SURREY CHILDREN’S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT BOARD

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

Surrey County Council is in intervention following its 2008 Joint Area Review, which found the Council to be inadequate in 4 out of 6 scored areas – safeguarding, learning difficulties and/or disabilities, capacity to improve and the additional investigation area relating to teenage pregnancy. Performance management and management of targeted services for vulnerable groups were also judged inadequate.

A Change Management Programme is being established in the Council’s Children, Schools and Families Directorate. The programme will need to speed up and implement immediate changes for better provision of children’s services, as well as plan, recommend and implement longer-term strategic changes to e.g. partnership working and joint commissioning.

DCSF has also issued Surrey County Council with an Improvement Notice (IN), specifying the areas of concern, the improvements required, the timescales for those changes, how the IN will be monitored and assessed, and next steps should the terms of the Notice not be met. Progress against the measures in the IN will be assessed by DCSF on a quarterly basis for a period of 2 years with the first assessment occurring in December 2008 and the final assessment in September 2010.

Purpose

The Surrey Improvement Board will advise on and challenge the Change Management Programme and monitor compliance with the terms of the Improvement Notice. External challenge will be provided through the independent chair, DCSF, GOSE and the SHA along with representatives of the IDeA, Improvement and Efficiency Partnership and through the membership of a peer Director of Children’s Services.

Membership

The Membership is as follows:

Independent Chair
  • Lucy de Groot

Representing Department for Children, Schools and Families
  • Julian Ward, Children’s Services Interventions Unit
  • Sarah Baker, Childrenfirst (Adviser to Julian Ward DCSF)
Representing Government Office for the South East
- Alex Walters, Children’s Services Adviser

Representing Surrey County Council
- David McNulty, Chief Executive
- Andy Roberts, Strategic Director for Children, Schools and Families
- Andrew Povey, Leader of the Council
- Peter Martin, Cabinet Member for Children and Learning
- Mary Angell, Cabinet Member for Children and Families

Representing South East Coast Strategic Health Authority
- Marianne Griffiths, Director of Commissioning and Delivery

Representing Surrey Primary Care Trust
- Chris Butler, Chief Executive
- Ruth Milton, Director of Public Health (joint appointment with SCC)

Representing the Improvement and Development Agency and representing Improvement and Efficiency South East
- Marianne Abley, Regional Associate for South East

Others may be invited to attend as necessary.

The Improvement Board has no quorum. Each meeting will need to consider progress and make necessary decisions; the work cannot be held up due to the absence of any member. For this reason, it is essential that if a member of the Board cannot attend, a deputy or alternative representative who has decision-making power attends in their absence. Such alternatives/deputies should be agreed at the first meeting of the Board.

Role and responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of the Board are as follows:

1. Monitor progress against the requirements of the Improvement Notice including by interrogating performance indicator data.

2. Challenge progress on implementation of the County Council and Primary Care Trust post JAR action plans including through an assessment of partners views.
3. Advise on the implementation of the change programme, reviewing risk management and considering issues that arise. This includes issues within scope of the programme but also issues identified outside the scope of the programme which need to be brought to the Board's attention (e.g. flagging up constraints to the project such as IT, financial or staffing issues).

4. Consider reports from a series of “deep dives” in to different aspects of children’s services as agreed by the Board.

5. Ensure that an assessment of progress is informed by the views of front-line practitioners and customers.

And where appropriate

6. Sign off outputs of the programme as having been delivered to time/cost/quality specifications including where these are different to what was originally envisaged (ensuring VFM).

7. Agree the future workplan until the next Board meeting or decide on changes to that (or that the programme should stop or be fundamentally altered).

8. Consider Council and Primary Care Trust reports on the wider improvement agenda in Children’s Services.

Dissolution of the Board

The Board will be dissolved on the independent decision or agreement of the Minister of State for Children, Young People and Families with a collective recommendation from the Board that all of the requirements in the Improvement Notice have been sufficiently met and are sustainable.

Administration

Surrey County Council, in consultation with the Council will be responsible for the preparation of the agenda and papers for the meetings of the Board, in consultation with the Independent Chair and received by Board Members at least five working days in advance of the meeting. Surrey County Council will also be responsible for the administration, clerking and hosting of the Board meetings and will ensure that minutes are taken and distributed to Board members within one week of a Board meeting. The Chair should agree minutes before circulation.