

Hampshire Children's Trust

Developing Local Children's Partnerships

Open letter to colleagues January 2010

Dear Colleague

Since my last open letter to you in November we have received a number of proposals for how local partnerships might develop and the key issues were discussed in some detail at the Trust Board on the 3rd December.

I am grateful for the work colleagues have put into considering the best way forward and am mindful of your concerns for timescale and the degree of detailed work to be done as local partnerships begin to emerge.

This letter confirms the intended time scales, seeks any further comments on the local structure of partnerships and confirms some next steps to put the arrangements in place in the early part of 2010.

After careful consideration I remain of the view that it makes most sense to confirm the start date for new partnerships to be in place as the 1st April 2010.

In view of the scale of the changes we will be treating the first year as a development period and will not put unreasonable expectations on the emerging new partnerships, but we do need them to make a start in 2010.

Timescale

The views of local partners in establishing new local partnership arrangements have been extremely helpful. As a result of discussion at the Trust Board on the 3rd December I propose that revised partnerships arrangements are secured and in place by April 2010 and for local partnerships to have identified a summary level delivery plan, addressing key priority actions by the end of July 2010.

Attached to this letter are a number of 'preferred options' for local arrangements following comments and views received so far, reflecting that the position is not final in all cases. The following action will be taken over the next few weeks.

- local Area Directors and District Managers for Education and Inclusion and for Children and Family Services will have a final round of discussion with local partners, where necessary, so that the position can be finalised when I meet with them on the 9th February 2010.

- I have also asked managers to hold discussions locally to identify interim chairs of partnerships so that they and local managers can come together for the first time at a workshop on the 9th March 2010 to begin the development phase of the revised local arrangements. Charing arrangements may then be reviewed during the first year as progress is made.
- progress will be reported at the Trust Board on the 28th January and recommendations made to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services on the 25th March.
- I have asked Clerks to Governing Bodies to ensure there is an item on each school Full Governing Body meeting before the end of term, on the 2nd April 2010, in order that Governors can consider a resolution of cooperation in the revised local arrangements.

Preferred options for the organisation of local partnerships

The 'preferred options' summarised at the end of this letter are drawn from proposals and comments received to date and are intended to enable a final round of reflection, where necessary, so that this phase of development can be considered complete towards the end of January 2010.

In some areas, quite small partnerships have been proposed. These limit the scope they would have to undertake the full range of business and in a few cases I have suggested that these be considered as working sub clusters of schools rather than full local partnerships.

To be clear, we anticipate that the manifestation of the Children's Trust at a local level will be the partnership that has the full engagement of all relevant partners, and that the arrangements to link to the LSP and any sub cluster arrangements are supportive of the work of the partnership.

I do accept that the process to engage with all local partners has been difficult in places and of course this emphasises the need to secure coherent local arrangements.

The position of colleges has also been difficult to establish in some areas as most colleges have very wide travel and 'catchment' areas. For this reason I suggest that colleges consider the attached 'preferred options' and identify the best fit with their local circumstances, recognising that all partners will support them in ensuring links to neighbouring arrangements as necessary. So each college should be able to identify its main 'host' partnership, but ensure liaison with others as necessary.

Subject to further local reflection the options in this letter would result in 18 or 19 local partnerships.

I would urge all colleagues to discuss these local issues with Area Directors and District Managers as soon as possible, so they are in a position early in February to recommend a final position.

Business process for local partnerships

A draft business process has been posted on the web page <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/hampshirechildrenstrust> and this confirms in the first year (2010/11) three essential areas of work for each local partnerships:

- at least one meeting of the revised arrangements should be held by July 2010
- to agree a summary level delivery plan addressing a limited number of key performance areas (perhaps 10) in the first year. These will be in part identified by the Children's Trust and in part, directed locally. We will provide a model for local delivery plans
- to then establish a pattern of meetings in the context of the draft business process, in preparation for a more detailed work programme from September 2010. This is likely to mean one full partnership meeting each term of the school year, with more detailed work being undertaken to support the work of the partnership. Partnerships may wish to meet more frequently initially to establish a full understanding of local issues and the pattern of meetings could helpfully include, for schools, coordination of inset days. This may provide greater opportunities for partners to take part in wider events, such as planning for the 2011/12 delivery plan and self evaluation of progress.

Support to local partnerships

To assist local partnerships, as the budget for 2010/11 is finalised, I will seek to identify a budget that can be made available to support the initial work of local partnerships. This will not be a substantial sum but will support basic administration.

You will recall from earlier communications that it is not intended to devolve service delivery resource in the first year of operation. I will discuss this with partnerships towards to end of 2010/11 as progress is made and when the financial position for the next three years becomes clearer.

The following documents are being developed to support local partnerships as they commence their 'business cycle' in the spring of 2010.

- Performance management framework
- Business process
- Guidance on key outcome improvements, which all local partnerships should address alongside locally determined priorities. These are likely to include NEET, Teenage Conceptions and the educational attainment of vulnerable children
- A standard report to Governing Bodies to support the requirement for all schools to be engaged in a local partnership
- Core governance arrangements and terms of reference for local partnerships to consider at their initial meetings
- A model local delivery plan format

Thank you for your contribution to the progress we have made to-date. Your continued attention to detail will help to ensure that local arrangements will enable all partners to contribute fully to improving outcomes for children and young people across Hampshire..

Please accept my best wishes for our work together in 2010.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Coughlan'.

John Coughlan
Director of Children's Services,
On behalf of the Hampshire Children's Trust
January 2010

**Preferred options for the organisation of local partnerships
Subject to further consideration in January 2010**

North and East Hampshire

Basingstoke

It is proposed that initially a District Wide Coordinating Group takes the lead in developing a number of local fully engaged partnership and that the coordinating group retains a long term role in ensuring coherence across the whole area and in reporting to the Basingstoke Local strategic partnership.

The proposal acknowledges that the focus of partnership working would be in a number (potentially 3) of fully engaged local partnerships undertaking the full range of local functions.

Area Directors and District Managers will discuss these issues further with local colleagues to ensure a firm timetable for the development of sub Council area partnerships in order that a delivery plan for each can be identified by July 2010.

East Hampshire

Two options have been identified and in both cases schools in the Horndean area are associated with a partnership in the Havant area 'west' of the A3 to reflect local school access patterns.

Steps will need to be taken to ensure that those matters related to Horndean are included in reports to the East Hampshire Local Strategic Partnership

In all cases there would be an East Hampshire Council area-wide coordinating group to ensure coherence of reporting to the East Hampshire LSP

- A partnership for Alton
- A partnership for Bordon, Liphook and Petersfield, recognising a need for Bordon schools to continue to have close working arrangements as a sub cluster of the wider partnership

OR

- A third partnership in Bordon

Hart

- A single Partnership based upon existing arrangements

Rushmoor

- A single partnership based upon the existing education Improvement partnership

Western Hampshire

New Forest

There is a proposal for a District Council Area coordinating group to maintain coherence with the New Forest Local Strategic Partnership and two fully engaged local partnerships

- A western New Forest area partnership based upon an existing extended schools cluster
- An eastern New Forest area partnerships based upon an existing extended schools cluster

Eastleigh

There is a proposal for a District Council area coordinating group to ensure coherence with the Eastleigh Local Strategic Partnership and for two local partnerships.

There are cross boundary issues with Romsey and with Winchester areas to be resolved in detail as local partnerships begin their work.

A proposal has been made for a group for schools in the Bursledon and Hamble area to become a separate partnership, however it is considered that the existing school cluster may not have sufficient resource to undertake all the functions of a local partnerships and the existing group might continue to operate within the relevant local partnership as necessary

- A west Eastleigh partnership
- An east Eastleigh partnership to include Swanmore School and associated schools

Test Valley

Proposals have been made for two local partnerships with a necessary Test Valley Council area-wide coordinating group to ensure coherence with Test Valley Local Strategic Partnership.

It is necessary for local colleagues to confirm the proposed boundary between the Romsey and Andover partnership and the association of each school.

There are also cross boundary issues between Andover and Basingstoke that affect some schools where detailed local arrangements need to be confirmed

- A partnership for the Andover and area
- A partnership for the Romsey area

Winchester

- A single partnership

A proposal has been made for those schools in the Alresford area to become a separate partnership in the Winchester area, however it is thought that the 7 schools in the area would not have sufficient resource to undertake the full functions of a local partnerships and it is proposed that the existing school cluster continues to operate within the whole area partnership, coordinating local activity as necessary

It is proposed that Swanmore School and the associated primary schools in the area forms parts of an Eastleigh partnership and the views of local colleagues to confirm the detailed arrangements would be welcome.

South Hampshire

Fareham

- A single partnership

Gosport

- A single Partnership

Havant

No final preferred option has been identified locally and the following is put forward as a working model for further local comment

- A partnership of schools west of the A3 to include those schools in the Horndean area currently supported by the Havant Education and Inclusion team
- A partnership of schools east of the A3, with a recognition that the work of the Leigh Park Community Improvement Partnership might remain in place as a sub cluster of the whole partnership to coordinate some aspects of work specifically in the Leigh Park housing area.