

To: Council
Date: 25 July 2017
Report of: Assistant Chief Executive
Title of Report: Partnership Report on the Oxfordshire Children's Trust

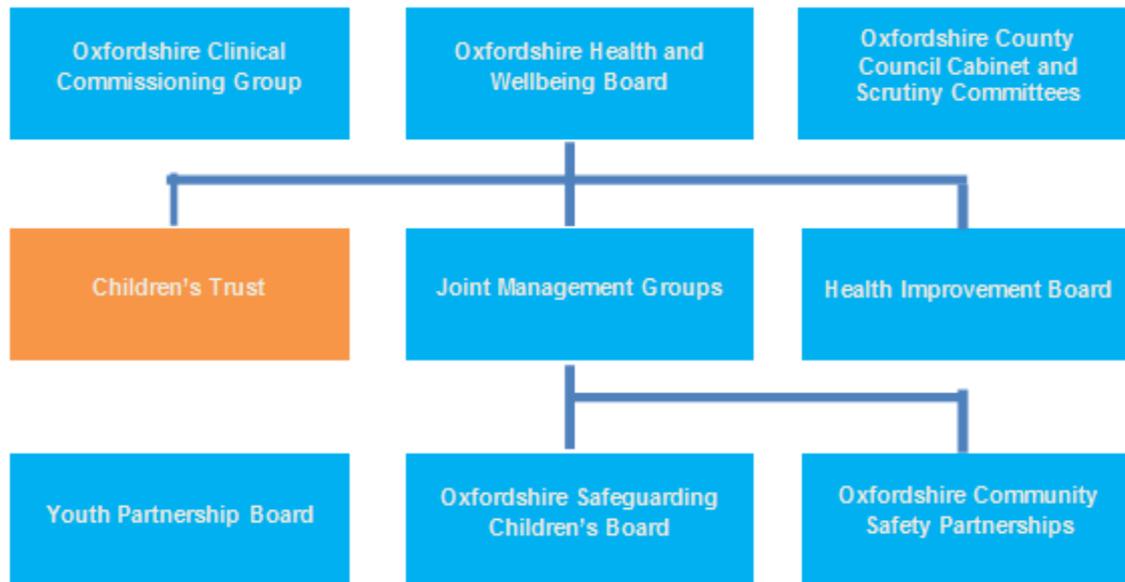
Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To provide members with an update on the work of the Oxfordshire Children's Trust including its changing role and recent developments.
Key decision:	No
Executive Board Member:	Cllr Marie Tidball, Executive Board Member for Young People, Schools and Public Health
Corporate Priority:	Corporate Plan: A vibrant and Sustainable Economy and Stronger and Active Communities
Policy Framework:	Corporate Plan
Recommendation(s): That Council resolves:	
1.	To note the report.

Introduction and background

- The Children's Trust is a group of stakeholders who have an interest in the health and wellbeing of children and young people in Oxfordshire. It includes representatives from Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City and District Councils, Thames Valley Police, the NHS, schools, the voluntary sector and parents.

There is only one Councillor representing both the Oxford City Council and the other Oxfordshire District Councils on the Trust. Following on from the children's trust board meeting on June 28th, Cllr Marie Tidball was co-opted into this role. Cllr Marie Tidball's first meeting will be on July 27th. Tim Sadler, the City Council Executive Director of Sustainable City, is on the Trust because of his role as a Chair of the Oxford Community Safety Partnership. Oxford City and the other Oxfordshire District Councils' involvement and engagement in the Trust is supported by the Oxford City Council's Policy and Partnership Team Manager.
- The Children's Trust is informed by the voice of children and young people through VOXY (Voice of Oxfordshire Youth) and their representatives attending the Children's Trust meetings. Children from Oxford are actively involved in VOXY and there are strong links with the Oxford City Council Youth Ambition Programme.

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4. The Children's Trust informs and complements the work of other partnerships in the county, in particular: the Health Improvement Board; the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board; the Oxfordshire Community Safety Partnerships and the Oxfordshire Skills Board. These Boards also have an interest in making sure Oxfordshire is the best place in England for children and young people to grow up.
5. The City Council also facilitates a Youth Partnership Board. This board is chaired by a secondary head teacher and is made up from the city, county, health, business, Mind, TVP, OCVA and young people. The City's Cultural Education Partnership reports into the Youth Partnership Board,
6. On 28 June 2016 a workshop was held, with all of the Children's Trust representatives, to review the effectiveness of the Children's Trust and to clarify the structure required to ensure appropriate and effective multi-agency working was in place. The workshop recognised that improvements should be made, in particular to have a clearer focus and increased influence over decision making processes.

Children's Trust Role and Purpose

7. As a result of the workshop the Children's Trust has reviewed and refreshed its role, purpose and governance. The new role and purpose is set out below.
 - To oversee key areas of multi-agency strategic planning for children and young people.
 - To improve the outcomes for children in relation to keeping safe, staying healthy, narrowing the gap and raising achievement in relation to agreed priority areas.
 - To drive the integration agenda where there is evidence that integrated working will improve outcomes for children and young people.
 - To champion the involvement of children and young people, parents and their carers' in Partnership working with senior managers and politicians.

8. To ensure that the Health and Wellbeing Board and other partnerships are aware of the key challenges facing children and young people in Oxfordshire the Children's Trust has set three key themes for 2017 -18. . The three themes are:

i) Early Help and Early Intervention

9. A multi-agency steering group has been set up to oversee this work and focus on parenting, school readiness, developing a centre of excellence and CAMHS accessibility. Research is also being undertaken to understand the pathway through early help and social care to manage demand on services better.

ii) Educational Attainment for vulnerable children and young people

10. A multi-agency steering group has been set up to focus on sufficient, good quality local specialist provision; developing the skills, expertise and confidence in each locality to support children with lower levels of need; central support services; and to learn from other areas.

iii) Managing transitions into adulthood

11. The existing Strategic Transitions Group will lead on this work and develop key improvements to the transition pathway for young people moving from children to adult services.
12. In addition, the Children's Trust Board is taking into account the findings of the recent 2016 Oxfordshire Health Inequalities Report, commissioned by the Health and Wellbeing Board, which emphasised the links between poverty and disadvantage leading to poorer health outcomes from birth to adulthood.

Oxford City Council support and engagement in these key themes

13. These themes have been actively endorsed and supported by Oxford City Council. It has been actively involved in the Early Help Working Group and the Education Attainment for Vulnerable Children and Young People Working Group.
14. Ian Brooke, Head of Community Services, has been working with Oxfordshire County Council's Early Intervention Team and Youth Partnership Board supporting them with the implementation of youth ambition and communication between stakeholders. The Youth Ambition Programme is monitored by the City's Youth Partnership Board.
15. Ian Brooke has also been working with the Secondary Schools in Oxford, to identify how the City Council can best support them. This will inform the Oxford City Council's new Children's and Young Persons Strategy that is due to be considered by the City Executive Board later in the year.
16. The City has also been having skills sharing meetings chaired by Cllr Bob Price, to bring infant, primary and secondary head teachers together. The last one was on 15th June, which included presentations from the river learning trust and diocese, co-operative on multi academy trust structures and governance.

17. The Council's Policy and Partnership Team have been actively engaged in the Working Group looking at educational attainment for vulnerable children and young people to ensure that this includes a focus on the needs of vulnerable children in the city.

Future challenges

18. There is an increasing demand for children's services. A peer review of children's services identified that there has been a 43% rise in the number of looked after children in Oxfordshire between 2013 and 2016. A significant number of these looked after children are 10 years or older. The Peer Review also identified that earlier intervention may have prevented the need for these children to be taken into care.

19. This has been coupled with significant budget reductions in children's services, including a £6 million reduction in Early Intervention Hubs and Children Centre provision.

20. In response to this Oxfordshire County Council have redesigned their children's services and established a single Safeguarding Team and three Community Locality Support Teams. Some Children's Centres have received one off pump prime funding to help keep them open and to provide some service provision, through the voluntary sector. Oxford City Council has been actively looking to support those Children's Centres that are based in the city.

21. Oxfordshire County Council have recently commissioned iMPower to help them better understand the flow of children through early help services and social care and to better understand if the demand on higher costs services can be prevented through working earlier with children and families.

22. Once the full results are available the Children's Trust will host another multi-agency workshop to consider the outcomes and recommendations

23. There is a need to continue to monitor child sexual exploitation and child drug exploitation as this has been highlighted as an issue currently for Oxfordshire.

Conclusions

24. Children's Services are in a state of change and the new structure and way of delivering services have not yet been embedded. Oxford City Council is actively engaging with the Children's Trust and within key working groups to ensure that the needs of the city are considered at a strategic level and to monitor the impact of outcomes for children in the city.

Oxford City Council is working with agencies at a local level, through the new Locality Teams to ensure that there is effective joint working with the Youth Ambition Programme, with the Children's Centres to support early intervention services and directly with schools to see what help and support we can provide to them.

Financial implications

25. There are no financial implications for Oxford City Council arising from this report

Legal issues

26. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

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Background Papers: None

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