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Date: 23 March 2011

Dear Member

**CHILDREN, FAMILIES & EDUCATION - VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND PARTNERSHIPS
POLICY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - WEDNESDAY, 30 MARCH 2011**

Please find enclosed, for consideration at next Wednesday, 30 March 2011 meeting of the Children, Families & Education - Vulnerable Children and Partnerships Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the following report which replaces the papers previously circulated with the agenda.

Agenda No	Item
B2	<u>Governance Arrangements for Children's Social Care Improvement (1 - 10)</u>

Yours sincerely

Peter Sass
Head of Democratic Services & Local Leadership

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By: Jenny Whittle, Cabinet Member, Specialist Children's Services
Malcolm Newsam, Interim Managing Director, Children, Families and Education

To: Vulnerable Children's Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 30 March 2011

Subject: Governance Arrangements for Children's Social Care Improvement

Summary: This report outlines the proposed governance arrangements for Children's Social Care Improvement.

Improvement Board

1. (1) The purpose of the Kent Improvement Board (Terms of Reference attached as appendix 1) is to support rapid and sustainable improvement of services in the county that safeguard children and/or support looked after children. Its key roles are to agree, monitor and report progress on the actions in the Kent Children's Services Improvement Plan. That will include monitoring the targets set out in the Kent Improvement Notice issued by the Secretary of State in January 2011. This report will be considered by Cabinet on 4th April and any amendments will be reported back to the Vulnerable Children POSC.

(2) The Board has appointed an independent chair, Liz Railton, which has been approved by the Parliamentary under Secretary of State for Children and Families. The Chair will report directly to the Minister and the Leader of the Council on progress on a quarterly basis

(3) The Board meets monthly and its membership includes:

- The Independent Chair
- KCC Lead Member for Children's Services
- KCC Managing Director Children Families and Education
- KCC Director of Specialist Services Children Families and Education
- Department for Education observer
- The Chair of the Kent Safeguarding Children's Board
- The Primary Care Trust Chief Executive
- Kent Police

(4) The Board's work will be reported to (see appendix 2).

- KCC Cabinet

- KCC Vulnerable Children’s Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- Kent Children’s Trust Board
- Kent Safeguarding Children’s Board
- County Council
- PCT Executive Board

Governance within Kent County Council

2. Attached as an Appendix 2 is a diagram illustrating the governance arrangements for Children’s Social Care Improvement. There is top level ownership of the Improvement Plan within the Council, as follows:

- a. The Leader will receive quarterly reports from the Chair of the Improvement Board and will meet regularly with the Cabinet Member for Specialist Children’s Services and the Interim Managing Director of Children, Families and Education
- b. The Cabinet Member for Specialist Children’s Services and Group Managing Director will have a key leadership role within the Improvement Board
- c. Progress on the Improvement Plan will be monitored by Cabinet and the Vulnerable Children’s Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The Vulnerable Children’s Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee will set up a **Children’s Services Improvement Panel** to offer support and challenge and to provide the detailed monitoring of progress
- d. The Children’s Services Improvement Panel will be cross party (based on proportionately) and comprise eight Members, chaired by the Cabinet Member for Specialist Children’s Services. It will replace the CSS Improvement and Development Steering Group (a Member and Officer working group) and the Children’s Champion Board. It will meet after the Vulnerable Children’s Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee and will receive detailed progress reports on the Improvement Plan and up to date management and performance data. The meeting will not be webcast, however papers will be published.
- e. The Children’s Services Improvement Panel will be supported by two key groups:
 - (i) **The Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP):** This Panel will be responsible for ensuring the best possible social, emotional, health and educational outcomes for all looked after children. Alongside all its other duties, it will be responsible for listening to the experiences of Looked after Children and feeding this into the Children’s Services Improvement Panel. The Panel will be chaired by Mrs Ann Allen (Chairman of the Children’s Champion Board and Vulnerable Children and Partnerships POSC), and will have a cross party Membership. It will also include two foster carers and two representatives from the Children in Care Council. The CPP will also act as

the governing body of the Virtual School for Looked after Children.

- (ii) **Staff Advisory Group:** this will be the forum in which front-line staff, including managers, will be able to report directly to Members their experience of the improvement plan. Members of the group will include the Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services and Deputy Cabinet Member, social workers, principal social workers and team leaders who are responsible for delivering front-line Children's Specialist services. The group will feed back views about the extent to which the improvement actions being taken is impacting on their day to day responsibilities and they will make suggestions about any further action required. They will also assist Elected Members in understanding the support they can provide to front-line workers. . In addition the Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services will engage with a series of meetings with front line staff

Both the Corporate Parenting Panel and Staff Advisory Group will be held privately, in order to allow staff and carers the freedom to discuss their views. This operates to great effect in Education, where the Members' Monitoring Group supports the identification of performance trends that feed through to Policy Overview and Scrutiny.

Recommendations

3. Cabinet Members and Members of the Vulnerable Children's Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee are requested to note the proposed governance arrangements for Children's Social Care Improvement.

Malcolm Newsam
Interim Managing Director
Children Families and Education

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**KENT SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S
IMPROVEMENT BOARD**

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose

The Kent Children's Services Improvement Board will ensure effective, cross-partnership oversight of the Safeguarding and Looked After Children Improvement Plan and Programme in order to ensure delivery of all requirements outlined in the Improvement Notice.

Status of the Board

The Board will report to the Leader and Cabinet of the County Council. The Chair of the Improvement Board will report progress on a quarterly basis to the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for Education and the Leader of Kent County Council (KCC) including specific commentary against the targets set out in the Improvement Notice.

Chair

- The Board will be chaired by an independent chair.
- Liz Railton CBE, Director of National Programmes and SERCO Education and Children's Services, has been jointly appointed by KCC and the DfE to undertake this role.
- If the Chair is unable to attend any meeting then she shall appoint an appropriate person from the existing Board membership to deputise in her absence.

Board Membership

- Liz Railton CBE, Independent Chair
- Katherine Kerswell, KCC Group Managing Director
- Jenny Whittle, Cabinet Member for Families & Social Care
- Malcolm Newsam, KCC Interim Managing Director, CFE (DCS)
- Helen Davies, KCC Director of Specialist Children's Services, CFE
- Oena Windibank, Interim KSCB Independent Chair

- Ann Sutton, Joint PCT Chief Executive
- Maria Shepherd, Detective Superintendent, Kent Police

Others in Attendance

- Julian Ward, Department for Education – Observer.
- Senior colleagues from KCC CFE and partner organisations will attend and report to the Board as required.

Meeting Frequency

The Board will meet on a monthly basis and a schedule of meetings will be agreed for 2011 in the first instance.

Quorum

The Improvement Board has no quorum. It will be a matter for the Chair to determine whether there are sufficient members either present or able to attend to undertake the necessary business of the Board.

Alternates

Members of the Board will be required to attend in person or send their apologies. Deputies cannot attend in place of Board Members. For others attending the Board to support its work, deputies may attend with the prior agreement of the Chair.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board will:-

1. Consider, comment upon and agree the detail of the KCC Safeguarding and Looked After Children Improvement Plan which will provide the focus for the Board's work.
2. Ensure that the requirements of the Improvement Notice, as issued by the DfE, are adequately and appropriately addressed within the Council's Improvement Plan.
3. Receive proposals for addressing the key performance issues identified within the Improvement Notice and monitor progress including the receipt of relevant performance management information.
4. Oversee, monitor and challenge progress on the implementation of the Council's Improvement Plan.

5. Advise on the implementation of the Improvement Plan, assessing risk and addressing issues that arise that may have an impact on the progress of the plan e.g. resourcing issues.
6. Assure itself that front-line practitioners and partners are all being appropriately engaged in addressing the key performance issues identified within the Improvement Plan.
7. Agree the future workplan of the Board.
8. Support the Chair in agreeing the key issues to be formally reported to the Leader and Cabinet of KCC and the DfE as part of the formal reporting requirements and in addition, ensure effective communication of the programme's progress to the Kent Children's Trust, Kent Safeguarding Children's Board and staff within individual partner organisations.

Dissolution of the Board

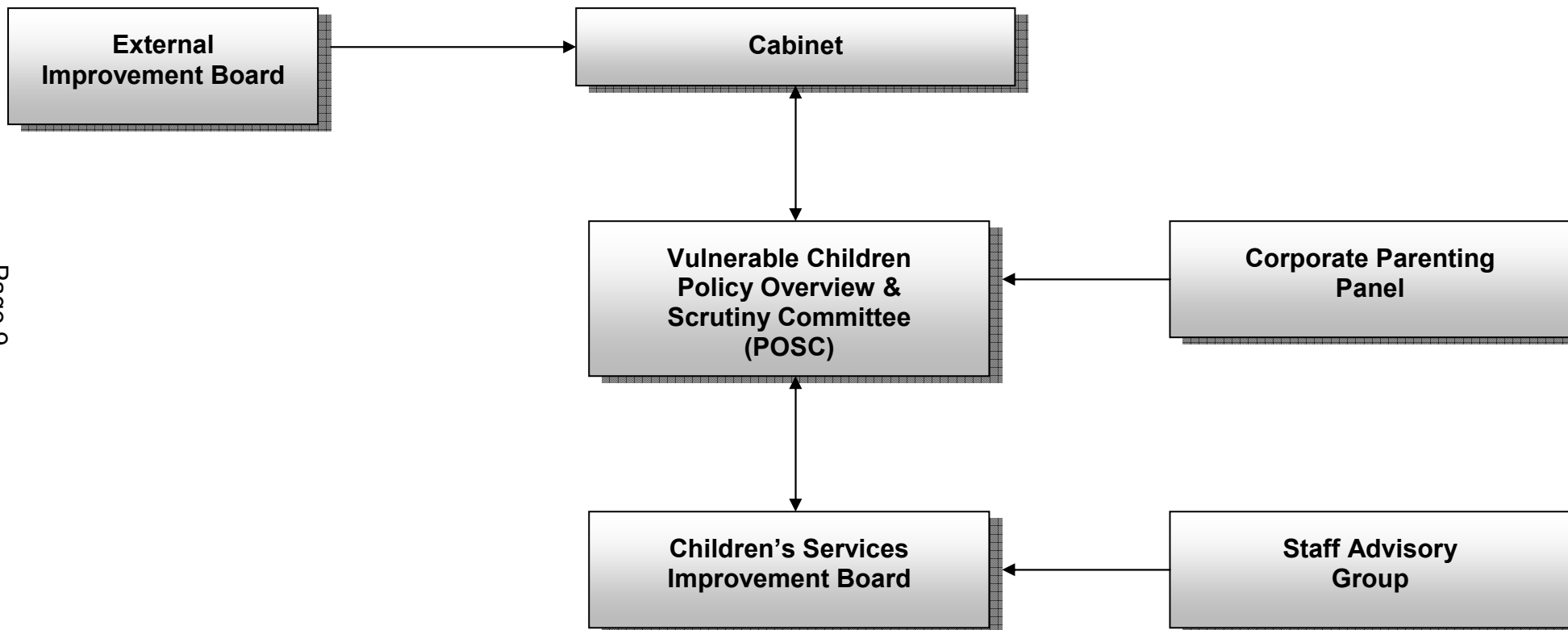
The Board will be dissolved by a joint decision of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families and KCC, following a recommendation from the Board that all of the key requirements in the Improvement Notice have been sufficiently met and are sustainable. Any change in the Board membership will need to be agreed with the DfE, KCC and the Independent Chair.

Administration

KCC will be responsible for the preparation of the agenda and papers for the meetings of the Board, in consultation with the Independent Chair. Papers will be distributed to Board Members at least 5 days in advance of any meeting. KCC will also be responsible for the administration, clerking and hosting of the Board meetings and will ensure that minutes are taken and distributed to Board Members within one week of a Board meeting. The Chair will agree minutes before circulation.

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Revised Governance Arrangements



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