

Meeting:	Cabinet
Date:	15 th January 2009
Subject:	Children's Trust
Key Decision:	Yes
Responsible Officer:	Paul Clark, Corporate Director, Children's Services
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Christine Bednell, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix 1: Timetable for Children's Trust Appendix 2: CYPSP Membership List Appendix 3: References, links and further reading.

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

Setting up a Children's Trust is a legal requirement (Children Act 2004). This is emphasised by the lessons learned from the 'Baby P' case in Haringey.

A Children's Trust :

- formalises children's partnership arrangements
- combines partners' resources
- Ensures that children, young people and their families who are in need of services experience a more co-ordinated approach by those working with them.

Recommendation: To establish a Children's Trust with a governance framework formalised by a legal agreement; the decision to finalise the terms and execute the legal agreement is delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services.

Reason: To improve outcomes for children and young people by formalising partnership arrangements.

Introduction

1) The decision to approve a recommendation to create a Children's Trust for Harrow fulfils the Council's Priorities to;

- ***“improve the way we work for our residents”*** and to
- ***“improve the well-being of adults and children who most need our help”***.

The combined efforts of partners will improve outcomes for children and young people as we will formally plan and fund services together.

Background information

2) Harrow Children and Young People Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) implemented all of the regulations in the Children Act 2004. Partners are therefore prepared for more formal arrangements, including shared agreements about spending.

The purpose and membership of Children's Trust Boards was revised by central government in November 2008 following the 'Baby P' case.

Current situation

3) The national developments arising as a result of concern about the death of 'Baby P' in Haringey resulted in a number of letters and guidance documents emerging from central government. These re-enforce the importance of Children's Trusts as a means to combine our planning and agreed spending on shared priorities.

There is evidence to show that the Children's Trust creates a multi-agency network that enhances local relationships and trust. This enhances local ability to communicate and share information. The result is increased focus on the safety and welfare of children and young people.

4) A modular approach to the Trust has been agreed by the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership. This means that developments can be achieved incrementally and when partners are ready to take part in financial agreements. Changes will be implemented over time, without major restructuring or dramatic change and with consensus.

Those areas initially identified as ready to integrate are Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and some residential services for children with special needs. These services have a strong history and experience of joint arrangements.

Why a change is needed

5) A formal Children's Trust is different from current arrangements because;

- it formally binds all partners into agreements on how we work together
- it includes agreement on financial commitments to meet agreed priorities
- it formalises partner commitment to resource the agreed priorities laid out in the Children and Young People's Plan
- this supports the Council priorities for young people,
- it strengthens the Council's vision for children and young people.
- partnership working is formally led, resourced and monitored
- it reduces the risks of variable financial positions impacting on financial commitment and on performance.
- it provides for overall sustained improvements in performance and outcomes for children and young people.

A Children's Trust Board will be created to lead on these developments;

6) ***A Children's Trust Board is;***

- a multi-agency group set up under Children Act 2004.
- made up of leaders of partner agencies who are required and authorised by their agency to commit resources, both financial and in kind, to the priorities agreed in the Children and Young People's Plan.
- authorised to arrange for the pooling of budgets to target areas of highest need where it considers it appropriate to do so.

7) ***Representation on Children's Trust Board:***

The exact representation on the board will be decided by negotiation with partner agencies but will be chosen to ensure the minimum necessary number of persons representing:

- Councillors
- Health
- Police
- Children's Services
- Voluntary sector
- Education

8) This group will meet a maximum of four times a year, linked to the budget process for agencies. The key driver will be the Children and Young People's Plan and annual evaluations which include the revision of priorities.

9) Principles of Voting:

Voting rights will be determined by discussion with partner agencies, but will be such as to ensure no agency can determine spend of another's budget against their wishes. In essence, voting will be to confirm a consensus approach to use of resources.

A timetable for the setting up of the Children's Trust Board is attached at Appendix 1.

10) Further considerations on membership following recent government guidance will be carried out with the aim of ensuring agencies influence without overloading membership.

11) Governance:

The Children's Trust Board will report to Harrow Strategic Partnership, Cabinet and the PCT executive group. It will be informed by the Children and Young People Strategic Partnership.

Cabinet	Children's Trust Board	PCT exec
Children and Young People Strategic Partnership		

See appendix 2 for CYPSP membership

12) Resources:

Set up costs, mainly on legal and expert consultancy advice, are estimated at £25,000. These are forecast to be incurred in 2009/10 and will need to be financed from existing resources. Initially the work of the Children's Trust will concentrate on joint procurement and partnership working. These measures are expected to reap economies of scale and the subsequent savings are expected to more than cover on-going running costs. The Trust will develop arrangements for pooled budgets by legal agreement.

NB There will be no transfer of capital assets.

Staffing/workforce: There are no immediate implications for the workforce. A gradual shift towards integrating resources will be realised over time, and with consensus

Equalities impact- Planning and delivery with partners will use local knowledge to assess and agreed local priorities. This will result in increased ability to identify vulnerable groups and provide the right services to meet their needs.

13) Financial Implications

- Set up costs will involve 25K .
- This investment will result in long-term savings. On-going running cost will be found from existing capacity from the Council and the PCT.

14) Performance Issues

Performance indicators are developing in line with the improved partnership arrangements between organisations. Partners are asked to plan and set priorities together and are held accountable for the same performance measures.

Formal partnership arrangements will enhance overall performance as indicators will reflect agreed priorities supported by agreed spending. Funding will therefore target those priorities and result in improved outcomes.

15) Risk Management Implications

This proposal requires stable financial positions in partner agencies.

Currently Harrow PCT reports increasing stability and a willingness to invest in the Children's Trust Board. This proposal suggests a modular, approach. Commitments are made in small stages and in accordance with the readiness of services. This allows for emerging need and demographic change.

It also requires clear governance and accountability which provide clear leadership arrangements and financial reporting mechanisms:

The Children's Trust Board will provide overall leadership, clear accountability and responsibilities of agencies. These will be enshrined in the detailed governance protocols ensuring all partners are clear about commitment and responsibilities.

There are competing commissioning intentions in an increasingly competitive market.

The new arrangements will enable our existing clusters to identify local need, and influence priorities. GP's, schools and partner agencies including the community, the voluntary sector and young people will be involved. This will support the Local Area Agreement and Harrow Strategic Partnership direction of travel and expectations in terms of delivery. The Children's Trust will further enable partners to narrow the gap between the more affluent and lower socio-economic groups.

Risk included on Directorate risk register? Yes

Separate risk register in place? No

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Emma Stabler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Chief Financial Officer
Date: 22 December 2008		
Name: Helen White	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the* Monitoring Officer
Date: 6 January 2009		

Section 4 – Performance Officer Clearance

Name: David Harrington



on behalf of the*
Divisional Director
(Strategy and Improvement)

Date: 18 December 2008

Section 5 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

Betty Lynch, Strategic Development Manager, Children's Services
0208 424 1370 x 2370

Background Papers: Detailed in Appendix 3

TIMETABLE FOR CHILDREN'S TRUST

November 2008 **discussion at CYPP and endorsement of Children's Trust,**

15th January- **Cabinet approval**

6th February- **Final approval by CYPSP**

April 2009-**Confirm all Children's Trust operating arrangements**

CYPSP Membership

Position / Organisation Represented
Metropolitan Police
Consultant Paediatrician, Northwick Park Hospital
Commissioner, Harrow Primary Care Trust
Head, Early Years Partnership
Children's Fund Manager
Strategic Development Manager
Assistant Director of Operations, NWLH Trust
Performance and Data Manager, Harrow Council
Head of Service, Safeguarding, Family Placement and Support
Learning and Skills Council
Director, Schools and Children's Development
Service Manager, Strategy and Business Support, Harrow Council
Headteacher Priestmead First School
Harrow Police
Headteacher, Rooks Heath High School
Director, Harrow Association of Voluntary Service
Deputy Head of Service, Community Development
Named Nurse (NWLH Trust)
Service Manager Policy and Partnership
Consultant Paediatrician, NPH
Corporate Director of Children's Services (Chair)
Head of Service, Young People's Services
Head of Service, Special Needs Services
Child Protection, Consultant
Clinical Director, NPH
Chief Executive, Harrow PCT
Principal, Harrow College
Equality & Diversity Manager, Harrow Council
Head of Service, Integrated Early Years and Community Services

References and Further Reading

The children act 2004

Working Together to Safeguard Children- DfES 2006

Children's Trust- Statutory Guidance on inter-agency co-operation to improve well-being of children and their families. DfES 2008

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00346/>