



Nottinghamshire Children's Trust

BRIEFING: The role of the Nottinghamshire County Council Leader regarding the Nottinghamshire Children's Trust and the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children's Board

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This briefing provides an overview of the role of the Nottinghamshire County Council (the Council) Leader regarding Nottinghamshire's Children's Trust and the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB).

2. Relationship between Nottinghamshire Children's Trust and NSCB

- 2.1 Nottinghamshire's Children's Trust is the single, strategic body responsible for ensuring all services co-operate to improve the well-being of local children and young people.
- 2.2 The role of NSCB is to ensure the effectiveness of arrangements made by individual agencies and the wider Trust to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- 2.3 The functions of both the Children's Trust and NSCB include responsibility and accountability for keeping children and young people safe. Whilst their roles in this regard are complementary, they are also distinct.
- 2.4 The Children's Trust is responsible for the improvement of outcomes across *all* aspects of children and young people's lives and for the overarching strategic framework for the delivery of these improved outcomes.
- 2.5 The NSCB plays a specific role to ensure the Children's Trust pays due regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. A major aspect of the NSCB's function is to challenge and scrutinise individual agencies of the Children's Trust (as well as the Trust as a whole) to ensure they are meeting this requirement effectively and in a co-ordinated way.
- 2.6 The Children's Trust has a challenge and scrutiny role towards the NSCB, including for example, its scrutiny of the annual report of the NSCB.
- 2.7 Therefore, although the NSCB must operate within the framework of the Children's Trust, it must also maintain a separate identity and independent voice to ensure this relationship of mutual challenge can be implemented effectively.

3. Role of the Council Leader

- 3.1 The role of the Council Leader regarding the Children's Trust and NSCB is set out in "The Roles and Responsibilities of the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Director of Children's Services" (DCSF, 2009) and is summarised below. The role is reinforced by "The protection of children in England: action plan. The Government's response to Lord Laming" (DCSF, 2009).

- 3.2 With regard to the Children's Trust, the Council Leader should, along with the Council's Chief Executive:
- take responsibility for, and support the Lead Member (LM) and Director of Children's Services (DCS) in ensuring that Children's Trust and safeguarding arrangements are robust and are integrated into the overall strategic planning of both the Council and the Local Strategic Partnership
 - provide support to the LM and DCS in the discharge of their responsibilities
 - monitor the performance respectively of the Lead Member (LM) and Director of Children's Services (DCS) in securing better outcomes for children and young people
 - at least once a year, as part of the Children's Trust annual report, formally make an assessment of the effectiveness of local governance and partnership arrangements to improve outcomes for children and to support the best possible standards for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.
- 3.3 With regard to ensuring the effective relationship between the Children's Trust and NSCB the Council Leader should satisfy themselves that the DCS is fulfilling their managerial responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. This includes ensuring that:
- the relationship between the Children's Trust Board and NSCB is working effectively
 - clear responsibility has been assigned with the local authority and among Children's Trust partners for improving services and outcomes
 - targets for improving safeguarding and progress them are reported to the Local Strategic Partnerships, and
 - they form a view on whether things are working effectively in practice.

Note on context of this briefing:

1. This briefing is one of a set of four that provide an overview of the roles of the

- Lead Member for children and young people's services
- Council Chief Executive
- Director of Children's Services

Therefore, the role of the Council Leader is set within the context of the roles of the above.

2. This briefing has been produced prior to the publication of the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act, expected in autumn 2009 and may be subject to subsequent amendment

3. This briefing has been produced by the Nottinghamshire Children's Trust and NSCB during the development of a protocol to establish an effective communication and relationship between Nottinghamshire's Children's Trust and NSCB. The protocol will outline processes to ensure the role of the local authority Leader with regard to the Children's Trust and NSCB is fully operationalised.