

## Note of decisions taken and actions required

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<b>Title:</b>	Children and Young People Board
<b>Date and time:</b>	21 May 2012, 11.00am
<b>Venue:</b>	Local Government House

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### Attendance

Position	Councillor	Council
Chairman	David Simmonds	Hillingdon LB
Vice chair	John Merry CBE	Salford City
Deputy chair	Liz Green	Kingston upon Thames RB
Deputy chair	Apu Bagchi	Bedford BC
Members	David Pugh	Isle of Wight Council
	Derrick Murphy	Norfolk CC
	Robert Light	Kirklees MBC
	Paul Lakin	Rotherham MBC
	Anne Burns	Cumbria CC
	Rita Krishna	Hackney LB
	David Bellotti	Bath & NE Somerset Council
Substitutes	Susie Charles	Lancashire CC
	Roy Perry	Hampshire CC
In attendance	Cllr Toni Coombs	SW regional network Chair
	Cllr Ivan Ould	East Midlands network Chair
Apologies	Catharine Grundy	Birmingham City
	Kath Pinnock	Kirklees MBC
	Paul Carter	Kent CC

**Officers:** Helen Johnston, Ian Keating, Cassandra Harrison, Mike Heiser, Lucy Ellender

Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
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The Board held a minute's silence in memory of Baroness Shireen Ritchie.

## 1 Free Schools

Sarah Counter, Principal of Canary Wharf College and Tom Philpott, Head of Partnerships for the New Schools Network, attended the meeting to discuss the role of free schools, the benefits and challenges of setting them up and how councils and Free School proposers can work together.

It was noted that the process for setting up a free school involved several different stages, including interviews with the local council and the Department for Education (DfE). The key foundation for a free school proposer was to show that there was a strong parental demand and a positive need for the new school in the area.

Members were concerned about the lack of scrutiny that councils would have in new free schools. Members asked what measures were in place to improve standards if they fell. It was noted that free schools would be subject to Ofsted inspections and if there were issues with the school, DfE had the power to intervene.

Members raised a number of other issues including:

- In areas of need there were potential difficulties in identifying people with the appropriate skills to run free schools.
- how free school sites were decided and their interactions with sites that councils might hold. It was noted that the process of finding a site for a free school was by negotiation.

### **Decision**

*Members thanked Tom Philpott and Sarah Counter for their presentation and noted that there would be a session at the National Children and Adults Services Conference (NCAS) on this subject.*

### **Action**

Officers to proceed with arrangements for the NCAS session on free schools.

## **2 The role of local government in promoting positive wellbeing for children**

Enver Solomon, Policy Director, and David Hounsell, Economic Adviser, from the Children's Society attended the meeting to discuss the role of local government in promoting positive wellbeing for Children following the release of their report *Promoting positive wellbeing for children*.

Members raised a number of queries including:

- whether there were particular elements which contributed the most to young peoples' wellbeing? Enver replied that relationships within the family and in the wider community were key to achieving positive wellbeing.
- concerns around the how the structured changes in the health service and communications between the different agencies involved would effect the services provided to young people
- concerns about a lack of visibility amongst young people on the services already provided for young people in local areas by councils

It was noted that the Children's Society were hoping to compare wellbeing over time in the future, but they were currently not able to do so.

The Children's Society's work had created a Charter for all agencies involved in working with children in care in conjunction with officials from DfE. This work would compliment the revised guidance that would be released shortly. Members commented on the Charter.

### ***Decision***

*Members agreed that the use of the Charter would be helpful however they felt that further work was needed to make it appropriate to the audience.*

### **Action**

Officers to proceed as directed in discussions with the Children's Society on the Charter.

## **3 Adoption Scorecards**

Members discussed the introduction of the adoption scorecards. It was felt that the LGA should continue to lobby

against the use of scorecards as these were still not accurate depictions of the effectiveness of local adoption processes. Members discussed the role of the Children's Improvement Board in supporting councils.

***Decision***

*Members commended the media work already done by the LGA and agreed to continue lobbying on the use of scorecards.*

**Action**

Officers to proceed as directed.

**4 Children and Families Bill**

Members commented on the new Children and Families Bill. Some members were concerned about behaviour being taken out of statements for special educational needs. Officers agreed to keep monitoring the Bill as it developed.

***Decision***

*Members noted the report.*

**Action**

Officer to monitor progress of the Bill.

**5 Schools funding update**

The closing date for the School Funding Reform Next Steps consultation was 21 May. The Association of Directors Children's Services and LGA draft response to the consultation was shared at the meeting.

Members discussed the role of the Education Funding Agency, the lack of an announcement on capital from the Government as well as academies topslice and School Forums.

***Decision***

*Members agreed the School Funding Reform Next Steps response.*

**Action**

Officers to proceed as requested.

**6 Children's Improvement Board update – May 2012**

***Decision***

*Members noted the report.*

**Action**

Officers to continue to provide updates to the Children and Young People Board.

**7 End of year review 2011/12**

***Decision***

*Board members noted the progress made against the Business Plan priorities.*

**Action**

No further action.

**8 Other Business Report**

***Decision***

*Members noted the report.*

**Action**

No actions arising.

**9 Note of the last meeting – 28 March 2012**

Members **agreed** the note of the meeting held on 28 March 2012.