

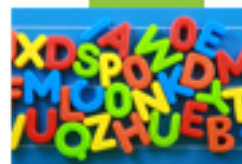


Kent Children's Trust



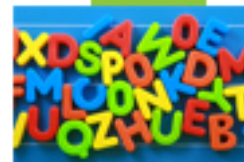
Partnership Agreement

KCT Partnership Agreement, May 2008, Version 4



Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Purpose	3
3. Governance Arrangements for KCT	3
4. Leadership	4
5. Accountability and Performance Management	4
6. Statement of Values and declaration of interest	5
7. Terms of Reference	6
8. Local Children's Services Partnerships	7
9. Membership of the Trust	7
10. Meeting Arrangements	8
11. Decision-making	8
12. Finance	9
13. KCT Executive Group	9
14. Links and reporting with other bodies and forums	10
15. Inspection	10
16. KCT Substructure and Working Groups	10
17. Review of the Partnership Agreement	11



1. Introduction

- 1.1 This agreement forms part of the Governance Framework for the Kent Children's Trust. It sets out the membership, functions and operational protocols.
- 1.2 The Kent Children's Trust is referred to as KCT or "the Trust" throughout this document.

2. Purpose

The purpose of Kent Children's Trust is:

- 2.1 To improve wellbeing and life chances for the most vulnerable children in Kent and to create local contexts where all children can flourish.
- 2.2 To agree priorities and actions for children's services across Kent ensuring safeguarding underpins all activity and to provide a framework for the effective operation of local arrangements.
- 2.3 To monitor and evaluate performance against priorities to inform future planning and commissioning.
- 2.4 To set the strategic direction for the development of integrated commissioning of services for children and young people pre birth to age 19 across the county in line with the Kent CYPP.

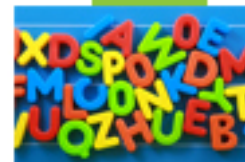
3. Governance arrangements for KCT

- 3.1 The Kent Children's Trust has been established to meet the requirements of the Children Act 2004 for whole-system integration.
- 3.2 The Kent Children's Trust is a sub-group of the Kent Local Strategic Partnership, known as the Kent Partnership. The Kent Partnership membership includes senior representation of the agencies and organisations involved in children's trust arrangements. The relationship between the Kent Children's Trust and the Kent Partnership is part of the KCT governance arrangements.

The full KCT Governance Framework can be accessed at:

http://www.clusterweb.org.uk/Children/kct_draftframework.cfm

- 3.3 The Kent Children's Trust includes all aspects of the lives of children and young people and some aspects of the lives of adults as they relate to the Every Child Matters framework for improving outcomes.



Definition of children under the Act:

- All persons aged 0-18
- Persons over the age of 19 who are receiving services under sections 23C to 24D of the Children Act 1989 (c. 41);
- Persons over the age of 19 but under the age of 25 who have a learning difficulty, within the meaning of section 13 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000, and are receiving services under that Act.

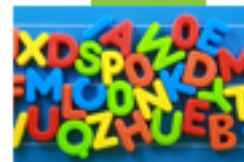
KCT Partnership Agreement, May 2008, Version 4 2

4. Leadership

- 4.1 The Children Act 2004 requires local authorities to take the lead in developing fully integrated arrangements for children's services. In areas with two-tier local government, the leadership is with the local authority with responsibility for education and children's social services. The lead local authority is known as the Children's Services Authority (CSA). Through the Children Act 2004 (section 10) particular agencies and organisations have a duty to co-operate to improve outcomes for children and young people. As the CSA the LA has a lead role to ensure that services comply with this duty and that arrangements for integrated planning and working are effective.
- 4.2 The Children's Services Authority is required to appoint a Lead Elected Member (LM), whose portfolio carries the political accountability for the same range of services as the Director of Children's Services (DCS), and a Director of Children's Services accountable for the full range of services for children and young people. The roles and responsibilities of LM and DCS are set out in statutory guidance:
<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/strategy/guidance/>
- 4.3 In Kent, Kent County Council is the Children's Services Authority. The Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Educational Standards is the Lead Member and the Managing Director of the Children, Families and Education Directorate (CFE) is the Director of Children's Services. This decision was ratified by KCC Cabinet on 16 October 2006.
- 4.4 The Kent Children's Trust provides strategic leadership for the entirety of Kent's Children's Trust arrangements, which includes local operations and partnership working.

5. Accountability and Performance Management

- 5.1 Members of the Kent Children's Trust share accountability for the work of the Trust with the Lead Elected Member and the Director of Children's Services. This means they share management, legal and public accountability for the work of the Trust.



- 5.2 KCT has a role in co-ordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of children's services to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- 5.3 Each agency represented on KCT retain their own existing lines of accountability for their services. KCT does not have the power to direct other organisations. However, it will bring concerns to the attention of the agency concerned and if necessary report its concerns to the appropriate government department.
- 5.4 Partners agree to share and review key information to support robust performance management arrangements within an agreed framework and cycle of monitoring and review. The KCT will agree actions to address areas of concern for children and young people in Kent and commission Local Children's Services Partnerships accordingly.
- 5.5 Partners will hold each other to account in the implementation of the CYPP and to ensure improved outcomes across ECM framework.

KCT Partnership Agreement, May 2008, Version 4 3

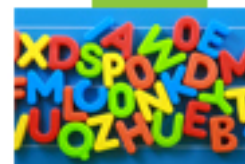
6. Statement of Values and declaration of interest

- 6.1 The welfare and development of the child is central to the work of the Trust and all policies, procedures and service provision will incorporate principles of equal opportunities and facilitate the involvement of children and families wherever possible.
- 6.2 All KCT members should declare any interest they may have in anything under discussion and leave the meeting if asked by the chair. This would not normally include interests of a strategic or general professional nature that would contribute to and enrich partnership work. However it would include, for example, a discussion of business or employment opportunities affecting the individual or his/her close family or any other matters where there is any potential for personal gain. In these situations members would be expected to leave the meeting. The rule is, 'when in doubt declare openly and immediately'.
- 6.3 In addition, the KCT has adopted the Nolan Committee's principles of public life. All members and partner agencies will have regard to these principles in relation to KCT business.

Nolan Committee's Seven Principles of Public Life

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.



Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

KCT Partnership Agreement, May 2008, Version 4 4

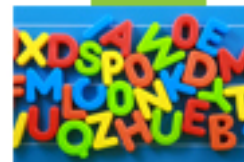
7. Terms of Reference

Core Purpose:

KCT is a strategic partnership at County level, as required by the Children Act 2004, with a key focus on commissioning improved outcomes for children and young people in line with the ECM Framework.

It will fulfill this core purpose by:

1. Agreeing priorities for improvement across children's services through the development of the Children and Young People's Plan for Kent.
2. Assessing needs through rigorous research and performance management across children's services.
3. Engaging CYP and their families in service development.
4. Identifying opportunities for integrated commissioning and developing stronger partnership arrangements including pooled budgets to improve outcomes.



5. Working with the Kent Children's Safeguarding Board to keep children safe from harm.
6. Championing the needs of children and young people particularly vulnerable groups.
7. Focusing on preventative and early intervention services for children, young people and families.
8. Ensuring that joint commissioning agreements between the PCTs and KCC are in place and regularly reviewed to improve health outcomes.
9. Ensuring that mainstream and additional funds are used to improve outcomes for children, families and young people and provide value for money.
10. Maintaining excellent relationships with providers including schools, hospital and community health services, the criminal justice system, youth services and the voluntary and community sector.
11. Taking account of the requirements of central government and responding to external review and inspection.

8. Local Children's Services Partnerships (LCSPs)

- 8.1 KCT has agreed a presumption in favour of decision making at the most local level that is consistent with excellent performance, (outcomes for children), value for money, (quality and infrastructure) and within the strategic framework established by the Kent Children and Young People's Plan.
- 8.2 The Trust is committed to supporting a strong network of Local Children's Services Partnerships and partners will ensure their agency is actively engaged at the locality level and will use their existing networks to enhance the work of LCSPs.
- 8.3 The KCT will work closely with the Local Children's Services Partnerships and agree the Local Children and Young People's Plans to ensure outcomes improve for local children within the framework of the Kent Children and Young People's Plan.
- 8.4 Strong performance management arrangements will ensure clear reporting to and from the Trust to Local Children's Services Partnerships.

KCT Partnership Agreement, May 2008, Version 4 5

9. Membership of the Trust

- 9.1 Membership criteria - agency representatives must have a strategic role within their agency, and be of a seniority to enable them to:
 - speak for their organisation with authority;
 - commit their organisation on policy and practice matters;



- hold their organisation to account, which will include drawing service deficits to their attention;
- influence the development of their agency's practices;
- ensure that children's needs are represented in agency decision-making regarding resources; and
- contribute to the development of robust and effective monitoring and performance functions.

9.2 Responsibilities of KCT Members - representatives on KCT will be required to sign a Partner Agency Agreement outlining roles and responsibilities.

9.3 Members - an up to date membership list can be found at:
http://www.clusterweb.org.uk/Children/kct_membership.cfm

10. Meeting Arrangements

10.1 The Trust will meet quarterly (April, July, October and January).

10.2 Chairing - the Director of Children's Services (KCC's Managing Director of Children, Families and Education Directorate) will chair KCT.

10.3 A Vice-chairperson will be appointed from amongst core members who are not KCC employees. The Vice-chairperson will deputise for the Chairperson when the latter is unavailable or by previous arrangement.

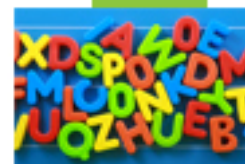
10.4 Quorum - KCT will be quorate if five of the following organisations are present:

- Chair or Vice Chair
- KCC
- Kent Police
- Youth Offending Service
- Children's Health Commissioning (or reps from both PCTs)
- District Councils
- The LSC and/or related service providers

10.5 Representatives of other agencies or specialists may be invited to attend meetings of the KCT for relevant items of discussion.

11. Decision-making

11.1 Consultation will be built into the development of the CYPP and other strategies to be agreed by the KCT. Where ever possible early draft strategies will have been widely circulated for comment by stakeholders before being presented to the Trust.



KCT Partnership Agreement, May 2008, Version 4 6

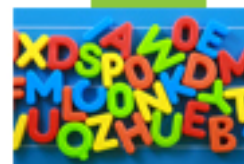
- 11.2 If, following full debate, the Chair feels that the Trust cannot come to an acceptable decision then he/she would normally postpone a decision while further information is obtained and to allow further consideration by stakeholders and partners.
- 11.3 The Trust will endeavor to reach agreement through compromise, consensus and if necessary voting. In the event of a tied vote the Chair may use his/her casting vote.

12. Finance

- 12.1 KCT will influence the way in which mainstream funding is used in order to improve outcomes for children, families and young people. This will include making plans for the integration and alignment of budgets including, where appropriate, preparation for Sections 10 or 31 budget pooling agreements, or provisions in subsequent legislation.
- 12.2 The KCT will influence the way in which mandatory pooled funds such as CAMHS, KDAAT and YOT are allocated in order to improve outcomes for children, families and young people.
- 12.3 KCT will allocate pooled and other funds, as they become available in order to improve outcomes for children, families and young people.
- 12.4 The KCT may advise the realignment of resources and decommissioning of services where there is evidence that services are not contributing to the improvement of outcomes for children, families and young people, so that they can be discontinued and the resources reallocated.
- 12.5 The Children's Services Authority will provide a small budget for supporting the KCT including funds for training and other costs.

13. KCT Executive Group

- 13.1 The role of the KCT Executive is to:
 - Direct agenda and forward planning for the KCT
 - Manage reporting arrangements between the Trust, sub groups and the LCSPs
 - Decision-making in emergencies between Trust meetings
 - Ensure follow up of decisions made at Trust meetings
- 13.2 The KCT Executive Group will include the KCT Chair and a representative from:



- KCC Children, Families & Education Directorate
- Kent Police
- Children's Health (PCTs)
- KCC Communities Directorate
- District Councils
- Voluntary and Community sector

KCT Partnership Agreement, May 2008, Version 4 7

14. Links and reporting with other bodies and forums

In order to carry out its responsibilities satisfactorily the KCT will also ensure that there are appropriate links and reporting to other bodies and forums including the following:

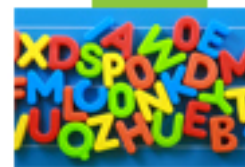
- Children's Safeguarding Board
- District Crime and Disorder Partnerships
- District Children's Play Fora
- KDAAT
- Kent & Medway Domestic Violence Strategy Board
- Kent Youth Justice Board - through the YOS representative
- Teenage Pregnancy Board - through the Director of Children's Health Commissioning
- The Kent CAMHS Strategy Board
- Health Change Programme Boards in East and West Kent

15. Inspection

- 15.1 Joint Area Reviews will inspect partner engagement in Kent Children's Trust arrangements. The scope of the inspection will encompass all agencies involved in the KCT, in particular, those who are required by statute to co-operate.

16. KCT Substructure and Working Groups

- 16.1 KCT will ensure a streamlined substructure to enable it to achieve its core purpose and TOR.
- 16.2 Working Groups will be established to support KCT in undertaking its responsibilities and reporting will be managed by the KCT Executive Group.



17. Review of the Partnership Agreement

17.1 The KCT Partnership Agreement, including its membership, will be subject to an annual review to ensure that it continues to be fit for purpose.

Joy Ackroyd

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January 2008

KCT Partnership Agreement, May 2008, Version 4 8

Kent Children's Trust Partner Agency Agreement

I agree to participate in accordance with the KCT Partnership Agreement and accept the following responsibilities.

Members will:

1. Represent their agencies and bring experience and knowledge about other sectors and organisations, however, their primary duty will be to act in the interest of children and young people in Kent.
2. Ensure that the 'duty to cooperate' is understood and acted upon within their agency.
3. Ensure that all staff within their agency who have contact with children are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and are supported to carry out any designated role with regard to partnership work including integrated working, CAF, LP and sharing information.
4. Ensure that actions to support the delivery of the Kent CYPP are firmly embedded within their agency and that there is adequate knowledge, skills and training for staff.
5. Ensure their agency makes an appropriate contribution to the resourcing of the CYPP.
6. Ensure that the reports, policies, procedures and decisions of KCT are disseminated in an effective way within their agency and acted upon.
7. Contribute to the development of robust and effective monitoring and performance arrangements and open organisational practice to scrutiny.
8. Bring key strategic issues to the Trust's attention.
9. Commit to attending a minimum of 3 out of 4 meetings of KCT in a year (April to March).
10. Nominate a named deputy who also meets the membership criteria to attend up to one meeting a year on the member's behalf.



- 11. Read all documents prior to meetings and consult with appropriate personnel within their agency as appropriate.
- 12. Be available for consultation between meetings to facilitate the business of the Trust.
- 13. Declare any interest in a particular topic or issue preferably before a meeting.
- 14. Support the work of KCT by identifying people within their organisation to join KCT working groups or to undertake any necessary research or additional work.
- 15. Actively contribute to Joint Area Reviews of Children's Services.

Agency Representative:

Signed: _____ Name: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____ Agency: _____