



SOUTH BELFAST
PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Consultation Response Documentation on Delivering Social Change for Children and Young People Draft Strategy

About South Belfast Partnership Board

The South Belfast Partnership Board is a Board which brings together all sectors – community, statutory, political and private – to strengthen and better target the efforts being made by the community, the private sector and the Government to tackle in partnership the economic, social and environmental problems which affect people in the most disadvantaged areas of South Belfast.

South Belfast Partnership Board is currently chairing and facilitating the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) South Belfast Locality Planning Group and establishment of Family Support Hubs across South Belfast. The structures and planning processes carried out throughout the CYPSP and particularly South Belfast Locality Planning Group demonstrate the importance of multiagency working to improve outcomes for children and young people through the delivery of the Our Children, Our Pledge Strategy and United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Consultation Response to DSC Children and Young People's Strategy

South Belfast Partnership Board (referred to as SBPB from hereafter) have identified and provided a consultation comment to sections of the DSC Children and Young People's Strategy Draft document that are relevant to the objectives of our organisation, the influential role and involvement SBPB have on working partnerships/groups and primarily how this documentation reflects the needs and direction of children's' services planning across South Belfast.

2.2 Adopting a life cycle approach to tackling poverty and social exclusion for children and young people

The document refers to early intervention and early year's provision being crucial for children and young people throughout the document however fails to demonstrate what this early year's provision will look in practice. There is a large volume of working already taking place across Northern Ireland and specifically in South Belfast to address early years. This work should be recognised and supported by Governmental Bodies.

SBPB has been working with several early years' service providers and parents of children and young people in South Belfast to develop a Good Start Compass that will enable family support workers to assess parental needs across the duration of their child's time receiving an early years service. The piece of work is going to be piloted by three organisations in first instance and the outcomes will be evaluated. It is anticipated that this model will work alongside the early year's service being provided to the child to sign post and support the needs of the parent and child so that parents are prepared and avail of services that will support them in parenthood from an early stage.

2.5 Early years and early interventions

SBPB is working with community organisations across South Belfast to trial the implementation of a Good Start Compass that has been designed with the empowerment and influential role of parents with children in their early years aged 0-4years. The tool will address early years and early intervention by working with parents to ensure that their needs are being met as a parent alongside the childcare services.

2.5 Integrated Delivery & Joined up planning and commissioning

We at the SBPB believe that Integrated Care Partnerships (ICP's) are positively contributing to the delivery of care closer to home rather than in hospitals through the Transforming Your Care agenda and multi-agency partnerships developed between General Practitioners, Pharmacists, hospital specialists, community health and representatives from community and voluntary sectors.

SBPB represents the community sector on the integrated care partnership for South Belfast. Joint proposals are being developed to improve care pathways such as a diabetes care pathway particularly for black and minority ethnic communities is underway within the South Belfast ICP. At this point it is critical to ensure the partnerships such as the Integrated Care Partnership are adequately funded / resourced and current workloads are acknowledged to ensure active and meaningful involvement throughout the design and implementation of such work to enable acceptance and reduce duplication and resistance. The works of ICP's influence the commissioning of the Local Commissioning Groups in Northern Ireland. These groups should be recognised and supported by Government Departments. The community sector such as SBPB have a crucial role to engage with the community, particularly those experiencing high levels of poverty to ensure their voice is heard and needs are reflected in strategies such as the DSC Children and Young People document and that their needs are met through potential work streams flowing from these documents. The community sector can also work with health professionals to design and share with the community health information in a way that is useful and makes sense to them.

We would like to see commitment from all commissioning bodies to place a higher value on community development approach to address and support health and wellbeing via prevention and early intervention by enabling mainstreaming of community sector provision to improve sustainability

Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Locality Planning Groups and Family Hubs in local areas and bring together networks of organisations from within all sectors to enable connectivity for children, young people, parents and families to the right services at the right time based on their level of need. At this locality level community sector work has a high value placed upon it to ensure that individuals or families avail of programmes, projects and services that meet their needs.

This response directly reflects the work that is currently taking place across South Belfast. There are a significant number of examples across Northern Ireland that will

demonstrate that the agenda of the Delivering Social Change Children and Young People Strategy are already being delivered through early intervention and prevention, integrated planning and commissioning and delivery of interventions to improve outcomes for children and young people.

This document should recognise the work that has already taken place and the outcomes that have been achieved to date and how this can be taken forward.

2.6 Delivering Social Change is a new level of joined up working across Government Departments to achieve real, long lasting social benefits for those who need it most

The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership has begun the initial stages of bringing together Government Departments with the community, voluntary and statutory sectors to improve outcomes for children and young people. For example the CYPSP planning groups have representation from the DSD, DHSSPS and DOJ. South Belfast Partnership Board recognises that further alignment across all Government Departments and in partnership with organisations from all sectors (statutory, community and voluntary) is crucial. The work currently taking place within the community sector addresses the needs of local people, this should be acknowledged through Government Departments and mainstream support is required for those programmes that are making a difference but are being run through short term funding.

For example South Belfast Partnership Board is currently managing a Public Health Agency contract to deliver an Obesity Prevention Programme in South Belfast which is underpinned by the Obesity Prevention Framework.

South Belfast has several emerging health and wellbeing issues include alcohol and drug use and misuse, mental health issues particularly of older people, obesity and diabetes in black and minority ethnic communities. In order to tackle these issues we in South Belfast Partnership Board believe individual choice and understanding of options will empower local people in communities to choose well and live better.

Joined up working between Government Departments, cross sectorial agencies and local communities/ service users is particularly important. In order for the DSC Children and Young People's Strategy to ensure that it delivers the 'real long lasting social benefits for those who need it most' it is important that there is engagement with stakeholders and communities alongside joined up Government Departmental working. This has not been referenced in this document.

2.8 The document states that it brings together 4 documents; Child Poverty Strategy, Annual Report to the Assembly on Child Poverty, Our Children, Our Pledge Ten Year Strategy and obligations under the UNCRC.

South Belfast Partnership Board would like to raise awareness of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child with Disabilities. If this document is underpinned by the requirements of section 75 of the NI Act 1998 and other equality and human rights obligations then the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child with Disabilities is an important document that should be considered as

statutory bodies have requirement to report on the UNCRC and UNCRC with Disabilities.

2.9 The consultation document has considered the work commissioned from the NCB and the C4EO, all Departments and Children and Young Persons Programme UNESCO Centre.

South Belfast Partnership Board currently chairs the South Belfast Locality Planning Group for Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership of which is delivering upon a number of strategic drivers which have not been referenced to at this point in the DSC Children and Young People Strategy;

- Our Children, The Ten Year Strategy Our Pledge Children's Strategy (2006-2016) and the six high level outcomes agreed within this document
- The multi-agency partnership approach that has been embraced by over 100 organisations in Northern Ireland through the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership
- Northern Ireland Children and Young People's Plan (2011-2014)
- CYPSP Outcomes Monitoring Reports and Interactive Mapping System for Northern Ireland, Local Government Districts and Ward level based on how well children and young people are doing alongside the local knowledge of community organisations to determine planning priorities and allocate funding.

Should this document consider the Early Intervention Transformation Programme that is currently being worked up for Northern Ireland? There needs to be better connectivity between Delivering Social Change, Early Intervention Transformation Programme and existing partnerships in Northern Ireland such as the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership to align work and funding priorities to tackle specific needs and improve disadvantage in communities and reduce duplication.

2.14 Six outcomes have been considered that will have the greatest impact on our children's lives.

Organisations including South Belfast Partnership Board and their chairing role within the South Belfast Locality Planning Group for CYPSP have been delivering upon the original six high level outcomes outlined by OFMDFM in the Children's Strategy; Our Children, Our Pledge (2006-2016) which is still in date for another two years. The South Belfast Locality Planning Group Action Plan has been designed to address priority needs under each of these six high level outcomes.

Although the outcomes outlined in the Delivering Social Change Children and Young People Strategy are updated and evidence based we ask what will happen to the wide spread implementation of those in the OFMDFM Children's Strategy; Our Children, Our Pledge (2006-2016) as we should not be duplicating our outcomes. All organisations working to improve outcomes for children and young people should be working of the same agenda.

Outcome 2: Children in poverty achieve good educational outcomes solely focuses on children in poverty. Does this not contradict the vision of the strategy which suggests 'that all children have access to good quality education', should this

outcome not state children and young people achieving good educational outcomes with specific attention being given to children in poverty.

On page 18 of the DSC Children and Young People Strategy under Section 3.17 states that '**a seventh signature programme to enhance play and leisure opportunities for children and young people**'. Would the Our Children, Our Pledge high level outcome Enjoying, Learning and Achieving be more inclusive of education and play?

SBPB and leading organisations in South Belfast have been working on addressing the low educational attainment of hard to reach children and young people who are NEET's through developing young's people skills and expertise in social media as a building block contributing to the economy of South Belfast and Northern Ireland.

3.13/3.14 Child Poverty Outcomes Framework

South Belfast Partnership Board attended a joint workshop between the Children and Young Strategic Partnership and National Children's Bureau in September 2013. The workshop demonstrated the Outcomes Performance Accountability Techniques developed by Mark Friedman. The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership have been publishing Outcomes Monitoring Reports based on quantitative knowledge since 2006.

The Outcomes Framework is an excellent way forward for identifying and monitoring outcomes over time. A lot of this information already exists and is already being used by planning groups in Northern Ireland to inform planning and commissioning priorities. South Belfast Partnership Board believes that the Outcomes Scorecards demonstrate clearly how turning the curve can be achieved but as a scorecard should also demonstrate the activity delivered to achieve the outcome. The proposed scorecard is operating as an action plan but should incorporate figure 2.1 of the Child Poverty Outcomes Framework; Performance Measurement Categories.

3.20 Childcare

South Belfast Partnership Board has already begun working with community organisations in South Belfast including South Belfast Sure Start, SOLAS and Windsor Women to deliver the vision for childcare in the Bright Start Child Care Strategy. A conference is being facilitated by South Belfast Partnership Board on 26 March to demonstrate how the Good Start Compass, a mechanism that demonstrates collaborative interagency working across the city to support parents of children attending three childcare practices in South Belfast and how this tool could be developed further

3.27 Conclusion

The Outcomes Framework will need to be underpinned by the adoption of a whole child approach

Consideration should be given to the whole family approach alongside the whole child approach which has been adopted within many Northern Ireland documents including;

- Sure Start Northern Ireland
- SCIE - Think child, think parent, think family: A guide to parental mental health and child welfare
- Families Matter Strategy, 2009
- PHA and HSCB: Alcohol and Drug Commissioning Framework for Northern Ireland 2013-16

Children and young people are central to Children's Services Planning in Northern Ireland within the role of the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership therefore consultation with this group of people is vital to ensure their voice heard and the objectives and actions taken forward from this DSC Children and Young People Strategy meet their needs.

Throughout this briefing South Belfast Partnership Board has sought to emphasize the collaborative partnership work that has been established through Northern Ireland to date by statutory, community and voluntary sector organisations with children, young people and parents to improve outcomes for children and young people. This should be reflected in this strategy via a bottom up AND top down approach to improving outcomes for the whole family.