

5. Arrangements for Joint Working and Co-operation

Liverpool First for Children and Young People

The Children Act 2004 required all local authorities to have children's trust arrangements in place by 2008. Liverpool First has five strategic issues partnerships (SIPs), one of which is Liverpool First for Children and Young People. This operates through an executive group and sub groups on which strategic partners and the voluntary and community sectors are represented.

Governance arrangements have been the subject of review using the self assessment toolkit produced by the Audit Commission. Appendix 6 is a diagrammatic overview of a revised structure and its links to the City Council's governance arrangements both corporately and at the neighbourhood level. This is followed by a list of the partner organisations currently represented on the executive group.

The primary purpose of Liverpool First for Children and Young People is to consult, plan, monitor and evaluate the delivery of services across Liverpool in undertaking their statutory duty to co-operate in improving the well-being of children and young people, and to secure the engagement and commitment of key stakeholders in delivering the five outcomes of '*Every Child Matters*', and to promote and disseminate best practice.

In doing so, Liverpool First for Children and Young People fulfils the function of a Children's Trust in all but name through its governance and partnership working arrangements by bringing together all services for children and young people across the city with a clear focus on improving outcomes, supported by integrated processes.

Government policy in respect of neighbourhood services is increasingly drawing public service providers together where they operate in particular areas of the community. In Liverpool, there are five district committees, based on the council's five neighbourhood management areas. These are the 'decision-making' element of the council's neighbourhood governance arrangements and have political representation. They are supported by five thematic neighbourhood partnership working groups, one of which relates to children and young people. One of their key roles is to contribute to and develop city-wide plans, such as the CYPP and the Local Area Agreement, and translate relevant priorities into local action plans and neighbourhood agreements where appropriate.

Liverpool First for Children and Young People is represented on the children and young people's neighbourhood partnership working groups. The membership also includes representatives from children and young people's advisory groups enabling them to participate in discussions and contribute to the decision making processes that will affect their lives and well-being.

Further information concerning Liverpool First and its strategic issues groups can be obtained from: www.liverpoolfirst.org.uk

Further information concerning each of the District Committees and neighbourhood partnership working groups can be obtained from: www.liverpool.gov.uk/Council_government_and_democracy/How_the_council_is_governed/Committees/District_committees/index.asp

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Inter-Agency Governance

The Liverpool Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is a critical part of our governance arrangements. The local safeguarding priorities in the Business plan for 2008/10 are:

- Promotion of the overall wellbeing of children in Liverpool in line with the Children and Young People's Plan.
- Promotion of early identification and support through the Common Assessment Framework.
- Communicating the need to safeguard children and raise awareness in the community.
- Monitor and improve performance by all partner agencies.

The joint commissioning arrangements for both adult and children's services are currently governed through a Health and Social Care Partnership Board, under the joint chair of the Chair of Liverpool PCT and the Leader of Liverpool City Council. With the integration of adult health and social care, and the development of the Children's Trust, this arrangement will be reviewed.

Commissioning Framework

A Joint Commissioning Strategy was drawn up in 2007 with three Joint Commissioning Groups which bring together the overview of commissioned and in-house provision under the following headings:

- Community and Families
- Inclusion
- Social Care

The framework will be reviewed in 2009 in the light of the development of the Children's Trust and changes within the structure of Liverpool City Council. A Commissioning Business Unit has been set up which has links to both the Children's Trust and the governance arrangements for Liverpool First, the local strategic partnership, which oversees the allocation of the Area Based Grant.

Commissioning is now clearly recognised as an important function of the Children's Trust and a means by which resources can be focused on identified gaps in provision, and linked to the achievement of positive outcomes.

A Joint Strategic Needs Assessment has been produced and will inform commissioning intentions (*referred to in Appendix 2*)

Integrated Processes

Liverpool continues to make good progress on the development of integrated working, supported by tools such as:

- Information Sharing
- Common Assessment Framework (CAF)
- Lead Professional role
- ContactPoint.

Priorities for the coming year include:

- Embedding of Lead Professional processes, building on the use of the Common Assessment Framework and the development of locality teams.

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- preparation for the introduction of ContactPoint , including stakeholder management, a workforce analysis, case management system analysis and preliminary data cleansing.
- Further development of the ICS system in social care and embedding practice changes as a result.
- A higher profile of workforce issues within the work programme of the Children's Trust, with the emphasis on integrated working.

Integrated Front - Line Delivery

Liverpool is committed to providing preventative services, and swift and easy access to targeted and specialist support to meet the needs of children, young people and their families. Integrated front line delivery across partner agencies with effective use of the Common Assessment Framework at a neighbourhood level is seen as the delivery key.

Liverpool has 24 Children Centres providing the full range of core services relating to health, childcare, Family Support and Job Centre Plus. Each centre has an action plan for ensuring the needs of vulnerable families needs are identified and met, with outreach support by Family Support Workers. The Common Assessment is increasingly used to identify additional support for children e.g. for 2 year old funded education places. 83% of children under 5 years living in the city are registered with a Children Centre. The development of two additional 3rd Phase Children Centres is underway with designation expected by March 2010. All Children Centres are partnered in some way with a primary school supporting a link between the Children Centre and Extended Services through Schools agenda in addition to the facilitation of the teacher role.

Building on the success of the multi agency 'team around the Children Centre', integrated working is being delivered through a 'Team Around the School' and Locality Team Managers approach. This incorporates the developing Extended Services through Schools and the Integrated /Targeted Youth Support Strategy.

Each secondary school, and clusters of primary schools have a named multi-disciplinary 'Team Around the School'. The model was piloted by secondary schools in the Alt Valley area of the city, and there are a number of case studies to evidence positive outcomes for young people as a result of this approach. All secondary 'Teams Around the School' are now operating. The Primary Cluster model is now established, and teams are beginning to meet. The membership of a 'team around the school' includes Parent Support Workers, Education Welfare Officers, Safer School Police Officers, School Nurses, Youth Workers, Connexions officers, Children Centre managers and educational psychologists.

The 'Teams Around the School' are supported by their managers through a neighbourhood focussed multi-agency locality team. This team meets regularly to support the work of the Team Around the School, and to consider integrated working on a neighbourhood level. The locality team seek joint agency solutions to problems and develop integrated planning of services. The use of the Common Assessment Framework to support prevention and early intervention through these structures is established with significant work being undertaken on referral pathways and Lead Professional training. A Locality Team Handbook has been developed to support induction for team members across agencies and to help clarify referral frameworks and thresholds. The Liverpool Conference 'Are We There Yet?' (30th March 2009) was organised at the request of Liverpool First for Children and Young People to support the ongoing development and commitment to integrated working.

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The locality team also supports the delivery of the neighbourhood devolution agenda and the Liverpool First Area Agreement through its links with the Children and Young People's Neighbourhood Partnership Working Group. The Children and Young People's Neighbourhood Partnership Working Group is chaired by elected Members and has the remit to identify and action priorities of the Local Area Agreement at a neighbourhood level. The locality team acts as the 'operational' group to deliver on some of the priorities of some of the Neighbourhood Partnership Working Groups. The Locality Team is also able to provide the Neighbourhood Partnership Working Group with information to support local priorities.

The Children's Trust is reviewing its structure in response to the Audit Commission report 'Are we there yet?'. An Integrated Services sub group of the Children's Trust is being established to take forward integrated working including workforce development issues.

The development of the Extended Services through Schools (EStS) programme in Liverpool is making steady progress across the city. It reflects the aim of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to ensure that by 2010, every school in Liverpool will be delivering the 'Core Offer'.

To avoid individual schools struggling to deliver the core offer, the Liverpool programme is planned and negotiated through Neighbourhood Learning Networks, consisting of head teachers from every secondary and primary school, who work in collaboration to plan and deliver the programme; deciding what it is realistic for the school to achieve alone, and how those achievements might be multiplied through the sorts of strategic and partnership approaches that are increasingly in evidence. Signposting between schools within networks achieves the 'core offer' in the most effective and practical way possible. Three of the key principles underpinning Extended Services in the City are consultation, inclusion and partnership. Networks have to demonstrate that their activities and services have been developed in consultation with children and young people, they are fully accessible and inclusive especially in respect of those with special educational needs and disabilities and they are delivered in partnership with other local agencies and community groups.

In July 2008, we met our interim roll-out target of 112 (61%) schools providing access to a core offer of extended services, and are on track to exceed the 2009 target of 156 (85%) schools.