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To: Children's Champions Board – 21st May 2008

Subject: KENT CHILDREN'S TRUST (KCT) ARRANGEMENTS

Classification: Unrestricted

File Ref:

Summary: This paper provides a progress report on the development of children's trust arrangements in Kent with a particular focus on the introduction of Local Children's Services Partnerships.

FOR INFORMATION

Introduction

1. (1) The development of children's trust arrangements is part of a national programme of change to improve outcomes for children and young people in line with the Every Child Matters (ECM) framework and the priorities in the national Children's Plan: Building Brighter Futures.

(2) Through the Children Act 2004 (section 10) the following services have a duty to co-operate to improve outcomes through effective children's trust arrangements:

- District Councils
- The Police Authority and Chief Officer
- The Probation Board
- The Youth Offending Team
- The Strategic Health Authority and PCTs
- The Learning and Skills Council and related service providers

(3) As the Children's Services Authority Kent County Council has a lead role to ensure that services comply with this duty and that arrangements for integrated planning and delivery are effective. Accountability for children's services rests with the Children's Services Authority and is secured through the Director of Children's Services, and the Lead Elected Member. Through the KCT governance framework this accountability is shared with members of the KCT.

(4) Following the launch of the national Children's Plan in December 2007 the DCSF has issued new statutory guidance on inter-agency co-operation through children's trust arrangements. This statutory guidance strengthens the framework for children's trusts by stressing the importance of robust partnership arrangements under the section 10 "duty to co-operate" and also the co-operation of "relevant partners" including schools. The DCSF is inviting views on the statutory guidance by 26th June 2007. The guidance can be viewed on web address.

Background

2. The Children's Champion's Board report received on 5th December 2007 set out the background to the development of children's trust arrangements.

Progress in Kent

3. (1) The Kent Children's Trust (KCT) established in September 2006 meets quarterly to consider strategic issues regarding the development of children's services across Kent. Agendas, papers and minutes of KCT meetings can be viewed on: <http://www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/Children/childrenstrust.cfm>

(2) To support the effective operation of the KCT a partnership agreement has been developed which sets out terms of reference, meeting protocols and responsibilities of partner agencies. A KCT Executive Group has also been established.

Kent Children and Young People's Plan (KCYPP)

4. The KCT is currently reviewing the Kent Children and Young People's Plan: Positive about our Future (CYPP) which is the single overarching plan for children's services in Kent. As part of this review the KCT have identified nine high level priorities:

- 4.1 To reduce the impact of poverty (generational and situational) on children's lives by tackling the underlying causes and mitigating the effects.
- 4.2 To draw on and improve resilience in C&YP to help them make informed and healthy/safe choices and develop coping strategies. To include a focus on C&YP with emotional and/or mental health problems.
- 4.3 To improve parenting by implementing every Parent Matters and developing more effective multi agency support and early intervention for families experiencing problems. To include:
 - taking action to increase fathers involvement in their children's upbringing.
 - reducing the incidence & impact of domestic violence and substance misuse on children and families.
 - improving the communication & interaction development of younger children.
- 4.4 To improve the quality and stability of housing provision for vulnerable C&YP through to early adulthood.
- 4.5 To improve the achievement and quality of life for young carers by implementing the Young Carers' Strategy.
- 4.6 To ensure more young people have things to do and safe places to go in their leisure time and improve outcomes for adolescents at risk to themselves and potentially others through, for example, implementation of the Integrated Youth Strategy.
- 4.7 To increase engagement and participation by young people in education, employment and society in order to prevent disaffection and improve security.

- 4.8 To take action to reduce the incidence and impact of bullying in schools and the community.
- 4.9 To improve leadership and collaboration at all levels.

All partners of the KCT are committed to supporting these priorities in service planning and delivery. These strategic priorities also provide a framework for the development of local children and young people's plans.

Local Children's Services Partnerships

5. (1) The Kent Children's Trust (KCT) have agreed to introduce 23 Local Children's Services Partnerships (previously known as Local Children's Trusts) across Kent from September 2008. Building on best practice in District Consortia and clusters and learning from the pathfinders the local partnerships will strengthen integrated working to improve outcomes for local children, young people (CYP) and families. The Local Children's Services Partnerships (LCSPs) will be based on the geography of the existing school clusters and will increasingly draw together all public and voluntary services for CYP and families in that locality.

(2) Key elements of Local Children's Services Partnerships

2.1 Local Children and Young People's Plan

Each LCSP will agree and deliver a LCYPP based on the Kent CYPP and focussed on the particular issues that local C&YP face. All localities have been asked to start work on a LCYPP in readiness for September 2008 and we have provided a range of multi agency data to support early planning. Local multi agency data can be viewed on:

http://www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/Children/kct_localdata.cfm

2.2 Local Children's Services Partnership Board

The local Board will lead the development of the partnership and work with existing partnership groups, for example Crime Disorder Reduction Partnerships. The Board will report to the Kent Children's Trust and be accountable for delivering the LCYPP and ensuring the new partnership arrangements and integrated working are effective.

2.3 Local Children's Services Partnership Manager (LCSP Manager) and Teams

Each local partnership will be managed by an LCSP Manager. These new posts will be introduced from September to lead the development of integrated working, to support the Partnership Board and to ensure outcomes are improved.

All staff currently part of the cluster teams will transfer to the new LCSP and further staff will be deployed as the LCSPs develop. There will also be much stronger links with professionals across partner agencies particularly as integrated processes for CAF, lead professional and Contact Point are implemented.

(3) **LCSP Pathfinders**

Improving outcomes across the ECM framework is acknowledged to be a long term agenda. The introduction LCSPs in September is a significant milestone in Kent and forms part of a long term change programme to embed highly effective children's trust arrangements.

Three pathfinders are operating across Kent based on the geography of the school clusters in:

- Shepway urban and rural
- Tunbridge Wells, and
- Maidstone cluster 2.

An interim evaluation of pathfinders was presented to the KCT in July 2007. The purpose of the evaluation was to enable the sharing of knowledge, learning and experience from the pathfinder localities. A final evaluation of the pathfinders will be available in June 2008; this will inform the development of LCSPs across Kent.

Children's Health

6. (1) The vision for Kent Children's Trust includes developing a radical partnership with Health. Both Kent Primary Care Trusts have entered into a formal agreement enabling commissioning of health services for children and young people to be carried out by a single, unified team. The team is co-located with KCC to enhance joint working.

(2) A Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Children has been produced in collaboration with the Public Health Unit and is informing the work of the team at all levels. The joint strategic needs assessment can be viewed on:
http://www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/Children/childrenhealth_policy.cfm

(3) There is already a significant increase in the levels of investment into children's health in Kent as a result of this close partnership working. Further work is underway at County, PCT and Local Children's Service Partnership level to ensure that health service specifications are gradually reviewed and amended as part of a rolling programme to ensure improved health outcomes for Kent children and young people.

Recommendations

7. Members of the Children's Champions Board are asked to:

- (a) Note this progress report on the development of Kent children's trust arrangements.

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Background Documents:

- Kent Children's Trust Membership
http://www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/Children/kct_membership.cfm
- Children's Health: Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
http://www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/Children/childrenhealth_policy.cfm
- National Children's Plan: Building Brighter Futures
<http://www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/Children/childrenstrust.cfm>
- Children's Trust: Statutory guidance on inter-agency co-operation to improve well-being of children, young people and their families.
[Statutory Guidance for Children's Trusts on the Duty to Cooperate](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/conDetails.cfm?consultationId=1544)
<<<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/conDetails.cfm?consultationId=1544>>>