

Public Report

Birmingham City Council

Report to Cabinet Committee – Group Company Governance

16 November 2023



Subject: Birmingham Children’s Trust CIC – Pen Portrait
Report of: Sue Harrison, Director of Children’s Services
Relevant Cabinet Members: Councillor Sharon Thompson, Deputy Leader
Councillor Karen McCarthy, Children, Young People and Families
Relevant O&S Chair: Councillor Kerry Jenkins, Education, Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Report author: Debdatta Dobe, Head of Commissioning, Vulnerable Children.

Are specific wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No – All wards affected
If yes, name(s) of ward(s):		
Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, add Forward Plan Reference:		
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, provide exempt information paragraph number or reason if confidential:	N/A	

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report sets out summary information in respect of Birmingham Children's Trust CIC as background information to the company's business plan in the private section of the agenda.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Members are recommended to:

- 2.1.1. note the information in this report.
- 2.1.2. note the information contained within the Pen Portrait at Appendix 1
- 2.1.3. review and endorse the Business Plan for the Birmingham Children's Trust CIC as attached at Appendix 2

3. Background

- 3.1. Birmingham Children's Trust CIC was created as a company limited by guarantee without share capital with the Council as sole member. The company was created in May 2017 and launched formally in April 2018. It became a Community Interest Company in October 2018.
- 3.2. The company has been created as an asset locked company so that on any future dissolution, the assets of the company will not come back to the Council but will go to a similar type of entity.
- 3.3. The company was created to provide all elements of children's safeguarding and social care services, including the Youth Offending Service and other preventative services to children, young people and their families.
- 3.4. Relationship between BCT and BCC

There are essentially three strands to the relationship between the Council and the Trust: these are set out below:

The Council owns the company (the Trust)

The Trust reports to the BCC Cabinet Committee, Group Company Governance, which discharges the function as owner of the Trust as wholly owned CIC by approving the Trust's annual business plan.

The Council commissions the Trust

The Trust and Council meet monthly at the Operational Commissioning Group, where Trust service and financial performance is scrutinised (focus on the key performance indicators in the contract) and where services the Trust 'buys back' from BCC are monitored, and areas where we share co-dependency are examined and monitored (for example: the Trust relies on BCC to provide appropriate school places for children with whom the Trust is working).

The Trust and the Council are strategic partners

The Trust and the Council share a responsibility to work together, and with other key partners – in Police, NHS, schools, third sector etc. – to support vulnerable families, to safeguard children and to promote life chances and better outcomes for children in our care and care leavers.

The Council continues to be responsible as Corporate Parent to our children in care and care leavers.

These shared responsibilities are transacted through a range of partnership systems, including:

- * The Children's Partnership
- * The Safeguarding Children Partnership
- * The YOS Partnership Board
- * The Community Safety Partnership
- * The Early Help Partnership Board
- * The SEND Improvement Board
- * The Partnership Operations Group

The relationship between Council and Trust is pivotal in driving improvements in services and outcomes, both in terms of the key issues that sit between us (SEND, school places, alternative provision, Elective Home Education etc), and in working together to drive change and improvement across the wider partnership working with children and families.

The Trust and the Council officers work together:

- * The Chief Executive and DCS are both members of the council's corporate leadership team.
- * BCT's Director of Practice is a member of the council's Children and Families leadership team.
BCC's Director of Thriving Families is a member of BCT's leadership team.
- * The Council's Children and Families directorate is on an improvement journey and is in the process of establishing a practice model which synergises with BCT's model. There will be opportunities for shared staff development to establish a strength-based, team around the child approach.
- * Now the council has established a permanent Children and Families leadership team, regular joint leadership meetings will be held to ensure emerging strategy is co-produced and performance across all children's services is overseen and discussed.

4. Options considered and Recommended Proposal

- 4.1. This report provides information to Members on Birmingham Children's Trust CIC.
- 4.2. The recommendations are set out at 2.1.1-2.1.3.

5. Consultation

- 5.1. The Chair of the Committee has been consulted on this paper.

6. Risk Management

6.1. This report provides information for Members and there are no risk management issues arising.

7. Compliance Issues:

7.1. How are the recommended decisions consistent with the City Council's priorities, plans and strategies?

7.1.1. The Council has created companies to support the delivery of services.

7.2. Legal Implications

7.2.1. There are no legal implications associated with this report.

7.3. Financial Implications

7.3.1. There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

7.4. Procurement Implications

7.4.1. There are no procurement implications directly arising from this report.

7.5. Human Resources Implications

7.5.1. There are no Human Resource implications directly arising from this report.

7.6. Public Sector Equality Duty

7.6.1. There are no specific Equality Duty or Equality Analysis issues relating to the proposals set out in this report.

8. Background Documents

Appendix 1 – Pen portrait Birmingham Children's Trust CIC

Appendix 2 - Business Plan