



Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership

Governance Arrangements

Document 1

(Revised February 2020)

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1. Introduction

The purpose of the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) is:

- a) To establish an agreed basis for collaboration in the delivery of children's services in order to address the eight outcomes of wellbeing as set out in the Draft Northern Ireland Children and Young People's Strategy (2020-2030) and in line with the Interim Programme for Government (2016-2021).
- b) To ensure that the CYPSP Children and Young People's Plan and supporting activities are focused on improving outcomes in relation to children in need.
- c) To promote co-production with children, young people and their families in the CSP integrated planning process.
- d) To support an integrated, multi-agency, information based planning process.
- e) To identify opportunities for pooled budgets.
- f) Incorporate children's rights into the planning process.
- g) To ensure an effective and efficient, fully mandated planning structure which is representative of all key stakeholders is in place to support the delivery of the CYPSP Children and Young People's Plan.

This document sets out how the CYPSP will carry out its functions and includes:

- 1. The agreed Terms of reference for CYPSP.
- 2. The Partnership Agreement endorsed by all CYPSP members.

These governance arrangements have been mutually agreed by all CYPSP agencies.

2. CYPSP Terms of Reference

Enabling agencies and organisations to link their planning and commissioning arrangements where this is required for improved outcomes requires leaders that are confident that their own governance processes are robust enough to withstand making arrangements with other agencies for the common good. The CYPSP agencies have agreed that, where integrated planning and commissioning is required to improve outcomes for children and young people, they will take this forward. The CYPSP agree that this will involve ensuring that single agency governance requirements are met in each piece of integrated planning and commissioning that may be carried out.



3. Mandate

The Children (1995 Order) (Amendment) (Children's Services Planning) Order 1998

'Requires every Health and Social Services Board to prepare and publish plans for the provision of children's services within its area and to keep those plans under review. In preparing or updating its plans, a Health and Social Services Board is required to consult Health and Social Services Trusts, Education and Library Boards, District Councils, certain voluntary organisations, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, the Probation Board for Northern Ireland, the Police and other relevant bodies. The Department of Health and Social Services may require a Health and Social Services Board's plan to be submitted to it at any time.'

Strengthened Collaboration is underpinned by:

The Children's Services Co-Operation Act (Northern Ireland) 2015 states in 2 (1) that:

"Every Children's authority must, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of its children functions, co-operate with other children's authorities and with other children's services providers in the exercise of those functions"

The Act also creates an enabling power to share resources and pool funds and states that:

'a Children's Authority may "(a) provide staff, goods, services, accommodation or other resources to another children's authority: (b) make contributions to a fund out of which relevant payments may be made"

The aims of Children's Services Planning are outlined in **Children's Services Planning Guidance 1998 (DHSS/DENI/NIO) as follows:**

- Promote the welfare of children
- Clarify strategic objectives in relation to services
- Promote integrated provision of service and effective use of available resources
- Ensure consistency of approach to planning

- Promote high standard of coordination and collaboration between HSCB and Trusts and between social care and health services
- Establish a high standard of coordination and collaboration between HSCB and Trusts and other agencies and organisations which have a contribution to make to effective provision of local services
- Facilitate joint commissioning by agencies when it is seen as appropriate to meet the needs of children

3. Accountability Arrangements

The CYPSP's governance arrangements do not supplant or replace the statutory responsibilities, lines of accountability or commissioning responsibilities of individual agencies.

Rather, the CYPSP provides the opportunity for agencies, as members, to come together with each other and with children and young people, families and communities, to make sure that individual efforts to support children and young people (across the whole range of needs) link up with and work well with other supports and services in the lives of children and young people.

All members will be required to adhere to CYPSP strategies, policies and protocols as outlined in the accompanying documentation.

4. The Responsibilities of CYPSP

The CYPSP oversees and mandates collaborative Regional Children's Services planning activity across Northern Ireland as well as localised planning and service delivery through:

- Outcomes Groups which are geographically co-terminus with Health and Social Care Trust boundaries as well as Local Government boundaries
- Locality Planning groups, which are geographies which make sense to local communities

The NI wide level planning takes place through Regional sub groups and Task and Finish Groups.

All planning groups are provided with senior mandate by the CYPSP.

The CYPSP also mandates the development, implementation and monitoring of **Family Support Hubs** across Northern Ireland. The purpose of Family Support Hubs is to provide a route to early intervention family support for children and families who require it, without unnecessary delay. The development of Family Support Hubs is the responsibility of Outcomes Groups. Operational responsibility for each Hub is taken by the lead agency in each case.

6. Decision Making by the CYPSP

The flow of decision making within the CYPSP planning structure is bottom up as well as top down.

The CYPSP has in place a process which balances the mandate of the CYPSP to be responsible for all the planning carried out, and a delegation of this authority to each planning group. Therefore, action plans drawn up by each planning group, should be agreed in the first instance by each agency represented on the planning group, before plans are subject to consultation.

This ensures that plans are realistic, manageable and not duplicating existing services or processes within member agencies. Then, after the consultation period and once results of the consultation have been taken into account by the planning group, the CYPSP as a group will also consider the plans, and sign off or not at that point.

Decision making by the CYPSP will be by consensus and agreement. These decisions will form the strategic direction to be taken by the CYPSP. It is mutually agreed that that decisions are accepted by non-attendees.

7. Representation on the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership

All membership is assigned to designated officers who have the authority to act on behalf of their respective organisations and to make decisions on their behalf.

Statutory Membership

There are **12** places for the statutory sector and agencies are represented at Chief Executive/ Director level from the following relevant **statutory agencies**:

- The Health and Social Care Board.
- The Public Health Agency
- The Education Authority
- The Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
- Local Government across Northern Ireland
- The Police Service of Northern Ireland
- The Youth Justice Agency
- The Probation Board for Northern Ireland.
- The Five Health and Social Care Trusts.
- The Northern Ireland Housing Executive
- Community Safety Unit of the Department of Justice
- Any other relevant statutory agency, Non Departmental Public Body or Department, subject to the approval of the CYPSP.

Observer status for a member of a statutory agency, NDPB or Department is possible, subject to the approval of the CYPSP, for one meeting per Observer.

Community Sector and Voluntary Sector

Children in Northern Ireland (CiNI) are the standing representative organisation with membership on CYPSP.

Representatives of the community sector and voluntary sector, including the Black and Minority Ethnic sector, are selected through an open process for nominating representatives from the Community Sector and Voluntary Sector, managed by CiNI and with agreed selection criteria as set out in Appendix 1. They serve three year terms. One place only will be allocated per agency for any one group.

Co-options

If gaps remain in the voluntary and community representation, CiNI will organise a process to seek and appoint co-optees, who will then serve the remainder of the three year term in which they are appointed.

If representatives are on long term sick leave, a temporary member can be co-opted onto the CYPSP for the duration of the absence of the member who has been selected through the agreed process. In the case of maternity leave, the agency concerned may replace the representative. If unable to do so, the place will be managed by the co-option process and will be undertaken by CiNI.

There are **five** places for the voluntary sector, which should be drawn from across Northern Ireland.

There are **five** places for the community sector, which should be spread across the five Outcomes Groups areas, in terms of where they cover.

There are **three** places for the BME sector, and a geographical spread is required.

8. Representative Accountability

CYPSP members are accountable to the rest of the sector which they represent, for the dissemination of relevant information and for the consultation with their sector where appropriate. Communication with media or other bodies on behalf of the CYPSP should be done in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair or appropriate officer and in line with the CYPSP Communication Strategy.

9. Conflict Resolution

In the event of conflict between members, the issue will first be raised with the Chair and Vice Chair for resolution. If this does not succeed, the Chair and Vice Chair will appoint a representative group of three to form an appellate committee to deliberate on the issue and to reach resolution.

10. Chair and Vice Chair

The CYPSP must be chaired by the HSCB, according to the statutory duty. A Vice-Chair will be elected by members of the CYPSP, to serve 3 year term. The Vice Chair will be from a sector other than health and social care.

11. Authority Level

It is essential that each member representative is of sufficient seniority and therefore mandated and empowered with delegated authority from their organisation to enable them to make strategic decisions on its behalf. Where the member is representing a group or collection of agencies they shall be expected to represent the overall views of that group, and wherever possible to have sought these views prior to the meeting. Being a member of the CYPSP requires each agency to be a signatory to the agreed Partnership Agreement on Page 10.

12. Attendance

Membership is designated to individuals, given the necessity for top level mandate for this Northern Ireland partnership. Therefore attendance by designated individuals is essential. All members should aim to attend all meetings. Any member who fails to attend two or more consecutive meetings will be contacted by the Chair, who will seek an explanation, and this will result in discussion on how to facilitate better the contribution of the agency concerned.

13. Conflicts of Interest

Where there is a potential conflict of interest for individual CYPSP members in relation to a specific item under discussion, this should be declared by the member to the Chair. At the discretion of the Chair the level of interest could result in the exclusion of the partner from either the discussion or decision making element of the meeting for that particular item. The conflict of interest must be declared before the topic is discussed in the meeting. Members must complete a Declaration of Interest Form (Appendix 2)

14. Frequency of Meetings

Meetings of the CYPSP will be held at least 3 times annually.

15. Confidentiality

Members are expected to respect the confidentiality of CYPSP meetings.

16. Communication on Behalf of the CYPSP

It is important that members of the CYPSP use opportunities to communicate the messages of the CYPSP. The Chair has authority to speak on behalf of the CYPSP. The Vice Chair has such authority in the absence of the Chair. Other members are

encouraged to communicate on behalf of the Partnership in line and with adherence to the CYPSP Communications Strategy.

17. Equality and Human Rights Statement

The CYPSP is committed to the promotion of children's rights through integrated planning and commissioning. The CYPSP will therefore promote the UNCRC, and also to actively address Equality and Human Rights legislative requirements, with the aim of promoting all relevant rights within the functioning of the CYPSP.

18. Commitment to Partnership Working

The CYPSP is committed to ensuring that its meetings and processes are consistent with best practice in relation to partnership, in line with the shared goal of improving outcomes for children and young people across Northern Ireland through integrated planning and commissioning.

It is recognised that the CYPSP brings together statutory agencies with community sector, voluntary sector and BME sector organisations. The imbalance of power that this represents is recognised by the CYPSP, given that, outside of the partnership arena, contractual relationships may exist between such partners. Therefore, all arrangements which the CYPSP sets up will endeavour to address this imbalance. In addition, some statutory partners have more members on the CYPSP than others, which can also give rise to imbalance. The CYPSP will endeavour to address this through all of its working arrangements. Mutual respect will be shown at all times and each organisation will be valued for its contribution in that:

- All CYPSP partners will have the opportunity to provide items for the agenda.
- All partners will be encouraged to contribute to the debate.
- All partners will be able to influence the policy and practice of the CYPSP.
- The CYPSP will ensure that it includes the right organisations to meet its aim.

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

1. The partners to this Agreement, through their mandated planning groups, will work together to establish and develop a shared understanding of how outcomes for Northern Ireland's children and young people can be improved through integrated planning and commissioning, and will, to the best of their ability, carry out such integrated planning and commissioning.
2. The partners to this Agreement understand that outcomes based planning for children and young people means promoting their rights through planning as well as addressing their needs.
3. The partners to this agreement share a view that the outcomes of children and young people will be best improved by a focus on early intervention and prevention and will therefore, work positively towards establishing arrangements through which resources across agencies can be utilised together, particularly but not exclusively in relation to early intervention.
4. The partners will work towards integrating services across agency and sector whenever it is feasible to do so and will monitor the effectiveness of these services to improve outcomes for children and young people.
5. The representatives of organisations which are parties to this Agreement and who attend meetings of the CYPSP and its planning groups will seek endorsement from their respective organisations in support of the priorities and recommendations of the CYPSP and the resources necessary to sustain them.
6. The partners to this agreement will adhere to the CYPSP Governance Arrangements and Terms of Reference outlined in the attached document.
7. The partners to this agreement will abide by the aims and guiding principles identified in the Children's Services Plan.
8. Each party to this Agreement will:
 - Individually contribute to the effective working of the CYPSP.
 - Align its use of resources to maximise early intervention services to children and young people.
 - Seek to ensure a culture of openness, and co-production, ensuring that children and young people participate in decision making about their own lives and in designing and developing services, in collaboration also with their parents and carers.
 - Actively both promote equality and diversity and seek the views of minority groups, whoever they may be.

It is a requirement of CYPSP that each agency demonstrates commitment to the process and endorsement of the agreement by signing below

Signed by _____ Date _____

On behalf of (Agency) _____

APPENDIX 1

Personal Specification: Community, Voluntary and BME sector representatives on the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership.

Experience of strategic planning.
Experience of needs assessment.
Knowledge of issues relating to children and young people, particularly vulnerable and excluded groups.
Experience of delivering services to children and young people, in particular to vulnerable groups.
Track record in Northern Ireland in relation to services/supports/advocacy for children and young people.
Knowledge of Trust area in which services or advocacy provided.
Knowledge of dynamics of social exclusion as it relates to children and young people.
Capacity to attend meetings.
Capacity to actively contribute to the work of the CYPSP.
Endorsement of sponsoring organisation.
Senior representative of organisation.
Commitment to Children's rights and equality issues.

Appendix 2

Register of Interests: Declaration by members of the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (2020-2023)

Title

Forename (s)

Surname

Declared commercial and political interests, (including those of partners, spouse or close relative) which may give rise to a conflict of interest. If none please enter "NIL" and return to Sharon.McMinn@hscni.net

The interests declared above include both direct and indirect interests (i.e. those of partner, spouse or close relative) and any specific financial or business interests are shown.

Signed

Date
