 Members will represent their agencies and will also bring experience and knowledge about other sectors and organisations. However their primary duty is to act in the interest of children and young people in Staffordshire.

4.3 Members may, by agreement, invite advisors to any meeting.

5. Quorum

5.1 Staffordshire Children's Trust Board shall meet its quorum when not less than four (4) members of its then current membership attend, provided that, where representation from one organisation is more than one, only one shall count towards the quorum number of four (4). For the avoidance of doubt, members with conflicts who cannot vote will not be counted towards the quorum number of four (4) required.

6. Chair

6.1 The Chair of the Staffordshire Children's Trust Board will be the Staffordshire County Council Lead Member for Children. The Vice Chair will be reviewed on an annual basis.

7. Budget

7.1 Because financial management is a key part of good governance, decisions should not be made in the absence of budget information. Most of the resources under the control of the Director of Children's Services (DCS) and children's partnerships are earmarked and proscribed.

7.2 The Staffordshire Children's Trust Board will influence the way in which mainstream funding is used in order to improve outcomes for children, families and young people. This will include making plans for the integration and alignment of budgets including, where appropriate, preparation for budget pooling agreements.

7.3 The Staffordshire Children's Trust Board will influence the way in which mandatory pooled funds including CAMHS, Drug Action Alcohol Team (DAAT), SYOS, ABG and Children's Fund are allocated in order to improve outcomes for children, families and young people.

7.4 The Staffordshire Children's Trust Board will allocate pooled and other funds as they become available in order to improve outcomes for children, families and young people.

- 7.5 The Staffordshire Children's Trust Board may advise the realignment of resources where there is evidence that services are not contributing to the improvement of outcomes for children, families and young people, so that they can be discontinued and the resources reallocated.
- 7.6 Members of the Staffordshire Children's Trust Board will contribute to a small budget for supporting the Staffordshire Children's Trust including funds for training, administration support, and other costs. Initially this will be managed by Staffordshire County Council.
- 7.7 Disabled access to meetings will be available unless exceptional reasons apply. Assistance with communication will be provided if members have a sensory impairment. From time to time the Chair may require participation at a training day or ask members to represent the partnership at meetings with stakeholders or make visits outside the area. The costs, where appropriate, will be paid for the small budget referred to in paragraph 7.6.

8. Partnership Board Support

- 8.1 Staffordshire Children's Trust Board members will ensure there is appropriate support in the form of administration, secretarial, Agenda and reports for itself and the agreed sub groups (e.g. Executive), in the first instance this financial sum will be that which has already been agreed.
- 8.2 Agenda, Minutes of the previous meeting and papers will be circulated to Staffordshire Children's Trust Board Members at least 7 days in advance of the meeting, and will be public documents for widespread circulation and discussion following approval by board members at the next meeting. Copies of Agenda, Minutes and papers will also be sent to others on an agreed mailing list to keep them informed. In the unlikely event that confidentiality is required – by virtue of individual rights and confidentiality or in the public interest – then papers will be so marked and destroyed at the end of the meeting.

9. Expectations of Chair and Board Members

- 9.1 All appropriate agencies have the right to be involved in the development of the CYPP, commissioning framework and delivery plans. Being a Board Member will include the following requirements:
- 9.1.1 Reading papers, responding to emails and other communications and keep up with what is going on.
- 9.1.2 Attending meetings; if unable to be there to contribute in writing or over the phone when apologising.
- 9.1.3 Being on time and not leaving early.
- 9.2 Participation in meetings in two ways – primarily as a member of the partnership in the interest of children families and young people in the area but also representing the views of providers, children, families and young people themselves and other stakeholders and networks.

- 9.3 Representing and promoting the CYPP to the Staffordshire Strategic Partnership, District/Borough Local Strategic Partnerships and Locality Partnerships, Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), inspectors and other networks.
- 9.4 Participating in partnership events and training.
- 9.5 Contributing to the development of the partnership/board as an effective, efficient and inclusive team including raising concerns with the Chair if necessary.
- 9.6 Be of appropriate seniority to make decisions and not to send substitutes unless necessary and of an appropriate level to make decisions.
- 9.7 Be responsible for the implementation within their own organisations of the new integrated systems including the CAF, Information Sharing and Assessment, Team Around the Child (TAC) approach.
- 9.8 To provide lead professionals for the board and the Staffordshire Children's Trust to call upon to obtain and co-ordinate the multi-agency support needed.
- 9.9 To provide information to hold each other to account.
- 9.10 To cooperate.

10. Probity and Declaration of Interest

- 10.1 The Nolan Principles of Public Life will apply. <http://www.archive.official-documents.co.uk/document/parlament/nolan/seven.htm>
- 10.2 High standards of behaviour are expected of all members who will be expected to declare any interest they may have in anything under discussion and leave the room if asked by the Chair. This would not normally include interests of a strategic or general professional nature that would contribute to and enrich partnership work. However, it would include, for example, a discussion of business or employment opportunities affecting the individual or her/his close family or any other matters where there is any potential for personal gain. In these situations people will be expected to leave the room.
- 10.3 Members will also be expected to declare any other board or committee membership, apart from the Local Strategic Partnership and Local Authority.
- 10.4 The Staffordshire Children's Trust Board will hold a public record of Members' interests which Members can amend at any time and which will be reviewed annually.
- 10.5 The rule is, as always, is 'if in doubt declare openly and immediately'.

11. Decision-making

- 11.1 Consultation will be built into the development of the CYPP and other work of the Staffordshire Children's Trust Board through discussion with stakeholders, use of statistics, information and research and submissions. Before going to

the partnership, initial drafts will have been widely circulated for comment by the stakeholder.

- 11.2 Plans and decisions will then be discussed, and normally be agreed, and then stakeholders will be informed.
- 11.3 If after full debate, the Chair feels that the Board cannot come to an acceptable decision at that meeting, the Chair would normally postpone a decision while further information is obtained to allow further consideration by stakeholders and partners.
- 11.4 The Board will then try and reach agreement through compromise, consensus and if necessary voting as the Chair thinks fit. In the event of a tied vote the Chair may use their casting vote.
- 11.5 Decisions of a financial nature must respect the accountabilities of the funding partners and voting shall only be used exceptionally and where it is necessary will be restricted to the funding parties only and further shall not be used to direct members in areas outside the agreements made hereunder.

12. Key relationships and Accountabilities

- 12.1 The Staffordshire Children's Trust Board will work within the strategic framework agreed by the strategic members of the Board.
- 12.2 All Members understand that this Board sits within a wider framework of different organisation governance arrangements which will need to be complied with and respected.
- 12.3 Local government has multiple roles in partnerships. The Staffordshire Children's Trust Board acknowledges these roles including the statutory duty to lead the Change for Children Agenda and keep children safe from harm, and the duty to coordinate commissioning and the provision of a range of essential services.
- 12.4 The Staffordshire Children's Trust Board will oversee the relationships between commissioners and those providing children's services, ensuring that they all contribute to implementing the CYPP, maintaining standards and improve children's lives.
- 12.5 In order to ensure the implementation of the Children's Young People's Plan the Staffordshire Children's Trust Board will measure and manage the performance of providers (within the authority, NHS, schools and other external providers, etc) in order to ensure that outcomes for children, families and young people improve. The Staffordshire Children's Trust Board will require the Locality District Trusts to carry out the same role at the District/Borough level.
- 12.6 Joint commissioning will be developed over time. As previously specified as individual members have their own accountabilities, it is recognised that individual members will retain the right to make their own commissioning arrangements.

- 12.7 Voluntary and community agencies provide a range of services for children, families and young people. Contracts are expected to comply with the voluntary sector Compact.
www.thecompact.org.uk

13. Delegation

- 13.1 The Staffordshire Children's Trust Board will devolve responsibility for ensuring the delivery of improved outcomes for children, families and young people to Locality Districts Children's Trusts at the District/Borough level and the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The Staffordshire Children's Trust Board expect that the Terms of Reference for these groups, will be shared with the staff Children's Trust Board and will include agreed commissioning standards, and subsequently receive reports at least once a year. These groups will be required

13.1.1 to develop an overall picture of children's needs within their area and work with the appropriate agencies to develop provision through public, private, voluntary and community providers to tailor the provision to local needs;

13.1.2 to consult, review and amend the delivery plan further their area;

13.1.3 ensure compliance as a minimum with the standards set out in paragraph 3.1.2.

- 13.2 The Executive will support, inform and report to the Staffordshire Children's Trust Board and will carry out the performance management roles, development of plans and the supporting strategies.

14. Review

- 14.1 The work of the Staffordshire Children's Trust Board will be subject to regular review, taking into account stakeholder experience. The Staffordshire Children's Trust Board will be successful if it contributes to improving outcomes and to developing and implementing the Children Young People's Plan. It will be successful by achieving credibility with its members and partners (within children's services and beyond in housing and the criminal justice system, etc) and is able to attract additional funding for work with children and young people in the administrative area of Staffordshire County Council, ensuring that children's services are popular and well understood by service users and receive high scores after inspection.

- 14.2 These Terms of Reference will be reviewed on an annual basis, or sooner if required.

15. Definition

15.1 In this agreement the following terms and expressions shall have the following meaning:-

ABG	Area Based Grant
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CSA	Children Service Authority (Staffordshire County Council)
CYPP	Children's and Young People's Plan
DAAT	Drug Action Alcohol Team
DCS	Director of Children's Services
DCSF	Department of Children, Schools and Families
LAA	Local Area Agreement
NHS	National Health Service
PCT	Primary Care Trust
SYOS	Staffordshire Youth Offending Service
SCIO	Staffordshire and Stoke Consortium of Infrastructure Organisations