



**AGENDA ITEM 9**

**MEETING**

**Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board  
12 June 2006**

**TITLE**

**Children's Networks  
-a position paper & developments in establishing  
Children's Network South**

**SUMMARY**

The CYPSP has discussed the development of the Children's Networks (CNs) on several occasions. The attached paper takes account of those discussions and is now proposed as a position paper. A short presentation will accompany this item and will focus on the development of the Children's Network in the South.

The CNs as part of the wider partnership for children and young people represent a Children's Trust approach. There is an expectation that most LAs will have established a Children's Trust by 2008.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the CYPSP support the direction of travel and outline the implications for their respective service.

**LEAD OFFICER(S)**

Sharon Shoesmith: Director of Children's Service  
Robert Singh        Children's Network Co-ordinator (seconded Headteacher of Risley Avenue Primary School)  
Jan Doust            Head of Children's Network South and lead officer for Safeguarding



## CHILDREN'S NETWORKS

### -a position paper

#### Introduction

1 The Children's Service in Haringey was established in April 2005 and works in close partnership with the Haringey Teaching Primary Care Trust (HTPCT), the Metropolitan police and the voluntary and community sector. The Children's Service is part of Haringey Council and as such reports through the Council's Executive. It also leads on the partnership for children and young people in the borough through the Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPSP) which reports to the Haringey Strategic Partnership (HSP).

2 The Children Act 2004 and the Every Child Matters (ECM) guidance outline a number of recommendations, including the need for agencies to see the child at the centre of delivery. The intention is that more integrated service delivery will lead to children and young people:

- being better safeguarded from harm;
- having improved opportunities to develop and reach their potential;
- receiving support earlier if they experience difficulties; and
- being able to access services faster due to better links between services.

3 Schools have an important central role as a 'hub' for multi-agency delivery of services in their communities. For many the best vehicle for delivering services in the heart of communities is extended schools working in partnership with those communities. For several years most Haringey schools have been working together in Networked Learning Communities (NLCs). From the early development of NLCs it was clear that they could provide the infrastructure for the delivery of integrated services to children and families. At the same time Haringey Council has focused the delivery of its services in neighbourhoods and through area assemblies based on wards. The focus on communities is central to Haringey Council's ambition to establish sustainable communities and to achieve community cohesion and good race relations.

## Consultation

4 Following extensive consultation with the HTPCT, schools, other providers through the CYPSP and the Council's neighbourhoods three Children's Networks (CNs) were proposed as shown in the map at the end of paragraph 7. The model takes account of the needs of children and young people, the economy of scale of managing and delivering services, the collaboration between schools (several NLC boundaries were adjusted to take account of wards), the location of a range of other services including the Children's Centres, together with the area assemblies and neighbourhood structure.

5 The CNs are co-terminus with wards but not completely with the neighbourhoods. However, since they are administrative areas the slight difference is not seen as significant – more important to have secondary schools represented in each CN together with primary and special schools that already work collaboratively. The decision to support the delivery of services through the 3 CNs was made by the Council's Executive in June 2005 and supported by the CYPSP. The HTPCT has since reallocated its Health Visiting service in line with the 3 CNs.

## Timescales

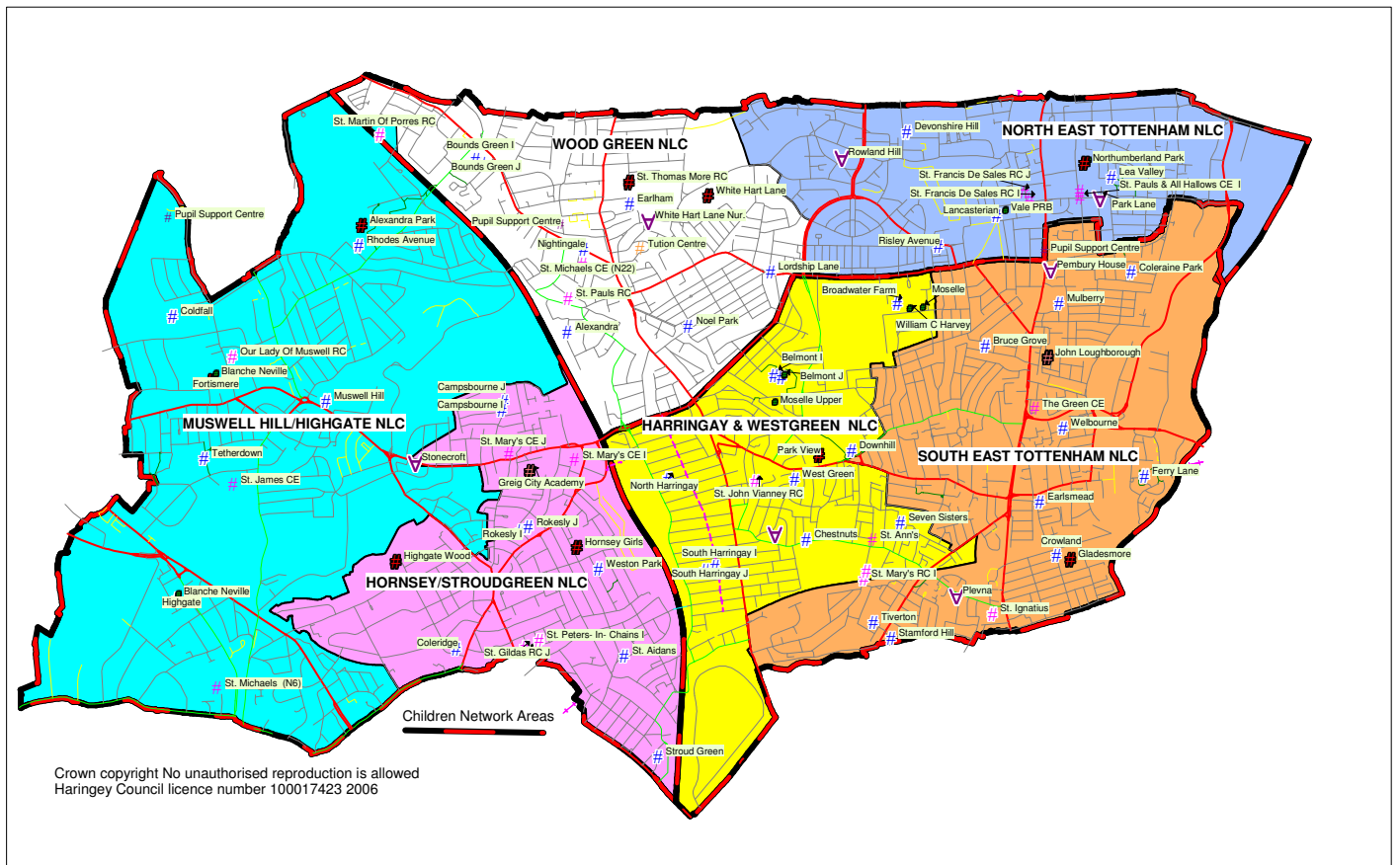
6 During 2005/6 considerable preparation work has been undertaken in the service in readiness for the introduction of the CNs from April 2006, beginning with the South during summer 2006, North during autumn 2006 and West during Spring 2007 with all operating from April 2007 onwards. This timescale is in place but may prove too ambitious and will be adjusted as required to embed change. Establishing the 3 CNs is subject to the Council's high level project management arrangements and it is through this mechanism that adjustments will be made.

7 Children's Networks will be flexible both in form and purpose depending on the improvements that they are seeking to achieve. They will reflect the multi-agency basis of work with 0-19 year olds, their families and their communities. Data about children and young people, local services, and the views of the local population, will be collected on the basis of the CNs. The analyses will be used to drive both the allocation of resources and to measure the impact in line with the targets in *Changing Lives*. In particular CNs will enable:

- a more effective basis for targeted strategic commissioning;
- the building of capacity of the universal services;
- greater ownership of the allocation of resources and services within a Network to meet children's needs;
- more co-ordinated assessment that supports children and families;
- a greater focus on prevention and early intervention;
- a stronger focus on safeguarding and a recognition that it is everyone's business;

- better information sharing both within and between agencies;
- improved partnership working between agencies with a focus on vulnerable children
- speedier problem-solving.

Map showing Children's networks and Networked Learning Community boundaries



### Which Services?

8 The Children's Networks will include all those services in a defined area, for example, children's centres, all schools, health centres, doctors' practices, children's homes, youth centres, and libraries. Each will be supported by multi-disciplinary teams which would provide joined-up services to children and families in the area. These services will be located together in due course. Key aspects of the ECM agenda will be implemented through these teams, for example,

- The Common Assessment Framework
- The Lead Professional
- Information-sharing protocols,
- Extended Schools and wraparound care;
- Family Support Strategy

- Aspects of the Workforce Strategy, and
- Children's Centres.

9 In practice the CN services will be developed from the immediate interface with children and families at the point of assessment and decision-making. Services will be co-ordinated around these needs by the lead professional and the workforce strategy will ensure that the workforce is able to meet the demands of revised working practices, roles and responsibilities. CNs will link assessment, decision-making and intervention processes.

10 In this way we intend to create the 'team around the child'. This means that we will develop integrated:

- identification of cases that require multi-disciplinary work through the use of agreed criteria and levels of vulnerability;
- assessment through the pilot of the common assessment framework;
- decision-making on individual cases through the multi-agency panel;
- decision-making on use of resources, through the use of agreed criteria and the greater use of pooled budget flexibility.

11 The Networks will comprise the majority of the children's service staff plus those in the PCT. A small number of services will be borough-wide, for example children protection, but based in one of the three localities. Staff in the CNs are likely to include:

- School Improvement Partners
- Education Welfare Officers
- Behaviour Support Teachers
- Learning Support Teachers (sensory impairment)
- Learning Mentors
- Parental involvement
- Connexions advisers
- Youth Workers
- Play Workers
- Health Visitors
- Home Intervention Team
- Social Workers
- Family Support Workers
- School Nurses
- Primary Mental Health Workers
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Sure Start Workers
- Allied Health Professionals
- GPs

Those providing more specialist services borough-wide might be:

- Educational Psychologists

- Social Workers
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Child Protection Officers
- Specialist Child Health Services (for example Paediatricians)
- Support to Children with Statements of SEN
- Pupil Support Centre (PSC)
- Drug & Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) / Substance Misuse Team
- Youth Offending Officer
- Play Therapists

### **Progress to date**

12 The interim structure of the Children's Service included three new interim posts for the three Networks each with a cross-service responsibility. These are:

Head of Children's Network South and Safeguarding;  
 Head of Children's Network North and Early Intervention & Prevention;  
 Head of Children's Network West and Workforce Reform

13 The roll-out of the CNs commenced in April 2006 with the South Network. A range of data have been established, schools and other settings have been involved in training sessions and the Children's Service staff have begun to be delivered in the three areas.

14 Work has progressed in relation to the implementation of the Common Assessment Framework. A multi-agency workshop was held in March 2006 to consider the thresholds, decision-making and management arrangements for the delivery of the CAF. Arrangements for the pilot are now in place and a steering group has been established to oversee the implementation.

15 A multi-agency steering group has been established to develop a Workforce Development Strategy as required by DfES. A strategy has been in place since April 2006 and very detailed work is now underway to ensure that this is implemented across the service. A senior officer has a dual responsibility for leading one of the children's networks and for coordinating the workforce development strategy.

16 A draft joint-commissioning framework is now being consulted on and a joint funded post with the HTPCT is being considered.

17 A Family Support strategy is in the development stage and has been the subject of consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.

18 Phase 1 of the Children's centres development has been completed with 10 designated and phase 2 is underway to establish 8 more by 2008. The development of Extended Schools is on-going together with wrap-around-care linked to the Play Service and together these services will form the main thrust of the early intervention work.

19 Work has already taken forward the integration of some of the borough-wide services, in particular child protection, children with disabilities and looked after children. This work will continue to link with the development of Children's Networks.

### **The Children's Trust Approach**

20 The CNs as part of the wider partnership for children and young people represent a Children's Trust approach. There is an expectation that most LAs will have established a Children's Trust by 2008.

21 This paper has sought to highlight progress to date on Children's Networks and where we need to focus our attention next. We are seeking to ensure progress simultaneously on a number of different but inter-linked initiatives in order to ensure that the service delivers better outcomes for children. The work is monitored through Children's Service Stream Board which is reported to the Council's executive via the Chief Executive's Management Board (CEMB) and to the wider partnership through the CYPSP.

March 2006