
Report to West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board

July 7th, 2022

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

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

Summary

This report provides a brief 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 April 2022, in particular, the development of the draft Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP), which has gone out to consultation with an accompanying survey.
 - (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.
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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 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. The Children and Young People's Plan 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, the draft CYPP with an accompanying survey has been put out for consultation. The consultation process started on April 4th 2022 and will finish on June 26th 2022. The primary focus of the survey on the draft plan is to find out what those who engage with it think 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, and how 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.
- 2.4 To facilitate the engagement of children and young people with the draft plan and secure their views on it we have generated, with the help of some young people, a child and young person friendly version of the plan and some questions which are specifically for them to answer. Such questions are about the one thing they would really like to see in a plan to make things better for children and young people; whether there is anything in the plan that they don't understand; what format(s) they would like the finished plan to be in; how the plan could be made as accessible as possible to all children and young people who may want to learn for themselves what it is and how it might make their life better. The child and young person friendly version of the plan has also been made into a video – delivered by young people from our West Sussex Youth Cabinet. Both the written version of the plan and the video have been made available to West Sussex schools and colleges.
- 2.5 The output from the consultation so far, has been summarised in an interim dashboard detailing information about the numbers of people who have so far: looked at the draft CYPP; downloaded it and completed the survey. The dashboard also sets out information about who has completed the survey and some of the key themes that are emerging from the feedback. This dashboard is inclusive of the period: 3rd April – to 23rd May 2022.
- 2.6 In summary, an estimated 200,000 individuals in West Sussex have received a communication about the consultation; approximately 600 people have visited and viewed the page and can be said to be "aware" of the draft plan; 49% of that number can be said to be informed about the draft Plan as this includes viewing key dates and/or downloading the draft Plan; 11% of those who have visited the page can be said to have engaged with the Plan as they have completed the survey; 16% of visitors have downloaded the draft Plan at least once.
- 2.7 To date, the majority of people who have completed the survey: are supportive of the priorities in the draft Plan and the proposed outcomes; think that the plan is accessible (in terms of language used); and found what they were looking for.
- 2.8 The feedback has also provided us with a wealth of suggestions and ideas regarding what else might be included: either as priorities e.g. the suggestion that SEND should be a priority in its own right; or included in our plans for implementing the priorities e.g. in relation to partnership working the suggestion that we need to continue to consider how we work collaboratively and engage with children, young people, families and other stakeholders (building on our collective strengths) as this will be important in terms of facilitating and embedding change and increasing a sense of ownership of developments.

- 2.9 When we look at the average demographic for those who have completed the survey to date, we are seeking to reach a more diverse audience, before the consultation ends, as most of the people who have completed the survey to date are female; the age profile is 35 – 64; in terms of ethnicity the survey has mainly been completed by those who see themselves as white British; in terms of religion we need to find ways to encourage people from a range of different faith groups to participate; and in relation to the different areas of the County we have had fewer responses from people in the Crawley area than from other districts and boroughs.

3. Engagement

- 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 Work continues on the development of the CYPP voice work as an integral part of the plan's development and implementation and it is our intention to work with the voice and participation team as part of the Children's First partnership's new *Children and Young Peoples Participation Strategy* to establish this as business as usual.
- 3.3 Planned activities over the summer and autumn will provide focused opportunities for children and young people to tell us how they would like services to work with them and their families and activities to deliver the priorities in the CYPP and will include regular/ongoing dialogue with service providers about what is working well and what would improve things further.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 Following the consultation the responses will be collated; the output will be shared with the Children First Board; changes will be made to the draft text of the CYPP; and the final draft text will then be brought to the Children First 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.
- 4.2 We are now starting to think about the delivery of the CYPP including arrangements for monitoring and evaluating its impact on the lives of children and young people, and parent carers and families. This includes the CF Partnership's role in owning, leading and delivering on the priorities in the plan and the governance arrangements that need to be put in place to ensure the plan's successful delivery.
- 4.3 Plans from July 2022 onwards will include strategies for bringing partners, children and young people, parent carers and families together to workshop how we deliver on the priorities in the plan and monitor and evaluate the impact of activities; and the on-going use of mechanisms such as online and face to face focus and/or reference groups for all relevant stakeholders.
- 4.4 We are conducting a review of the Children First Board governance arrangements including its sub-groups to ensure the Board has full oversight of the key areas of strategic planning for children and young people's services where these plans affect more than one agency or service.

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Background papers

Copy of the Children and Young Peoples Participation Strategy for information