
Report to West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board

28 April 2022

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

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

Summary

This report provides a quarterly update on the work of the Children First Board formed in October 2020, a sub-group of the West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board.

Recommendation(s) to the Board

The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to;

- (1) Acknowledge and provide feedback on the progress of the Children First Board since its last quarterly update in January 2022, in particular, the development of the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP).
- (2) Consider how the Health and Wellbeing Board, as key systems leaders across the county's health and social care system, can continue to support the Children First Board to maximise its collective strength, supporting it to achieve its goals.

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 West Sussex organisations and groups– including young people, parent, carers and others who look after our children on a daily basis, practitioners and officers of the County Council; people elected to represent the views of the people of West Sussex, Districts

and Boroughs, schools, colleges, police, health partners, and representatives from the voluntary and community sector. The voice of young people is provided through four young people on the Board and the Board's vice-chair is also a young person; Harley Collins. They are all supported by the Council's Voice and Participation Team and to facilitate their participation, Board notes and papers are written in an accessible style.

1.3 The Children First Board has agreed three main goals

These are to:

- 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;
- Always listen and respond to the views of children, young people and their families, particularly when decisions are being made that affect them such as how services are run and funded.

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

- Have oversight of 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 to learn how to keep themselves safe;
 - supported to be as healthy as possible – both physically and emotionally;
 - given the skills to be successful in adult life.

1.5 The Board will also:

- Be responsible for determining the key priorities that need to be addressed to improve the lives of children and young people in West Sussex;
- 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 agreed an approach and style for this Plan, with the latter being based on what children and young people and parent carers said would help to make it accessible.

2.2. The three agreed priorities are:

- 1. Keeping Children and Young People Safe*
- 2. Addressing Poverty and closing the disadvantage gap*

3. Improving emotional health and wellbeing.

- 2.3 In the period since the last report to the Health and Well-Being Board, significant progress has been made re the development of the Children and Young People's Plan; through the work of a Design and Delivery Group which comprises key stakeholders including a parent carer representative and a children and young people's voice representative and the leads of three time-limited Task and Finish groups – one for each of the Plan's key priorities. The DDG reports into the Children First Board (CFB) at each meeting bringing it up to date on progress and developments and appraising it of any significant risks and issues.
- 2.4 The CYPP will take the form of a one-page summary (in various accessible formats) supported by more specific, information relating to how each of the key priorities will be addressed which will be detailed in an implementation plan. The CYPP will have a life of three years, and progress will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, so that iterative changes and improvements can be made between more formal annual review points.
- 2.5 The original timeframe for delivering the CYPP and the 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 arrangements affected the capacity of key people involved in the delivery of the CYPP including the leads of the Task and Finish Group causing the original timescale for the delivery of the Plan to slip. The CFB was aware of this risk and its possible implications. The draft text for the consultation on the CYPP was completed at the end of March 2022.

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 Voice and Participation Team is currently leading on the development of a Youth Voice Network which will enable a wider range of children and young people's voices to be heard, in new and ongoing work that affects them; through the co-ordinated use of existing networks across the County. This will further enhance and enrich the on-going work of the Children First Board and the specific work associated with the CYPP including the monitoring and evaluation of its implementation.
- 3.3 Work has also commenced on some further development of the CYPP voice work that will focus on the ways in which children and young people would like services to work with them and their families. The intention is that this piece of work is owned by children and young people; will be launched by them and will involve regular dialogue between them and service providers about what is working well and what would improve things further.
- 3.4 Consideration is also being given currently to how to enable more parent carers to have a voice in the work of the CYPP going forward and particularly in the evaluation of its impact on their lives/lives of families and whether it might be possible to set up a network of parent carers on a similar principle to the Youth Voice Network.

- 3.5 The consultation on key elements of the draft CYPP is scheduled to run from April 4th 2022 for 12 weeks and will provide those who engage with it to respond to specific questions about its proposed content; whether it is easy to understand; whether they feel we are focusing on the right things; the format of the final plan and whether they would like to be involved in helping us to evaluate the impact of the Plan on the lives of children and young people and their families.
- 3.6 Following the consultation the responses will be collated; changes will be made to the draft text of the CYPP; and the final draft text will then be brought to the West Sussex Cabinet and the Health and Well-Being Board for final comment before being signed off for publication. A summary of responses from the consultation will be generated including information about how the Plan was adapted and amended. This will be made available to interested parties.

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Background papers

None.