

Audit and Governance Committee 20th February 2023

Report Title	Presentation of Northamptonshire Children's Trust Audit Report 2021-22	
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List of Appendices

Appendix 1: NCT 21-22 Internal Audit Summary

Appendix 2: NCT Audit Tracker Jan 2023

Appendix 3: Summary of Northamptonshire Children's Trust Governance Arrangements

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To present Northamptonshire Children's Trust Audit Report for 2021-22.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 Northamptonshire Children's Trust delivers statutory social care services on behalf of North and West Northamptonshire Councils. The relationship between the Councils and Northamptonshire Children's Trust is governed by a set of contractual agreements.

2.2 At the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee in September 2022 a series of reports were presented by the Executive Director of Children's Services and Chief Executive of Northamptonshire Children's Trust. Members of the Committee were able to scrutinize these reports and resolved to note the contents of the reports.

2.3 This report presents the Northamptonshire Children's Trust Audit Report for 2021-22, an update on previously agreed actions and a summary of the Trusts governance arrangements as previously agreed with the committee.

3. Recommendations

3.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

a) Note the contents of the report and attached appendices

3.2 Reason for Recommendations –

- For the Committee to exercise its duties and responsibilities.

4. Report Background

4.1 Following a statutory direction from the Secretary of State for Education, Northamptonshire County Council established an operationally independent but wholly council-owned company to deliver children's social care services. Northamptonshire Children's Trust (NCT) was established on 1st November 2020 and was a company limited by guarantee that was initially wholly owned by Northamptonshire County Council.

4.2 As part of this arrangement, statutory responsibility for children's services remains with the Council's Director of Children's Services. NCT is operationally independent, and a set of contractual agreements exist between NCT and the Council with the aim of ensuring NCT develops and provides high quality social care services to children and young people in Northamptonshire within the financial resources made available to it.

4.3 On 1st April 2021, ownership of NCT transferred to North and West Northamptonshire Councils as part of the transition to unitary Councils. North Northamptonshire Council acts as the 'Host Council' for managing the relationship with NCT including contract management arrangements. North Northamptonshire Council employs a team called the 'Intelligent Client Function' which manages the relationship with NCT.

4.4 At the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee in September 2022 a series of reports were presented by the Executive Director of Children's Services and Chief Executive of Northamptonshire Children's Trust. Members of the Committee were able to scrutinize these reports and resolved to note the contents of the reports.

5. Issues and Choices

5.1 This report presents the Northamptonshire Children's Trust Audit Report for 2021-22.

5.2 There are no alternative recommendations arising from this report, but the Committee may wish to raise queries or request further clarifications, as appropriate.

6. Implications (including financial implications)

6.1 Resources and Financial

6.1.1 None specific to this report.

6.2 Legal

6.2.1 None specific to this report.

6.3 **Risk**

6.3.1 None specific to this report.

6.4 **Consultation**

6.4.1 None specific to this report.

6.5 **Consideration by Scrutiny**

6.5.1 Not required on this occasion.

6.6 **Climate Impact**

6.6.1 None specific to this report.

6.7 **Community Impact**

6.7.1 None specific to this report.

7. Background Papers

7.1 None.