

Shropshire Ambitions Board for Children and Families

Terms of Reference

Context

At the last Improvement Board (November 2024), Board members discussed the progresses made over the last year and positive achievements in relation to the improvement plan. The plan was developed in response to the concerns raised in the Ofsted letter following a focussed visit in November 2023.

The discussion considered whether the focus of the Board should shift from overseeing the plan that was developed in response to the Focussed visit to consider how Shropshire can deliver the absolute best for children, young people and their families, working towards achieving consistently good and outstanding outcomes.

- The Board should be strategic, ambitious, support innovation and work at pace to deliver the best outcomes possible for children and young people and their families.
- The Board recognises that all partners and stakeholders in Shropshire will own these Ambitions.

Role and purpose

The role and the purpose of the Ambitions Board is to support and challenge all agencies to deliver the absolute best for all children, young people and their families in Shropshire, especially those who are disadvantaged and /or vulnerable.

The test of success in improving services is improvement in outcomes secured for and achieved by children and young people. The Board will seek to ensure that the voices and experiences of Shropshire's children and families are central to all its work.

The Board will review and monitor the Ambitions Plan which was signed off by the Board on XX. The plan sets out the actions which the Council and partners are committed to take, the timescale for completion and lead officer responsibilities, and the qualitative and quantitative measures which will be used to evaluate success and impact.

The Ambitions Plan will be subject to ongoing review, to take account of the outcomes of any peer review work, recommendations from Ofsted focused / JTAI visits, and any other emerging issues.

Progress against the Ambitions Plan will be regularly and rigorously reviewed by the Board through a high -level set of key performance and quality assurance indicators

The scrutiny and challenge of improvements will be primarily the responsibility of the People Overview Scrutiny Committee and the Shropshire Safeguarding Children Board for the multi-agency working aspects.

Membership

The Board will be chaired by XX

Board members will be:

- Cabinet Member, Children's Services, SC
- Leader or Representative of XX Group, SC

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- Chair of People Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Director of Children's Services, SC
- Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Care, SC
- Assistant Director for Education, SC
- Principal Social Worker, SC
- Two Ambassadors for Vulnerable Children and Young People
- Scrutineer for children Safeguarding Partnership
- Head of Public Protection Bureau, West Mercia Constabulary
- Executive lead for safeguarding, Integrated Care Board
- Chief Officer Shropshire VCS Alliance
- Head Teacher rep for Primary Schools
- Head Teacher rep for Secondary Schools
- Head Teacher rep for Special Educational Needs Schools
- Representative from Early Years providers
- Any legal representation?
- Any external memberships e.g. LGA or peer support or will this be by invitation /exception
- Programme manager? see point below under other matters

Substitutes: Each member of the Board should nominate a named substitute who may attend in their absence.

The Board will also be attended by:

- Performance & Improvement Manager, SC

Ways of working:

The Ambitions Board will use the ways of working outlined below in guiding its work:

- Clarity of view – ensuring that progress or lack of progress can be clearly understood, and that children, young people and their families remain the central focus of the Board's work – there will be consistent strategic reporting of performance data and quality assurance findings.
- Challenge – effective challenge leading to effective action and impact.
- Rigour – to show persistence in not letting go of an issue until it is resolved.
- Collaboration – demonstrating shared responsibility for delivering the Ambitions.
- Active engagement – commitment from all Board Members to play an active role by attending meetings and contributing to the discussions as well as submitting highlight reports (see template in Appendix 1) on key activities to the Board.

Agenda

The meetings will be split into:

- Business agenda (1.5 hours)
 - Ambitions Plan dashboard
 - Director report
 - Partners' or Board Members? highlight report
 - Exception reporting for QA and Performance (full reports still to be circulated to Board members for information)
- Deep dive / Focused discussions (1 hour) – the themes will be agreed ahead of each board meeting.

- Summary of agreed actions and next steps

Other Matters

The Board will initially, from Feb/ March (?) 2025, meet every two months; this will be reviewed after 12 months.

The Programme Manager will have responsibility for agreeing the agenda with the Chair of the Board and arranging for appropriate reports to be provided to the Board for approval or further action.

Changes to membership can be agreed by the Board. The Board may invite anyone who it believes will be useful in achieving its aims and purpose to attend meetings or join the Board as a full member.

Appendix 1 – Partnership Updates Highlight Report

Partnership Updates Highlight Report to Shropshire Ambitions Board

Report of	Name / Role
Agency or partner organisation	
Date of Meeting	

Update on developments that have taken place within your organisation linked to the Ambitions Plan since you last reported to the Ambitions Board and what has been the impact upon children and families

Identified risks (including performance you are worried about), or opportunities (including good practice) identified for discussion