

Nottinghamshire Children, Young People and Families Early Help Locality Management Groups (LMG) 2015

LMG Review November 2015

Nottinghamshire County Council Early Childhood and Early Help Locality Team has been responsible for managing and co-ordinating Early Help Locality Management Groups (LMG). LMGs are held at a District level with Mansfield and Ashfield sharing an LMG.

LMGs were developed to have the responsibility for locality-level planning and the delivery of partnership activities, including the development of integrated working, in order to achieve better outcomes for children & young people and their families. They have a key focus on early help approaches to prevent poor outcomes.

LMGs were established in 2013 when Local Strategic Partnership Children and Young People's sub groups were disbanded. Terms of Reference for these groups is included in Appendix One.

Their purpose is to:

- To provide effective leadership to overcome local barriers to the successful implementation of the Nottinghamshire Children's Trust's, Children and Young People and Families Plan and the Early Help Strategy;
- To share information on the needs and aspirations of children, young people and their families in the area and to make effective uses of resources available which best meet their needs;
- To identify opportunities for the delivery of services in partnership in order to improve the access to services for children, young people and families and thus reduce possible duplication of provision;
- To ensure the effective operation of integrated working practices that facilitate the 'step up and step down' process with the local Children's Social Care teams;
- To establish clear links to and communication with the NSCB and ensure that the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is considered in all aspects of the group's work
- To provide a local advisory board for the localities Children's Centres;
- To promote the participation of children and young people and parents/ carers in their communities, and especially in the services delivered for them;
- To promote the sharing of best practice through networking, mentoring, buddying and shadowing opportunities.

1. Why do we work in Partnership?

Partnership working is about developing inclusive, mutually beneficial relationships that improve the quality and experience of care.

There are a number of benefits of partnership working for both service users and services. A partnership approach is founded on co-operation and collaboration between all relevant providers has a number of benefits for service users. These include:

- removal of barriers to progressing towards improved outcomes
- providing more consistent, co-ordinated and comprehensive services and interventions

The benefits for service providers of partnership working include the ability to:

- develop a 'whole person/family' approach
- manage a broader range of services which address the individual's needs

- develop a better understanding of others' skills and develop a wider range of personal skills
- develop a wider skill base for staff to meet more effectively the needs of children, young people and families
- recognise and utilise the strengths and areas of expertise of all the partner agencies involved
- make the best use of available resources by managing care of more people in a coordinated and cost-effective way - including pooling resources

In order to achieve a co-ordinated service partners need to communicate, co-ordinate and co-operate. These principles are embedded through Nottinghamshire's LMGs.

2. Why are we reviewing Locality Management Groups?

The time has come to review these current arrangements to assess their impact, successes and challenges; this in turn will inform our next steps in terms of locality partnership arrangements for children and families.

3. Who are Locality Management Groups accountable to?

When the LMGs were first established, they were sub groups of the Nottinghamshire Children's Trust Board. They were responsible for being the link with locality partnerships and countywide strategic partnerships; they allowed the opportunity to influence commissioning on a countywide level and vice a versa.

The LMGs currently report to the Nottinghamshire County Council Early Help Leadership Group and deliver the work of the Children's Trust Board through the local delivery of the Children, Young People and Families Plan. The Children's Trust Board governance structure is included in Appendix two.

4. Methods

An on line questionnaire was developed and cascaded to:

- Members of LMGs
- District Councils
- Schools
- Senior managers in Children, Families and Cultural Services
- Key stakeholders such as VCS partners

The consultation exercise lasted 7 weeks and a summary of the results and subsequent recommendations are included in this report.

5. Headline Results

- 77 practitioners responded to the survey
- 89% of respondents were aware of LMGs
- 88% were members of LMGs
- Respondents came from Broxtowe (25%), Mansfield and Ashfield (23%), Bassetlaw (18%), Gedling (15%), Newark and Sherwood (11%), Rushcliffe (8%)
- 89% of respondents stated that they understood the aims and purpose of LMGs.

- 58% of respondents attend their LMG regularly, 27% attend occasionally, 9% receive papers only and 6% delegate attendance to someone else in their service.
- 69% of respondents were aware of other local partnerships groups in their locality. When asked to list these, the information provided included a range of topic based meetings, case management meetings, service specific management groups. The following were listed:
 - Children Centre Local Advisory Group (engages stakeholders and service users in the specific management of a Children Centre)
 - School Behaviour & Attendance Partnerships - focus on cases where a child or young person has school non-attendance or challenging behavior at school)
 - MARAC (case meetings focusing on Domestic Violence and Abuse)
 - Early Help Practitioner Forums (for frontline practitioners who want to focus on a particular topic within a District locality)
 - Children’s Services Locality Leadership Groups (for NCC Children’s Services Managers)
 - Community Safety Partnerships (focuses on crime and community safety for all age groups within a locality)
 - Community Learning Groups (focus on family and community learning)
 - SENCo Network (for SEND practitioners)
 - Together for Worksop (focuses on a range of issues within Worksop)
 - In addition there are a number of task and finish groups focusing on a particular issue or geographical area.
- When asked which benefits of LMGs were most important, they included in order of priority:¹
 1. Information sharing regarding the work of partner agencies
 2. Help to reshape services to improve outcomes
 3. Developing partnership activity
 4. Help local planning and addressing local priorities
 5. Informing commissioning and local planning
 6. Make links with organisations across the locality
 7. Assessing local needs
 8. Avoid duplication
 9. Information sharing regarding countywide initiatives
 10. Informing the service delivery of my organisation

“Being invited and respected for what we do and how we provide added value and compliment statutory services”

- When asked to select the greatest challenges of having an effective local partnership group focusing on children and families, answers included in order of greatest challenge:
 1. Not all the right people turn up
 2. Cant cover my work if I attend
 3. Takes up too much time
 4. Unclear of purpose
 5. Cant influence countywide activity
 6. Not clear how it adds value
 7. Not in an accessible location

¹ Many respondents stated that some priorities were of equal value however the questionnaire was not designed to identify joint priorities.

8. Not taken seriously by your organisation/managers

“I am a headteacher who was invited onto the Rushcliffe LMG because my school has one of Rushcliffe's areas of deprivation within its catchment. I attended some meetings but for the last year have delegated this to another member of staff who has more to do with the areas discussed at the meeting.... However, if the LMG wanted to share some information with schools that may offer them knowledge about support/things going on then I would suggest an update either termly via a written report or annually in person at the termly borough heads meetings. Headteachers simply have too much on their plates to attend meetings that are not directly relevant to their core work... It may not be an issue that schools do not engage or are not asked to engage if their work is not central to the aims of the LMG”.

When asked what would improve the LMG going forward, respondents selected more than one of the suggestions offered.

1. All key partners attend (74%)
 2. Evidencing impact of local work (65%)
 3. Having clear priorities and actions (50%)
 4. Greater understanding of local need (46%)
 5. Locality data being made available (44%)
 6. Senior level representation (22%)
 7. Operational level representation (15%)
- 100% of respondents stated that LMGs have the correct governance by reporting to the Children’s Trust Board.
 - 80% of respondents stated that there were no other bodies where the LMGs should report to, acknowledging that at least one LMG also reports to a District Council (Broxtowe).
 - Respondents were asked about the use of the Children’s Trust priorities within their local plans. The majority of respondents understand what these priorities are and have identified their ability to influence the successful delivery of Children’s Trust priorities. However there seems to be a need to also include specific local priorities within LMG plans rather than to solely focus on the countywide Children, Young People and Families Plan.

Local plans are developed based on the priorities of the Nottinghamshire Children’s Trust. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	Yes	No
I know what the Children’s Trust priorities are following discussions in my LMG.	88%	12%
I / my organisation contribute to these priorities.	91%	9%
Children’s Trust priorities influence the work of my organisation.	73%	27%
LMG plans reflect <u>local</u> strategic priorities.	85%	15%
It is correct to focus on the Nottinghamshire Children’s Trust Board priorities	79%	21%
It is beneficial to include local priorities as well as the countywide Children’s Trust priorities.	98%	2%
I use local data and evidence of need to inform local plans and priorities.	79%	21%
I feel that I have been able to influence the development of your LMG plan.	72%	28%

- A key role of LMGs is to communicate information about service developments and initiatives, LMG members are encouraged to cascade information within their organisations and share information about their own services with partners. Respondents identified that:
 - 50% of respondents routinely share information within their own team or organisation.
 - 81% of respondents cascade information within their organisation where they feel it is relevant.
 - 63% of respondents consistently share information about the work of their own organisation through LMGs.

- Each of the 6 LMGs across Nottinghamshire has received a small amount of funding (£7,500 per District) to commission local activities based on local need. Respondents were asked which activities they have found most useful to influence the impact of their work. The vast majority of responses focused on training, workforce development and market place events.
 - *Commissioning training in secondary schools for staff to support young people who self-harm*
 - *Training and briefing events have been beneficial*
 - *Training and information events have helped staff to understand how their work is impacted by partner agencies.*
 - *The commissioning of activities and training has been most helpful which has increased the knowledge and expertise of my staff.*
 - *Market days training events support from the LMG*
 - *Training Support for parents of children with SEND*
 - *market days training events support from the LMG*
 - *Market place and information on new initiatives e.g. Family Service/Operation Striver*

- In addition there has been some positive feedback re the role of sharing information in the development of 'informal' needs assessments, the identification of local priorities and pooling of resources:
 - *Collation of information has helped to reduce duplication and deliver more effective services.*
 - *Focus on C-Card access*
 - *Agreed funding for priority issues*
 - *Shared partnership resources to deliver events etc. in the area*

- Respondents were asked to provide any additional feedback about LMGs. The vast majority of comments were positive.
 - *I find the LMG's really useful to network in, I have made several new connections through the LMG meetings which I would not have made if I had not attended the meetings.*
 - *It is felt that the LMG is a vital cog in the wheel of effective partnership working. There are few / no opportunities for lead officers to discuss current and emerging issues to identify duplication, new initiatives etc. The recent NSCB recommendations for partners (especially districts / boroughs) is to become more robust in child protection planning and having appropriate agency involvement is child protection meetings and to ensure multi-disciplinary approach to preventing and responding to*

CSE. These issues are examples of development being sought and why the LMGs are important to second tier authorities and other partners. 2 hours every couple of months to assist in increased understanding and awareness. It may be that districts / boroughs could come together e.g. South Notts, Ashfield/ Mansfield and Bassetlaw Newark and Sherwood but whatever the structure it is felt that they are of great benefits locally and allow us to demonstrate the vision of NCC Chief Exec of local focus.

- Some comments focused on how LMGs could be improved. Comments included the lack of a bottom up approach, the poor attendance of some key partners, the capacity required to ensure representation and whether the groups are being taken seriously.
 - *They need to be taken more seriously. As budgets reduce we need to increase partnership working. Not having the council telling us what they are doing but more bottom up information.*
 - *Having a police representation from time to time would aid understanding of particular local pressures.*
 - *There is no rep from social care. In the past the meeting was led by health and representation was much stronger across the area. However there did not used to be a plan and I feel this is a benefit of the current arrangement although I am not sure how much the partners feel they have ownership*
 - *I think it needs to be clear what the LMG is trying to achieve to ensure that representation is correct. If it is planning joint priorities and linking in with the Children's Trust Board then I think representation needs to be reconsidered.*
- In addition some respondents have expressed the potential duplication with the Children's Leadership Locality Groups (CLLG – formally known as EHIGs) for NCC managers.
 - *The LMG does seem to replicate the CLLGs that are in place and I am listening to the same presentations and information in 3 different settings (I'm supposed to attend 2 LMGs). CLLGs are not represented by all agencies but if they were this could then feed into the LMG at a lower level, even practitioner level where people can put things into place to achieve service aims and objectives e.g. work together to deliver things within schools /share good practice/ set up initiatives across different agencies rather than duplicating what each agency is doing. The LMG seems to have lost focus and whilst its great to listen to what others are doing locally when I have done this I have sat for an hour listening to someone talk about their service which actually if I didn't find useful or was able to use in any way.*
 - *The LMGs for me personally feel like a duplication of the EHIG meetings as managing such a large team only one meeting can be prioritised.*
 - *The overlap between the CLLG and the LMG's is still an issue particularly where there are similar people attending both within a locality.*
- Furthermore some managers who cover more than one district are invited to more than one LMG.
 - *Attending only one LMG for two districts is very beneficial for time/shared services and community links. I think my response would be significantly different if I had to attend two separate LMG's.*
 - *Biggest issue is committing to several meetings that address the same information - frustrating when managing a direct service.*

6. Recommendations

A. Enable the continuation of Early Help Locality Management Groups

The review has identified that the LMGs are a useful resource for practitioners managing services and working with children and families within a specific locality. The overall response to the survey was that they are positive groups that enable improved integration and partnership work, especially in the current climate of limited resources.

There are areas for improvement however and these can be addressed through the successful progression of the recommendations in this report.

B. Ensure there is Correct Governance for Early Help Locality Management Groups

Early Help Locality Management Groups were set up as sub groups of the Children's Trust Board. Over the last few years this governance has weakened with little or no input from LMGs to the Children's Trust Board. The relationship is currently a top down approach with LMGs carrying out the work of the Children's Trust by delivering the Children, Young People and Family plan priorities, but no scope to share emerging issues and needs with the Children's Trust Board.

The latest governance structure of the Children's Trust (agreed at the Children's Trust Board in July 2015) is included in Appendix two of this report and no longer includes the six LMGs covering Nottinghamshire.

This relationship must be strengthened and the LMGs reinstated as part of the Children's Trust Board governance reporting directly into the Children's Trust Board at least once a year.

C. Create increased ownership of LMGs by partners

Historically LMGs were chaired by nominated representatives from the locality, more recently the meetings have been chaired by an NCC manager. Now is the time to review this arrangement and explore a rotating chair role across member agencies. This administration however should still be led by NCC to ensure the groups have continuity, have clear business support and ensure links with NCC Children's services.

Ownership will also be improved if local LMG plans incorporate local priorities to meet identified local need. The Children's Trust should enable a bottom up approach to also address local priorities and not just those included within Nottinghamshire's Children, Young People and Families Plan.

D. Reduce potential duplication with NCC Children's Locality Leadership Groups

The potential duplication highlighted with the Children's Locality Leadership Groups must be made clear to NCC managers. CLLGs are for Nottinghamshire County Council Senior Children's Managers and should not replicate work of the LMGs. CLLGs receive feedback from the LMGs in their locality however LMGs report to the Children's Trust and the CLLGs are stand alone NCC groups that report into the county wide NCC group leading on early help.

Despite other groups available within a locality, the Early Help LMGs offer an opportunity for wider partners to engage in work to improve a range of outcomes for children and families.

E. Early Help Locality Management Group Membership

The engagement of all key partners at meetings can be challenging, in particular for schools, CCGs, children's social care and frontline services where backfill is not an option. In these cases we need to enable key partners engage in the LMGs by having a wider circulation group for those not able to attend meetings but can still receive papers.

Terms of reference will need to be reviewed and a realistic list of members is incorporated, however still having a wider network for papers and information sharing.

It has also been suggested that we develop an online forum for each of the 3 children's services localities so that partners can post information and share information re needs, local services and interventions.

“Could LMGs have a place where minutes are available and issues discussed - this may help discover local concerns?”

There may also be an option to hold later meetings to enable schools and PVI providers to attend, however this can also create challenges for those not able to work outside of normal working hours.

In addition, LMGs should reduce the expectation that one person needs to attend more than one LMG. This can be resolved by delegating one LMG to a different colleague.

F. Information Sharing

The survey identified that only 50% of LMG members routinely cascade information within their own organisations. There may be scope to develop a countywide termly LMG e-bulletin to share information from all LMGs, sharing good practice, new initiatives and evaluation of local activity.

An e-bulletin may be more appropriate to cascade to organisations as information will be more focused and would not require the need to cascade formal minutes which are not always that effective in presenting information. This can be sent to partners that do not routinely engage e.g. schools, Clinical Commissioning Groups etc.

An e-bulletin and local online forums should be explored in parallel to assist information sharing for LMG members.

G. Networking / Market Place Events

There is a requirement locally for market place events to publicise the range of services available within a locality as well as an opportunity to establish effective partnerships. There is scope to merge these with Children's Trust Roadshow events broadening the agenda by providing a locality focus in the organisations attending and the needs/ priorities being presented.

When running events it may be more effective to use the 3 children's services localities rather than district level events which may require attendance from the same organisation for 2-3 events. This will also reduce the need for additional business support to organise 6 events rather than 3.

H. Workforce Development

LMG funding has been used in the main to commission training and workshops. These events have been very successful with positive feedback from nearly all respondents. LMG funding will be withdrawn next financial year (2016/17) so this potentially leaves a gap in local training. There is however scope to use existing local expertise from partner agencies; scope to develop training needs assessments to inform all training providers and commissioners such as NSCB, NCC workforce development.

Some training has recently been commissioned by other Departments of NCC with contracts in place to deliver training to a range of organisations re tackling childhood obesity, domestic violence, emotional health and wellbeing. We do not want to duplicate this training especially when resources are limited. It is important therefore to help promote existing training and work with training providers to help establish training within localities, targeting local partners.

I. Review Early Help Practitioner Forums

There is a view to also take stock in terms of Early Help Practitioner forums. These have sometimes taken the form of training, presentations, market place events and topic based discussions. They may provide an opportunity to explore key topics, however there may be duplication with some LMGs. Early Help Practitioner forums only operate currently in four districts. It is therefore proposed to cease these fora and focus instead on specific online fora, workshops and market place events.

J. Increase focus on local intelligence, data and service mapping to inform planning and commissioning

The LMGs have at times evidenced the need for interventions at a local level following the sharing of data such as child poverty levels, teenage conception rates, childcare sufficiency etc. This work should be strengthened and it would be useful to provide each LMG with local data sets which highlight information such as referrals to MASH and the Early Help Unit. Child Health profiles and Family of School profiles are made available and yet local intelligence is not necessarily evidenced.

7. Conclusions

LMGs have been an effective resource to establish and maintain local partnerships. These partnerships have provided opportunities for information sharing, joint work, workforce development and improved links with services such as schools and VCS organisations.

There are a number of actions that are recommended to improve the effectiveness of the groups by improving access to information, increasing membership, supporting Children's Trust roadshows, ensuring that needs assessments are a key function of the LMGs and strengthening the governance arrangements with the Children's Trust.

The future of the LMGs will be discussed at the Children's Trust Board for their agreement of the recommendations listed in this report. It is critical to ensure ownership of the LMGs by the Children's Trust and LMGs need to be acknowledged for their local delivery of the Children, Young People and Families Plan.

Irene Kakoullis

Group Manager Early Childhood and Early Help Locality Services

Children, Families and Cultural Services

Irene.kakoullis@nottsc.gov.uk

APPENDIX ONE

EARLY INTERVENTION LOCALITY MANAGEMENT GROUPS

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Aim	To have the responsibility for locality-level planning and the delivery of partnership activities, including the development of integrated working, in order to achieve better outcomes for children & young people and their families.
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide effective leadership to overcome local barriers to the successful implementation of the Nottinghamshire Children’s Trust’s, Children and Young People and Families Plan and the Early Help Strategy; • To share information on the needs and aspirations of children, young people and their families in the area and to make effective uses of resources available which best meet their needs; • To identify opportunities for the delivery of services in partnership in order to improve the access to services for children, young people and families and thus reduce possible duplication of provision; • To ensure the effective operation of integrated working practices that facilitate the ‘step up and step down’ process with the local Children’s Social Care teams; • To establish clear links to and communication with the NSCB and ensure that the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is considered in all aspects of the group’s work • To promote the participation of children and young people and parents/ carers in their communities, and especially in the services delivered for them; • To promote the sharing of best practice through networking, mentoring, buddying and shadowing opportunities.
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The locality management group will be accountable to the Early Help Executive Group, a subgroup of the Children’s Trust.
Reporting:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The early intervention locality management groups will each produce a local implementation plan; provide timely progress reports; and an annual report for the Children’s Trust Executive. Such information will also be made available to local strategic partners and reporting arrangements will be determined at a local level. • The Early Years & Early Intervention Group Manager will organise regular meetings of the early intervention team in order to review progress, provide support and share best practice.
Management Group structure and membership:	<p>The early intervention locality management groups will be co-ordinated and chaired through the leadership team of the Early Years and Early Intervention Service.</p> <p>Group Membership will be the senior operational manager responsible for the delivery of service across the district. The following services will be represented as a minimum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years • Schools • Children’s Social Care (NCC) • Youth Justice & Targeted Support (NCC)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance and Behaviour Service (NCC) • Young People’s Service (NCC) • Police • CAMHS (District Team) • Community Health (Midwifery, Health Visitors and School Nurses) • Voluntary and Community Sector • District Councils (Housing and Community Safety) • DWP Job Centres • Adult Services
Frequency:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The early intervention locality management group shall meet bi-monthly, unless otherwise agreed. • Development groups identified to support the work of the locality management group will be held as and when required.
Review Date	Bi-annually or as required

APPENDIX TWO

