



Committee and Date

Shadow Health and Well-being Board

27 July 2011

Item

7

Public

## SHROPSHIRE CHILDREN'S TRUST

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### 1. Summary

- 1.1 Shropshire Children's Trust Partnership arrangements have recently been streamlined to reflect the need to work smarter and more efficiently. The Children's Trust Board has been replaced by a range of practitioner forums that build on local networks and provide opportunities for the children's workforce in Shropshire to share good practice. An Executive Group of the Children's Trust, comprising the main public sector organisations, now meets approximately six weekly and will feed directly into the Health and Well-being Board via the Health and Well-being Board Joint Commissioning Executive. This arrangement will ensure that the Health and Well-being Board has an appropriate focus on services for children and young people. There will be an annual cycle of area based meetings attended by Members of the executive which will be used to hear from local practitioners and also refresh the Children's Plan

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Health and Well-being Board is asked to note the changes to the structural and governance arrangements for Shropshire Children's Trust and endorse the proposed alignment with Shropshire Health and Well-being Board.

## REPORT

### 3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 Following the change of Government in May 2010, the statutory requirement on local councils to support and maintain a Children's Trust partnership in their local area was removed. Whilst a reduction in the bureaucratic burden on

local authorities and their partners is welcomed, there is a risk that without appropriate alternative arrangements, improvements made in recent years in the co-ordination and integration of services could be lost.

- 3.2 The changes introduced to Children's Trust arrangements in Shropshire were considered as part of the Ofsted inspection of Shropshire Children's Services in February 2011. The report states:

"Significant work to modernise and refocus strategic partnerships so that they are well placed to tackle emerging demands and opportunities has been successful. The reconfigured Children's Trust has been central to driving the revised children's service priorities and the appointment of the Director of Public Health is supporting the development of a range of services."

- 3.3 It is now imperative to complete the refocus of the Children's Trust that the Children's Trust Executive takes its place alongside the Commissioning Executive of the Health and Well-being Board to ensure the commissioning decisions of the Board make appropriate provision to meet the needs of children and young people within the community.

#### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications relating to the partnership arrangements of the Children's Trust.

#### **5. Background**

- 5.1 The streamlined arrangements now in place to maintain effective partnership working in a context of diminished resources rely heavily on robust commitment at the most senior levels of key public sector organisations, as recognised by Ofsted in February 2011.

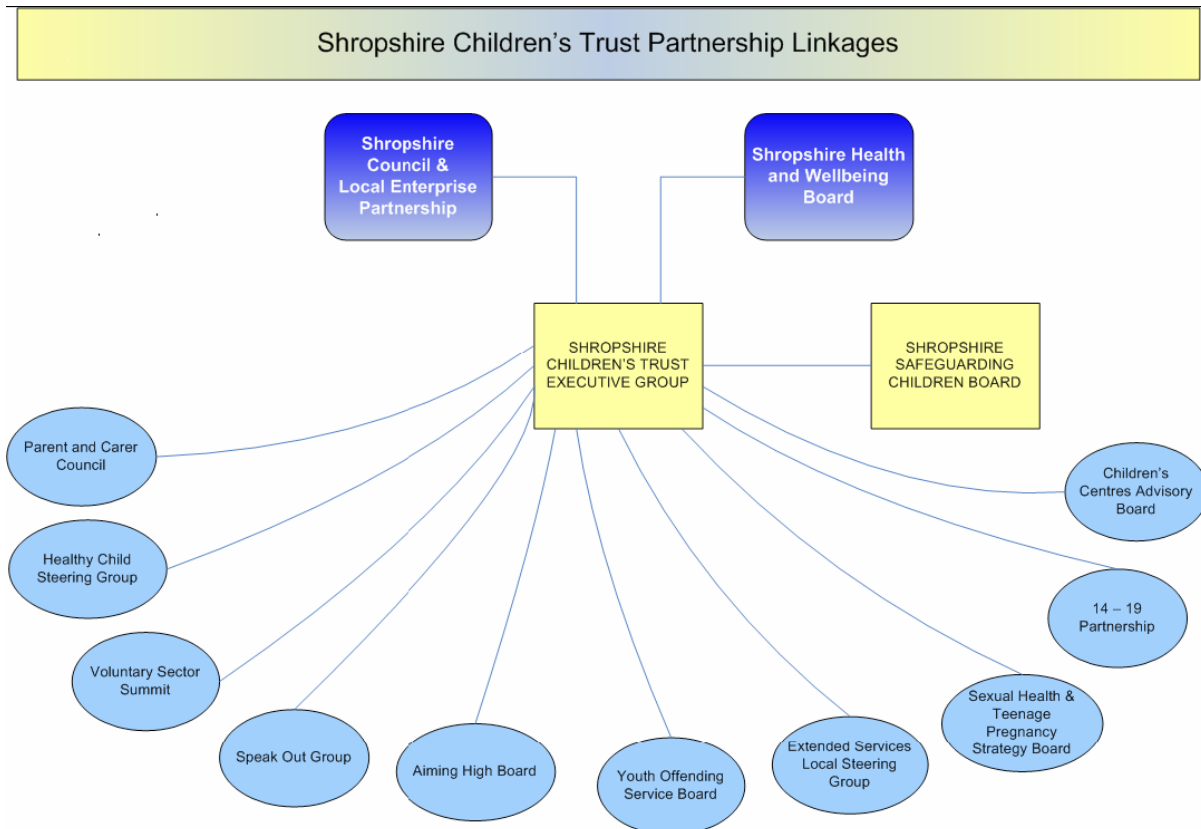
- 5.2 The other critical component is that partner agencies have opportunities for both strategic linkages and forums for sharing good practice. The diagram at the end of this section of the report demonstrates how the strategic links are made through a range of partnership groups.

- 5.3 Shropshire Children's Trust's overall strategy is to maintain high quality provision despite diminished resources. It aims to do this by:

- Targeting effort at the most vulnerable but and those at high risk of needing care or protection
- Moving towards more localised services with more being delivered by partners outside the public sector
- Achieving closer working with partners and also with neighbouring local authority areas

- 5.4 As part of its reconfiguration, Shropshire Children's Trust has reduced the number of priority outcomes it is trying to achieve and now has a clear focus on the following:

- To improve health outcomes, especially for the most vulnerable children and young people
- To help reduce the number of and support for Looked After Children
- To help support child protection service delivery
- To help protect and maintain achievement levels
- To continue to equip young people for a prosperous future
- To expand the range of opportunities to help increase the number of young people volunteering



## 6. Conclusions

- 6.1 The recent changes to the structure of Shropshire Children's Trust have been designed to ensure it remains fit for purpose and relevant in a very different operating environment from that which previously existed. The challenge for the Health and Well-being Board, as the over-arching partnership arrangement in Shropshire, is to set clear priorities for action, informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment when it is completed, that meet the needs of the whole Shropshire community.

**List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)**

Shropshire Children and Young People's Strategy 2011

Ofsted Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children's Services, 7 -18 February 2011

**Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)**

Councillor Aggie Caesar-Homden

**Local Member**

County-wide

**Appendices**

Appendix A - Membership of the Children's Trust