
Report to West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board

27 January 2022

Update on the Children First Board (a sub-group of the Health and Wellbeing Board)

Report by Lucy Butler, Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning

Summary

This report provides a brief update on the work of the Children First Board formed in October 2020.

Recommendation to the Board

The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to;

- (1) Note the contents of this report.
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Relevance to [Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#)

1. Starting Well
2. Living and Working Well

1 Background and context

- 1.1 The Children First Board is chaired by Cllr Jacquie Russell, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People. Meetings are held four times a year, and the inaugural meeting was held on the 8 October 2020.
- 1.2 The Board is made up of a wide range of organisations and groups in West Sussex – including schools, police, health partners, voluntary and community sector. Importantly, there are also four young people on the Board, they are supported by the Voice and Participation team and all notes and papers for the Board are written in as simple and clear a style as possible.
- 1.3 The Children First Board has agreed three main goals;
 - Improve outcomes for children and young people who live in West Sussex, or who are cared for by West Sussex’s children’s services.
 - Ensure that all agencies that provide services for children and young people in West Sussex work together effectively.

- Listen and respond to the views of children, young people and their families all the time, particularly when decisions are being made about how services are run and funded.

1.4 To achieve these goals, the Children First Board will;

- Have oversight of the key strategic planning for children and young people's services, especially when these plans affect more than one agency or service.
- Always remember that our children and young people have the right
 - To be kept safe by everyone, and learn how to keep themselves safe
 - To be supported to be as healthy as possible – both physically and emotionally
 - To be given the skills to be successful in adult life.

1.5 The Board will also:

- Decide what the main priorities are for children and young people
- Agree how these will be addressed.

2. Update on progress

2.1 One of the Board's early priorities is the development and production of a Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). The Board has agreed an approach and style for this Plan, with the latter being based on what children and young people and parent carers have said would help to make it accessible.

1.2. Three priorities have now been agreed. These are:

- 1. Keeping Children and Young People Safe*
- 2. Addressing Poverty and closing the disadvantage gap*
- 3. Improving emotional wellbeing and mental health*

1.3. In the period since the last report to the Health and Well-Being Board, the Children First Board (CFB) has agreed the framework for the development of the Children and Young People's Plan. A Design and Delivery Group - comprising key stakeholders including a parent carer representative and children and young people's voice representatives - is responsible for driving the work forward and will report into the CFB at each meeting.

1.4. Three, smaller, time limited Task and Finish groups are leading on the development work for each of the priorities. The leads for these groups are also members of the Design and Delivery Group.

1.5. The CYPP will take the form of a one-page summary version (in various accessible formats) supported by more specific information relating to how each of the key priorities will be addressed which will be included in a detailed implementation plan. The CYPP will have a life of three years, and progress will be reviewed on an ongoing basis with more formal reviews annually.

- 1.6. The original timeframe for delivering the CYPP and high-level plan for its delivery was the beginning of April 2022, which included a formal consultation period. However, the need to prioritise the demands of the pandemic is placing staff in general, and Task and Finish group leads in particular, under considerable pressure and consequently, the original timescale for the delivery of the Plan may slip. The CFB will keep this under close review and provide support in the mitigation of this risk.

3. Consultation, engagement and advice

- 3.1 The Board has a very strong ethos of engagement and participation and continues to support young people's participation in the work of the Board, both as Board members and as consultation and participation subject matter experts.
- 3.2 The Board is delighted that one of the young people, Harley Collins, has agreed to take the appointment of Vice-Chair. The Voice and Participation team are ensuring that he is supported in this role, and that his engagement is meaningful.
- 3.3 The Project Manager for the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) is working closely with Helen Butcher (Senior Consultation and Engagement Officer) on matters relating to our approach to consultation and engagement of relevant stakeholders in the production of the Plan and the future evaluation of its impact on the lives of children and young people and their families.

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Background papers

None.