

Note of last Children & Young People Board meeting

Title:	Children & Young People Board
Date:	Thursday 23 March 2017
Venue:	Rooms A&B, Ground Floor, Layden House, 76-86 Turnmill Street, London, EC1M 5LG

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note

Item Decisions and actions

1 Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed the Board and those observing.

2 National Youth Agency

The Chair introduced Jon Boagey, Associate Director of the National Youth Agency (NYA), and Amanda Fearn, Programme Manager at the NYA.

Jon Boagey gave a presentation to the Board on the work that the NYA have been undertaking. In his presentation he raised the following points:

- The NYA had focused on their core strengths in workforce development, education and training standards as well as the personal and social development of young people. They had also focused on training professional youth workers and partnership work with local authorities.
- He brought members attention to their partnership work with the National Citizen Service which has proven to be a very successful programme in the North East.
- Regarding their work around apprenticeships the NYA were now focused on apprentice retention. He informed members that ensuring young people finish their apprenticeship and stay in work will continue to be a challenging and important role of the NYA.
- He brought members attention to new work they were doing look into financial capability, including debt advice. He emphasised that they had been engaging with councils regarding this work and would continue to argue there is an important role for the NYA and councils to play in preventative work.
- He expressed a view that many councils wished to retain universal youth work provisions, but they are struggling to do so. This has led to a decline in access to the provision.

- That many councils were setting up arm's length bodies were being set up to take on these responsibilities. He raised a concern as to the sustainability of these organisations beyond their initial opening.
- He explained that the NYA was seeking more collaboration with partners and more sharing of good practice.
- He also advised that moving forward we should focus on investing more into young people's life skills.

In the discussion that followed, Members raised the following points;

- A concern was raised that grant givers were not supporting some local authorities based on the quality of life in much of their area, despite having some areas of deprivation.
- That local authorities would continue to require strict value for money when ensuring youth services are provided in their area.
- That a survey of good practice and what works well in different areas would be extremely valuable in informing the roundtable meeting suggested in the report.
- A view was expressed that the National Youth Parliament should also be involved.

Decision

The Board discussed and considered issues facing councils in fulfilling their youth services duties and what the LGA can do to support councils in this area. The Board also approved a roundtable meeting with partners to support the development of LGA policy around youth services.

Action

Officers to arrange a roundtable meeting with partners to support the development of LGA policy around youth services.

3 Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse

The Chair introduced Cassandra Harrison, Director of the Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse.

Cassandra updated the Board on the Centre's current work and plans to develop a comprehensive programme of research and evaluation over the coming years. She explained their aim was to have a positive impact in improving both policy and practice at local and national levels by identifying, through strong evidence, effective practice in preventing and responding to child sexual abuse.

In the discussion that followed Members raised the following points;

- That the work of the Centre must be grounded in the operational realities facing local authorities and their partners in order to have a real impact on practice.
- A view was expressed that there should be a focus on improving collaborative work across local authority boundaries.

- Members emphasised the importance of early identification and prevention, rather than focussing entirely on activity to address CSA once it has already been identified
- The Chair emphasised the importance of addressing victim trauma and providing long term support.

The Chair advised that the Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse will report back to the Board on their progress in 2018. As the LGA's representative on the Centre's advisory board, Ian Dean offered to act as the main contact for Board Members to feed into the Centre's work in the meantime.

Decision

The Board noted the current activity of the Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse and provided comments on future areas for the Centre's research, evaluation and practice development activity over the coming years.

Action

Officers to arrange for the Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse to report back to the Board in 2018.

Members to contact ian.dean@local.gov.uk with any specific feedback or suggestions for the Centre.

4 Update on lead members' special meeting on children and young people's mental health and wellbeing

Deepa Patel, Adviser, introduced the report updating the Board on the lead members' special meeting on children and young people's mental health and wellbeing and seeking the Boards views on resulting actions and next steps. She informed the Board that, based on the issues identified by lead members at the special meeting, suggested actions had been detailed in the report. Members were asked whether they would like to suggest any additional actions or identify if any should be prioritised.

The Chair expressed a view that the lead members' special meeting on children and young people's mental health and wellbeing had been very valuable.

In the discussion that followed, the Board raised the following points:

- A concern was raised that were there to be a radical shake up of services, providers could be destabilised.
- A view was expressed that officers should be mindful of issues emerging in the mental health support of children who have been moved across regional or national boundaries.
- Members raised concerns as to workforce issues in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). A member informed the Board that the National Youth Parliament had expressed similar concerns.
- A view was expressed that care leavers must be considered in forthcoming LGA

work on children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.

- The Chair suggested that the proposed round table discussion should have a focus on identifying further work to build the capacity of providers to delivery services that achieve the transformative change described in the government initiative 'Future in Mind' that aims to transform the way CAMHS are delivered nationally.

Decision

The Board noted the report and provided their views on the suggested actions.

Action

Officers to incorporate the Board's views in forthcoming work as detailed in the report, with priority given to the suggested round table discussion.

5 Promoting sector-led improvement in children's services

Clive Harris, Senior Adviser, introduced the report updating the Board on discussions with the Department of Education on a proposed programme of council-led support to improve Children's Services. He asked for the Board's views on the proposed content of a sector led improvement offer and to consider additional lobbying opportunities.

The Chair expressed a view that if local authorities were going to be credible players in the improvement sector going forward then we would need a thorough analysis of the opportunities available as well as to have a credible voice and response to the Department of Education.

In the discussion that follow, the Board raised the following points:

- Concerns were raised over the impact of waiting for Ofsted assessment on the officers of the 38 local authorities who have yet to be assessed. The Chair endorsed members concerns and asked this be raised in future discussion with Ofsted.
- A member suggested partnership and mentoring work for local authorities who are failing to provide a good children's service to support their improvement.
- A view was expressed that good political leadership in children's services would be of great importance going forward.

Decision

The Board considered the report and provided comments.

Action

Officers to incorporate the Board's feedback into future discussions with the Department for Education on sector-led improvement in children's services.

6 Education Update

The Chair introduced the Education Update discussion item to the Board. He expressed views that there was a need for the Department of Education to give greater acknowledgement to the role local authorities play in education, that there was a broad acceptance that heavy structural change in a school does not necessarily bring improvement and that a strong evidence base would be required going forward.

Sally Burlington, Senior Policy Adviser, explained that the letter accompanying the report was jointly written by the Children and Young People Board lead members to the Secretary of State for Education at the start of January, setting out proposals for four key areas, including a 'reset' in relations between central and local government on schools.

In the discussion that followed, Members raised the following points;

- That the LGA should continue to push for a positive dialogue with DfE.
- That the LGA should continue to emphasise the role local authorities have in improving local standards, skills and opportunities for their residents and as positive players in their local economies.
- That to ensure no child falls through the gaps it would be beneficial for local authorities duty towards schools to be status blind.

Decision

The Board noted the update in the report and the letter to the Secretary of State for Education attached at Appendix 1.

Action

Officers to incorporate the Board's feedback in the LGA's ongoing dialogue with DfE.

7 Update on LGA Task Group: The Future of Children's Social Care Improvement

Cllr Dick Madden, Chair of the task group on the future of children's social care improvement, updated the Board as to the task groups progress. He explained that the task group has now met twice since the Board formally approved its terms of reference at the January Board meeting. At its last meeting, the group took evidence from the ISOS Partnership and the Early Intervention Foundation. Cllr Madden explained he has recently written to all Lead Members for Children's Services to publicise the group's work. This letter also included a short survey to gather additional information about councils' experience of improvement support, which will further inform the task group's work.

8 Note of the Previous Meeting

The Board agreed the minutes of the previous meeting.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Richard Watts	Islington Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Roy Perry	Hampshire County Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Gillian Ford	Havering London Borough Council
Members	Cllr Gareth Barnard	Bracknell Forest Borough Council
	Cllr Liz Hacket Pain	Monmouthshire County Council
	Cllr Ian Hudspeth	Oxfordshire County Council
	Cllr Dick Madden	Essex County Council
	Cllr John Kent	Thurrock Council
	Cllr Bob Cook	Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
	Cllr Anne Burns	Cumbria County Council
	Cllr Anntoinette Bramble	Hackney London Borough Council
	Alison Michalska	
Apologies	Cllr Ian Parry	Staffordshire County Council
	Cllr Janet Walton	Borough of Poole
	Cllr David Mellen	Nottingham City Council
	Cllr Roz Gladden	Liverpool City Council
	Cllr Paul Cullen	Richmondshire District Council
	Cllr Christopher Coleman	Cheltenham Borough Council
In Attendance	Jon Boagey	National Youth Agency
	Amanda Fearn	National Youth Agency
	Cassandra Harrison	Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse