



## **Children First Board**

**(sub-group of the Health and Wellbeing Board)**

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **What are Terms of Reference?**

Terms of reference set out the purpose and structures of a Board (or group of people) who have agreed to work together to achieve a specific goal. It is important to have terms of reference so that everyone understands what the goal is, what their own purpose is on the Board, and how people will work together to get the goal accomplished.

These terms of reference set out the following things;

1. The goal of the Board (Objective)
2. How the Board will achieve this goal (Purpose)
3. Principles of the Board (Values)
4. Responsibilities of the Board
5. Who will be a member of the Board and how will it work? (Structure)
6. Code of Conduct for Board members

#### **1. What is the goal (or objective)?**

1.1 The three main things that this Children First Board needs to do are;

- **improve outcomes** for children and young people who live in West Sussex, or who are cared for by West Sussex's children's services. Another way of saying this is the Board will **make life better** for children and young people who need our help and support. This is the most important thing that the Board can do.
- make sure that all the 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.

## 2. How the Board will achieve this goal (purpose).

### 2.1 The Children First Board will;

- have ***oversight of the key areas of strategic planning*** for children and young people's services, especially when these plans affect more than one agency or service.
- remember that our children and young people have the right
  - to be ***kept safe*** by everyone, and to learn how to keep themselves safe,
  - to be supported to be ***as healthy as possible***– both physically and emotionally, and
  - to be given the ***skills to be successful in adult life***.
- think about ***how services could be delivered differently***, by for example joining or merging services where this makes sense.
- act as a ***champion for the involvement of children, young people*** and their families in all significant decisions that are made, including those outside of this Board.
- make sure that the ***Health and Wellbeing Board is fully aware of the challenges*** that some of our children, young people and families face, and that they are told about the work this Board is doing to reduce the impact of these challenges.

### 2.2 The Board will also;

- decide what the ***main priorities*** are for children and young people in West Sussex.
- agree ***how these priorities will be addressed*** – who will do what, and by when. The Board will get regular reports on progress from the people and services doing this work.
- work out ***how it can safely share information*** across different agencies.

### 3. Principles of the Board (Values)

3.1 The Children First Board, and all its members, will be;

- ***inclusive*** – the Board will be a partnership of equals, and all members will be supported to be actively involved. Members of the Board will remember that we are all different and that we and our children and young people must not be discriminated against because of their age, sex, disability, race, religion, belief or sexual orientation
- ***strategic*** – the Board will focus on the big picture, and members must be able to influence decision-making and delivery of services in their own organisations and communities
- ***focused on improving outcomes*** – making life better for children and young people in West Sussex.

### 4. Responsibilities of the Board

4.1 The Board will have to do certain things to make sure that it is held accountable to the Health and Wellbeing Board, and others. It will;

- lead the development and production of a ***Children and Young People's Plan*** for West Sussex. This plan will ensure that the people responsible for commissioning (designing and buying) or delivering services do so in a way that improves outcomes, or makes life better, for children and young people, and reflects their priorities
- make ***regular reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board*** about how well the Children and Young People's Plan is making things better
- regularly look at, and comment on, performance data (which tells us about how services are doing, and what outcomes are being achieved)

### 5. Who will be on the Board and how will it work? (Structure)

5.1 The Children First Board will be chaired (run) by the West Sussex County Council's Cabinet Member for Children and Young People. The Vice-Chair will be agreed at the first Board meeting – this item was carried forward to second meeting.

5.2 The Board will be made up of lots of different organisations and groups of people in West Sussex, who all have the will to make things better for children and young people. These groups, organisations and services include;

- Children and young people who represent others, and the people that support them to have their voice listened and responded to

- People who represent parents, carers and other people who look after our children daily
- The County Council, the people who work in these services and the people elected to represent the views of the people of West Sussex
- Health services, including services which provide community, acute (hospital) and mental health services, and those people who are responsible for ensuring that we commission (design and buy) the right health services
- The District and Boroughs which provide a lot of local services to people in their area
- People who work in our schools, colleges and early years settings
- Community based and voluntary organisations which work with or are concerned about children and young people's lives
- The Police who see a lot of children and young people and know a lot about their lives
- The Children's Safeguarding Partnership Board which is led by an independent person and whose job is to make sure that services keep children safe.

- 5.3 A **full membership list will be written up and shared with everyone on the Board** each time there is a meeting. This membership list will include a short summary of each person's role so that everyone can understand what everyone else does.
- 5.4 Membership of the Board will be looked at every year (this is the job of the person Chairing the meeting) to make sure that it has the right people on the Board.
- 5.5 The Board may decide to set up **working groups** to look at specific areas or pieces of work. The working groups will run for an agreed period. The Chair of the meeting will make sure that the people on these working groups know what they are being asked to do, by when, and how they can report back to the Board.
- 5.6 Meetings will be **held every three months** (4 times a year) and will be held at times that allow children and young people to attend. Members of the Board are asked to do everything they can to attend meetings.

- 5.7 In keeping with the principle of inclusiveness, ***papers and agendas will be written in as easy a style to read and understand*** as is possible.

The agenda will always have;

- welcome and introductions on (so that everyone gets to know each other),
- after the first meeting it will always have the notes taken at the last meeting (which will include any actions that people have been asked to do)
- items for discussion about the priorities of the Board

- 5.8 Members of the Board are responsible for making sure that they ***share information about the work of the Board with other people in their groups, communities, organisations or services***, unless they have been asked to keep some information confidential.

## **6. Code of Conduct**

- 6.1 A code of conduct is needed to support public confidence in the work of the Children First Board. In public services, codes of conduct are based on an act of parliament called the Relevant Authorities (General Principles) Order 2001. This is what the elected members' code of conduct is based on, and they are good principles for everyone.

- 6.2 A full copy of the Code of Conduct is included as Annex 1 to these terms of reference. In summary members are required to be honest and act with integrity, they should make decisions based on evidence, must make sure that public money is used wisely, and must obey the law.

- 6.3 Members of the Board must comply with the code of conduct whenever they attend a Board or working group meeting, and whenever they act as a representative of the Board.

## **7. The Children First in West Sussex Sub-Group member code of conduct**

- 7.1 The principles underlying this code of conduct are those of the Relevant Authorities (General Principles) Order 2001 which expanded on the Nolan Principles and form the basis of the Local Authority Members' Code of Conduct:

- 7.2 ***Selflessness*** - Members should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

- 7.3 ***Honesty and integrity*** - Members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

- 7.4 **Objectivity** - Members should make decisions on merit.
- 7.5 **Accountability** - Members should be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.
- 7.6 **Openness** - Members should be as open as possible about their actions and should be prepared to give reasons for them.
- 7.7 **Personal judgement** - Members must take account of the views of others, including the groups they represent, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.
- 7.8 **Respect for others** - Members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
- 7.9 **Duty to uphold the law** - Members should uphold the law and on all occasions act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.
- 7.10 **Stewardship** - Members should do whatever they are able to do to ensure that the Sub-Group uses its resources prudently and in accordance with the law.
- 7.11 **Leadership** - Members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should always act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.
- 7.12 **Duty to abide by the law** - Members should not engage in conduct which constitutes a criminal offence.