

Minutes of a meeting of the Joint Children's Trust Committee

At 2.00 pm on Wednesday 22nd December, 2021 in the The Maybin/Sunflower Room,
One Angel Square, Northampton

Present:-

Members

Councillor Scott Edwards (NNC) – Chair

Councillor Lloyd Bunday (NNC)
Councillor Matt Golby (WNC)

Councillor Matt Golby
Councillor Jonathan Nunn (WNC)
Councillor Jason Smithers (NNC)

Officers

Cornelia Andrecut, Director of Social
Care, Northamptonshire Children's Trust
(NCT)
Rob Bridge – Chief Executive NNC
Tony Challinor – Assistant Director of
Commissioning and Partnerships NNC
Jenny Daniels, Democracy Officer, NNC
Anna Earnshaw – Chief Executive WNC

Colin Foster, Chief Executive NCT
Janice Gotts – Executive Director of
Finance NNC
Cathi Hadley – Director of Children's
Services
Martin Henry – Executive Director of
Finance WNC

23 Apologies for Non-Attendance

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Fiona Baker.

24 Notification of requests to address the meeting

None received.

25 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 24 November 2021

Resolved that:

The minutes of the meeting of the Children's Trust Joint Committee held on 24
November 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

26 Members' Declaration of Interests

The Chair invited those who wished to do so to declare interests in respect of items on
the agenda.

No declarations were made.

27 To consider any items of business of which notice has been given to the Proper Officer prior to the meeting of the Executive and the Chairman considers to be urgent pursuant to the LGA 1972

There were none.

28 Approval of the NCT Business Plan and Provisional Contract Sum

The Joint Committee considered a report of the Director of Children's Services seeking approval of the NCT Business Plan for 2022-23 and the Trust's provisional contract sum for 2022-23. A copy of the report was marked as item 5 on the agenda.

It was noted that the approval of the Business Plan was a matter reserved for both councils as owners of the Trust and had therefore been brought to the Children's Trust Joint Committee for approval by both councils. This had followed receipt of a progress report to the Joint Committee on 24 November 2021.

The Chief Executive of the Northamptonshire Children's Trust stated the plan was built on that of the previous year's when the Secretary of State had commented it was one of the best he'd seen. It had been developed with the workforce, children and young people and colleagues around the table. There had been a number of challenging times and there would be more to come but they were moving well together.

The Business Plan talked about the vision and values. The Strategic Framework document had vision and was committed to children and young people. There was strong and stable leadership and that would be triangulated with what was happening at ground level.

Answers to queries on the report were given as follows:

- i) The placement situation had worsened nationally over the last couple of years. Directors had contributed to a social care review and they were currently waiting for the outcome of that. Locally they needed to build the best relationships with providers so that they became the preferred supplier. They only wished to work with providers that wished to give the best outcome for children and young people. As the situation improved they could mitigate the challenges of the past. They were getting there but it would take some time. Some work was being undertaken regionally in this and the East Midlands Region had put in for a grant;
- ii) How they approached Clinical Commissioning Groups and education was complex and it could be really difficult to find the right placement for children with increasing amounts of needs. They had been unsuccessful in their bid to the Department for Education so they would look at a contingency plan and see how they could create some capacity to meet the demand;
- iii) It was important to develop some in-house capacity and there was a need to work together with partners. They had discussed forming family hubs. More money would be received from health. There was a need to be clear about what could be done to assist so that more opportunities were opened up. Keeping families together was what was required;

- iv) The business plan and contracts were inter-linked. There was a £0.3m increase from 2021/22 to 2022/23 which would be provided by North Northants Council (44%) and West Northants Council (56%) as agreed;
- v) The Trust had set out £2.99million of savings to be delivered in 2022/23. The Trust had also request £1million of investment, £300K for infrastructure (IT System) and £700K to meet the complex needs of families coming into the Trust;
- vi) There were risks which would need mitigating, including placements. There was also the risk that the cost of services would exceed the contract sum, the impact of COVID19 on demand for the service and that proposed savings were not found.

Resolved that:

The Joint Children's Trust Committee:-

- a) Approves the Provisional contract sum for Northamptonshire Children's Trust for the 2022/23 financial year;
- b) Approves the Updated Northamptonshire Children's Trust Business Plan for the 2022/23-2025/26 period.

29 Children's Trust Contractual Agreements

Resolved that: This item be deferred to the next meeting.

30 Close of Meeting

There being no further business the meeting was closed.

Chair

Date

The meeting closed at 2.17 pm