

# Strategic Advisory Board Information Pack Including Terms of Reference

## Definitions:

**Accountable Body** (the Local Authority) – is accountable to the Department for Education for the funding and ensuring Children’s Centre Services are delivering with Devon’s targets.

**Responsible Body** – Is responsible for the overall management of the programme including employment of staff and financial expenditure. This body will be/ has been awarded a contract from April 1st 2016 through a competitive tender process.

**Strategic Advisory Board (SAB)** – is responsible for monitoring the programme on a local level to ensure that the Responsible Body is fulfilling the core offer in line with the contract between the Local Authority and Responsible Body.

## A) The purpose of the Strategic Advisory Board - SAB

*The core purpose of Sure Start children’s centres is to improve outcomes for young children and their families, with a particular focus on those in greatest need. They work to make sure all children are properly prepared for school, regardless of background or family circumstances. They also offer support to parents. Source. Sure start CC; Local authority duties*  
<https://www.gov.uk/sure-start-childrens-centres-local-authorities-duties> Printed 25-03-14

1. To steer the Children’s Centre programme at a local level and be responsible for monitoring the objectives laid down through the service plan developed by the Responsible Body.
2. Work closely with the Accountable Body who will be responsible to the DfE for the delivery of the outcomes laid out in the agreement. Provide monitoring reports to the Accountable Body regarding the Responsible Body’s achievements towards milestones laid out in the agreement;
3. Work closely with the Responsible Body to deliver better outcomes for children and their families within the identified catchment area:
4. Ensure Service Level Agreements commissioned through the Responsible Body are fit for purpose and in line with the objectives laid out in the agreement made between the Accountable and Responsible Body.

5. Challenge the Responsible Body where it believes it is failing to meet agreed targets or could improve outcomes for children;
6. Recognise and promote good practice for overall service development
7. To ensure service development reflects parents' views and local needs in order to improve outcomes for children and families within the identified reach area;

## **B) Aims of the Strategic Advisory Board - SAB**

1. Monitor the delivery of the programme in line with the identified needs of the area and the principles, objectives and time scales set by the Responsible Body in the Childrens Centre Service plans.
2. Challenge the Responsible Body where monitoring shows that performance is below the expected standard;
3. Ensure that organisations, bodies and members of the local community are involved in delivering the core purpose of the childrens Centres (see Appendix 4).
4. Act as a channel of communication between the Accountable Body, Service users and the wider community.
5. Recognise and promote good practice; To facilitate and encourage integrated working with all relevant agencies and organisations to improve accessibility to families, particularly families under pressure;

## **C) Objectives of the Strategic Advisory Board - SAB**

1. Ensure that the Responsible Body is integrating within the wider planning of children's services, linking with the Local Childrens, Young Peoples and Families Alliance. (see Appendix 1)
2. Ensure the Responsible Body operates in an inclusive and collaborative manner co-operating with all partner agencies and the local community in the children's centre reach areas to provide services for children and families and responding to locally identified needs.
3. Promote the participation of parents and service users and in particular hard to reach families and challenge when this does not reach expected standards.
4. Monitor the budgets allocated to the Responsible Body against agreed spend and report back to the Accountable Body as required

## **D) Monitoring**

In conjunction with the Responsible Body's leadership team and the Local Authority, the SAB will monitor and review;

- i. Children's centre service plans – (produced annually to outline the services the CC will deliver);
- ii. Policies (annually);
- iii. Budgets (monitoring under and overspends);
- iv. The impact and delivery of services; and Partnership working.
- v. Ensure services are delivered as set out by the core offer (see appendix 4)

## **E) Features of an Effective Strategic Advisory Board**

1. Working as a team via effective meetings;
2. Good relationship with the managers and staff;
3. Being a 'critical friend';
4. Knowing the Children's Centre's area;
5. Identifying gaps in services for the local community.

## **F) An effective board member:**

1. Works or lives in the local community and cares about improving outcomes for children and families;
2. Wants to work as part of a team and can value the contributions of different people;
3. Stands by collective decisions even if she or he holds a different point of view;
4. Asks questions in a constructive, not a confrontational manner;
5. Ensures that confidentiality is maintained at all times;
6. Shares his or her knowledge, experience and skills for the benefit of the children's centre as a whole and provides an independent view;
7. Keeps up to date with developments in children's services, the Local Authority and their local community;
8. Is enthusiastic, committed and available to attend meetings and training;
9. Feeds back to the local community and the agency they represent;
10. Prepares for meetings including reading papers prior to the meeting;

# Terms of Reference for Devon's Strategic Advisory Boards

## 1) Meeting Administration

- a) The SAB will meet 6 weekly or as locally determined by agreement between SAB members and the local Authority.
- b) Administrative support will be provided by the Responsible Body;
- c) Distribution of agendas and papers will be at least five working days in advance of the meeting. Minutes will be distributed no more than two weeks after the meeting;
- d) Any member of the group can place an item on the agenda through Chair or the Responsible Body;
- e) The SAB will aim to work collaboratively with stakeholders and decisions made on a consensual basis.
- f) The **Annual membership review** will be part of the main meeting and will involve the election of Strategic Advisory Board members and officers;
- g) An independent Chair (and Vice Chair if required) will be elected at the annual membership reviews. Chairs can stand for a maximum of three years but should stand for re-election each year (for job roles see Appendix 2)
- h) All members are expected to put forward another person to deputise in the event of their absence from a meeting; Members of the Strategic Advisory Board who fail to attend for three consecutive meetings will be asked to nominate a permanent replacement.

## 2) Membership

- a) Membership will be representative of the range of partners and providers who deliver children's centre services against the Core Purpose for Children's Centres, and include users of the services e.g. parents and carers.
- b) All members should be appropriate representatives, committed to children's centres and able to make decisions on behalf of their organisation or agency.
- c) The SAB may co-opt any suitable person as a member of the board for a period of up to 12 months.
- d) The proposed membership will aim to include, but **not limited** to:
  -  Users of services (Parents and Carers\*);
  -  Responsible Body (strategic or cluster manager and/ or centre lead);

- ✚ Devon County Council People Service. ( e.g. Early Years and Childcare Service; Children’s Centre Commissioning Officer);
- ✚ NHS Devon;
- ✚ District/County Councillors; –
- ✚ Community Representative (e.g. School Governors, faith groups;)
- ✚ Representative from the voluntary sector;
- ✚ Jobcentre Plus;
- ✚ Adult and Community Learning; (e.g Learn Devon)
- ✚ Early years Representative (Early Years and Childcare Advisor)
- ✚ Local Schools representative’s;
- ✚ Other community or partner organisations/individuals as relevant to the local area needs. (e.g housing,)

\*Parent representatives will be eligible to join the board where they have (or are expecting) a child under 5 years old and are registered with the children’s centre. Parent representatives may remain on the Strategic Advisory Board until the end of term after their child’s fifth birthday. Childcare provision or expenses maybe made available for parent representatives at the discretion of the children’s centre.

### 3) Quorum

- a) Representation of at least three partner agencies will be required for the meeting to be quorate; Each organisation or partner agency will have one vote (i.e. not one vote per person attending). (parents will have one collective vote and will be classified as a “partner” agency regarding voting rights);
- b) The Responsible Body will have the deciding vote in the event of a split decision.

### 4) Decisions of the Strategic Advisory Board

- a) Decisions are made in formal meetings. Strategic Advisory Boards may have smaller **task and finish groups** that meet more frequently to explore issues in more depth than is possible at formal meetings. The number of task and finish groups depends on the needs of the Strategic Advisory Board.
- b) Task and Finish groups are required to carry out tasks specifically given to them by the Strategic Advisory Board to aid the work of the children’s centre and report back to the full SAB.
- c) Task and Finish groups will abide by their own Terms of Reference as a sub group of the SAB.

### 5) Disclosure of Personal Interests

- a) Each member will sign a Conflict of Interest form. (Appendix 5) This will disclose to the Responsible Body their occupation, employer, directorships and any public positions held. Members will also disclose any interests relating to-Kinship or friendship with, or membership of, an organisation or Trusteeship

- b) Where deemed necessary or appropriate all members of the SAB will give consent for the Responsible Body to carry out Disclosure and Barring Service checks. (Formerly Criminal Record Bureau check).
- c) Partner agencies will provide the children's centre with a safeguarding requirement letter to ensure that all agencies' staff are covered by their own safeguarding procedures.
- d) No person may serve on the SAB if prohibited, or restricted from working with children or young people.

# Further information for Strategic Advisory Board members: Appendices

## Appendix 1    **Definitions and clarifications**

- ❖ **Local Childrens, Young Peoples and Families Alliance** Will provide the overall leadership, develop an integrated strategy and enable integrated accountability for delivery of improved outcomes for children and young people through the Devon Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). The CYPF Alliance replaces the Devon Children's Trust which was developed to meet the requirements of the Children Act 2004. Some of the statutory guidance on the Children's Trusts has been withdrawn and regulations around children and young people's plans revoked reducing the requirements for local authorities. However, the 'duty to cooperate' and the requirement for each local authority to have a children's trust board remains in place. In Devon, this is the CYPF Alliance. The CYPF Alliance is a partnership of all organisations who are working together to listen to children young people and families and then to set priorities for the future. The Alliance will also be responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the CYPP and is co-ordinated by an Executive group led by Lead Member with representation from Local Authority Social Care, Education, Public Health, Police, Health and Voluntary Sector
  
- ❖ **Parent Forums** give families who use children's centres regular opportunities to be involved in shaping services and evaluating the effectiveness of the centre. Some parent forums have constituted themselves and have raised funds for specific projects. Representatives from parent forums should be invited to sit on the SABs or submit reports to the SAB meetings..
  
- ❖ **Practitioners' Forums** or **Multi-Agency Meetings** are meetings that include all agencies that work with children under the age of five. The forum shares information about the work being undertaken by each partner agency. It is not a decision making forum and, as such, has no powers. These are open meetings and individual families will not be discussed. Membership could include: health practitioners, children's centres, community groups, voluntary agencies, early years settings, housing, police etc.
  
- ❖ **Referral** or **Allocation Meetings** are confidential meetings involving agencies that work directly with families. The aim is for agencies to share information that may be of a sensitive nature regarding families' case files. These meetings should only include the agencies working directly with the families and will be confidential. The information sharing should follow the organisation's and Local Authorities' protocols.

## Appendix 2:

### **Roles and Responsibilities of the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Strategic Advisory Board**

#### **Chairperson**

- ❖ Chairing is a key role of any advisory board. The Chair must ensure the SAB runs smoothly, so there is full participation from members during meetings, all relevant matters are discussed, effective decisions are made and actions are carried out.
- ❖ The Chair should be independent from the Responsible Body and free from any other relationship or business interest which could interfere with the Chair's independent judgment.
- ❖ To keep abreast of the activities of the childrens centre and the Responsible Body.
- ❖ In partnership with the Responsible Body, centre leads and administration support, to be responsible for making sure that each meeting is planned effectively.
- ❖ In partnership with the Centre Lead and Responsible Body, to develop and set the agendas for meetings.
- ❖ To act as chair at meetings of the SAB, to ensure they run to time and include all members present.
- ❖ To review and sign minutes of the SAB.
- ❖ To act as the communicator for SAB decisions where appropriate.
- ❖ To call special meetings of the SAB where appropriate.
- ❖ To be an advocate for the children's centre when necessary.
- ❖ The Chair may from time to time be called upon to represent the childrens centre and sometimes be its spokesperson at, for example, functions or meetings, especially during an OFSTED inspection, when they will meet with the HMI inspectors as required.

#### **Vice Chairperson**

- ❖ The Vice chair should also be independent of the responsible body and will stand into support
- ❖ the Centre Lead and the Responsible Body in the absence of the chair. A vice chair is optional
- ❖ but can be useful in the event of the chair's absence, and to support the SAB and childrens
- ❖ Centre when required.
- ❖ The Vice Chair is a support for the Chair as required. Functions of the Vice Chair are similar to those listed above for the Chair, but only in the absence of the Chair, The role of the Chair can be shared with the vice chair.

## Appendix 3:    **Acronyms**

AFC – Action for Children  
BME – Black Minority Ethnic  
BSO – Business Support Officer  
CAMHS – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service  
CC – children’s centre  
CCCO – Children’s Centre Commissioning Officer.  
CCG - Clinical Commissioning Group  
CCM – Children Centre Manager.  
CNN – Community Nursery Nurse  
CIN – Child In Need  
CAFCASS - The Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service.  
CYPS - Childrens and Young Peoples Service.  
CL – Centre Lead  
CLL – Communication, Language and Literacy  
CP – Child Protection  
CSM – Children’s Services Manager  
CYPFA -Children Young People and Families (CYPF) Alliance  
DAF – Devon Assessment Framework  
DISC—Devon’s Family Information Service  
DCC – Devon County Council  
DSO – Designated Safeguarding Officer  
DSCB – Devon Safeguarding Children’s Board  
E & D – Equality and Diversity  
EAL – English as an Additional Language  
ECI - Exeter Community Initiatives  
EHLE – Early Home Learning Environment  
EHCC—Early Help Co-ordination Centre  
EHA— Early Help Advisor  
EH4MH – Early Help for Mental Health  
ELLP – Early Language Lead Professional  
ESTART – database used by Devon children’s centres to track attendance etc  
eASPIRE – AFC case recording system  
EYCS - Early Years and Childcare Service  
EYFS – Early Years Foundation Stage  
FIS - Family Information Service  
FIW – Family Intervention Worker  
FSP – Foundation Stage Profile  
FSW –Family Support Worker (childrens centre)  
HV – Health Visitor  
HV – Home Visit.  
JACAT- Journey After Child Abuse Team  
LA—Local Authority.  
LLC – Local Learning Community (schools)  
LP – Lead Professional (on a DAF)  
LP - within AFC Lead Practitioner who is the Safeguarding Lead  
LSOA – Lower Super Output Areas (a geographical area that covers 1500 population)  
MARAC – Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference  
MASH – Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.  
MW- Midwife  
MH – Mental Health  
PD – Physical Development  
PHNT – Public Health Nurse Team  
PSE – Personal, Social and Emotional  
SW – Social Worker  
SPA – Single Point of Access. (for health teams)  
TAC – Team Around the Child meeting  
TCS - The Children’s Society

## Appendix 4

### Core Purpose of Children's Centres

#### **Government Vision:**

The Government believes that children's centres should have a clear core purpose, focused on:

1. Improving outcomes for young children and their families, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged families, in order to reduce inequalities in:
  - child development and school readiness

Supported by improved

- Parenting aspirations, self esteem and parenting skills
- Child and family health and life chances

#### **Co-produced description of how the core purpose can be achieved:**

The Government has worked with sector leaders to consider evidence and good practice, resulting in a co-produced description of how the core purpose can be achieved, by:

2. Assessing need across the local community
3. Providing access to universal early years services in the local area including high quality and affordable early years education and childcare
4. Providing targeted evidence based early interventions for families in greatest need, in the context of integrated services
5. Acting as a hub for the local community, building social capital and cohesion.
6. Sharing expertise with other early years settings to improve quality.

#### **Sector-led principles**

Sector Leaders believe that all children's centre activity should be underpinned by the principles of:

7. Respecting and engaging parents
8. Working in partnership across professional/agency boundaries

For further information see.

[http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Core\\_purpose\\_of\\_Sure\\_Start\\_Childrens\\_Centres.pdf](http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Core_purpose_of_Sure_Start_Childrens_Centres.pdf)

## Appendix 5

### Declaration of Interest form

Name

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Address

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Postcode

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Phone number(s)

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Email

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Occupation

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Employer

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Directorship(s)

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Public Position(s)

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Membership(s)

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Trusteeship(s)

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Signature

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Date

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