



An Roinn Leanaí
agus Gnóthaí Óige

Department of
Children and Youth Affairs

Blueprint for the development of Children and Young People's Services Committees

March 2015

DRAFT for feedback



Blueprint for the development of Children and Young People’s Services Committees

Contents

1. Introduction	4
1.1. Background	4
1.2. Policy Context	5
1.3. Evidence Base for Interagency Working	7
1.4. Principles Underpinning CYPSC.....	8
2. Purpose, Objective and Remit of CYPSC	8
2.1. Purpose	8
2.2. Objectives of CYPSC	9
2.3. Mandate.....	9
2.4. Remit.....	10
2.5. Geographical Area.....	10
2.6. What a CYPSC Does.....	10
3. CYPSC Governance and Structures at National and Local Level	11
3.1. National Governance	11
3.1.1. CYPSC National Steering Group	12
3.1.2. CYPSC National Co-ordinator	13
3.1.3. Participation of Children and Young People	14
3.2. Local Governance.....	14
3.2.1. Chairperson.....	14
3.2.2. CYPSC Vice-Chairperson.....	14
3.2.3. CYPSC Co-ordinator.....	15
3.2.4. CYPSC Membership.....	15
3.2.5. Terms of Reference.....	16
3.2.6. CYPSC Sub-Groups.....	17
3.2.7. Local Community Development Committees	17
3.2.8. Other Interagency Structures for Children and Young People	17

4.	Planning and Resourcing.....	18
4.1.	Children and Young People’s Plans (CYPP)	18
4.2.	CYPSC Annual Programme of Work	18
4.3.	CYPSC Progress Reports	18
4.4.	CYPSC National Progress Report	19
4.5.	Reporting to the Consortium	19
4.6.	Managing and Leveraging Budgets	19
4.7.	Resourcing of CYPSC	19
5.	Communications and Capacity Building.....	20
5.1.	Publications.....	20
5.2.	Communications Plan	21
5.3.	Website	21
5.4.	Capacity building and development support for CYPSC	21
5.5.	Data, evaluation and dissemination of best practice	21
6.	Key Actions 2015 - 2017 for the Development of CYPSC.....	22
	Appendix 1	25
	Children and Young People’s Policy Consortium	25
	Appendix 2	26
	Template Terms of Reference for a Children and Young People’s Services Committee	26

1. Introduction

Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSC) are a key structure identified by Government to plan and co-ordinate services for children and young people in every county in Ireland. The overall purpose is to improve outcomes for children and young people through local and national interagency working.

At local level the CYPSC are county-level committees that bring together the main statutory, community and voluntary providers of services to children and young people. They provide a forum for joint planning and coordination of activity and for oversight of policy and provision, to ensure that children, young people and their families receive optimum services. Their role is to enhance interagency cooperation and to realise the national outcomes set out in *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: the national policy framework for children and young people 2014 - 2020*.

CYPSC have, to date, engaged in many successful interagency innovations and interventions at both strategic and operational levels that respond to the identified needs within their areas and have developed effective synergies between member organisations for effective interagency working. Examples include:

- the implementation of family literacy projects in early childhood care and education settings,
- providing the local interagency foundation for community based youth mental health supports,
- the successful establishment of Critical Incident Protocols to enable co-ordinated responses to serious incidents affecting children and young people, and
- the delivery of evidence-based parenting programmes.

Acknowledging the development and work of local CYPSC since 2007 and in supporting the ongoing strategic and operational development of CYPSC, a Task Group was established by DCYA in September 2014 with a view to prioritising key issues to be addressed in the strategic and operational development of CYPSC.

1.1. Background

This Report provides a blueprint for the development of CYPSC operationally and strategically within the broader context of *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014 – 2020*. It forms the basis for a work programme for CYPSC based on policy and strategic direction from DCYA, the CYPSC National Steering Group and the Children and Young People's Policy Consortium, with input from relevant sectors. It is also reflective of emerging trends and issues.

The Report was developed with a Task Group established by DCYA in September 2014 with a view to prioritising key issues to be addressed in the (strategic and operational) development of CYPSC. DCYA circulated a discussion document on Children's Services Committees (CSCs) which formed the basis for the work of the Task Group. The Terms of Reference for the Task Group were to identify key issues and prioritise same with specific regard to the development of CYPSC in the following areas:

- Central purpose, mandate and remit of CYPSC;
- Governance of CYPSC at national and local level;

- Composition and role of local committees and of the CYPSC National Steering Group;
- Role of CYPSC Co-ordinators;
- Organisation of the CYPSC initiative and development of an annual programme of work;
- Resource Allocation Framework for the CYPSC initiative;
- Reporting;
- Communications;
- Capacity building and support for CYPSC;
- Data, evaluation and dissemination of best practice.

This Blueprint for the development of CYPSC was based on a discussion document drafted by DCYA which charted areas for development of CYPSC. In addition this work was also informed by recent organisational and policy developments, such as the establishment of Tusla – the Child and Family Agency; significant developments in local government reform; and the implementation of *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014 – 2020*. An immediate consequence of unifying children’s and young people’s policy domains through *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* and aligning children’s services within this frame is the extension of the remit of committees beyond 18 up to 24 years of age to ensure that CYPSC cover the respective policy domains and broad range of constituencies which work with children and young people, from the statutory to the voluntary sectors.

This report aims to chart succinctly a blueprint for the development of CYPSC going forward over the next three years having regard to the aforementioned organisational and policy developments, to ensure co-ordinated, comprehensive, evidence informed and outcomes-focused policy, planning and provision of services for children and young people. This blueprint outlines a number of key actions which are listed and time-lined in the concluding section of the document. While this document sets out some key tasks to be progressed in the coming years, this does not preclude local CYPSC from addressing identified emerging priorities. This blueprint for the development of CYPSC will be revisited in 2017 to align with the mid-term review of *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People, 2014 – 2020*.

1.2. Policy Context

Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures is the first overarching national policy framework for children and young people, developed and led by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs on behalf of the Government. The purpose of the framework is to co-ordinate policy and implementation across government departments, agencies and constituent sectors to achieve better outcomes for children and young people. CYPSC form an integral part of the new structures provided for in *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* and will be accountable to the CYPSC National Steering Group and the DCYA, and in turn to the Children and Young People’s Policy Consortium.

Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures sets out five National Outcomes and six Transformational Goals for children and young people. These are the overarching and unifying outcomes and goals structuring policy for children and young people across government, agencies and sectors which have a role and remit for working with children and young people. The outcomes span the key policy domains which impact on the lives of children and young people, while the transformational goals are identified as the enablers which are required to realise these outcomes. The work of Children and Young People’s Services Committees will be framed according to these outcomes and transformational goals. Figure 1 depicts the five national outcomes for children and young people in relation to the six transformational goals.

In line with the age range of *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*, the age range of **Children’s Services Committees (CSC)** has now been extended beyond 18 years, up to 24 years of age, and as a consequence the name of CSC has changed to **Children and Young People’s Services Committees (CYPSC)**. While this may pose initial challenges in terms of an extended remit, such a focus will ensure greater co-ordination and coherence between policy and provision for children and young people and bolster supports and opportunities in their development and key transitions into adult life. This extended remit will strengthen and lengthen the continuum of service provision for children and young people, thereby promoting more structured services and supports which align with their developmental needs and aspirations

Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures is predicated on cross-departmental and inter-agency collaboration, both nationally and locally. It underscores the necessity of inter-agency working and tasks CYPSC with a key role in this regard. Through respective local CYPSC, and a CYPSC National Steering Group, the CYPSC initiative is regarded as a crucial infrastructure through which to enhance working across agencies and sectors and a key structure in the implementation of *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*.

In this context the Department of Children and Youth Affairs will continue to develop the role of CYPSC and to expand the establishment of local CYPSC from the current 22 committees to full national coverage for every county (and in some instances city areas) in Ireland. The range of commitments outlined in *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* relating to CYPSC will underpin and structure the direction of the CYPSC work programme going forward along with identified priorities and other emerging tasks.

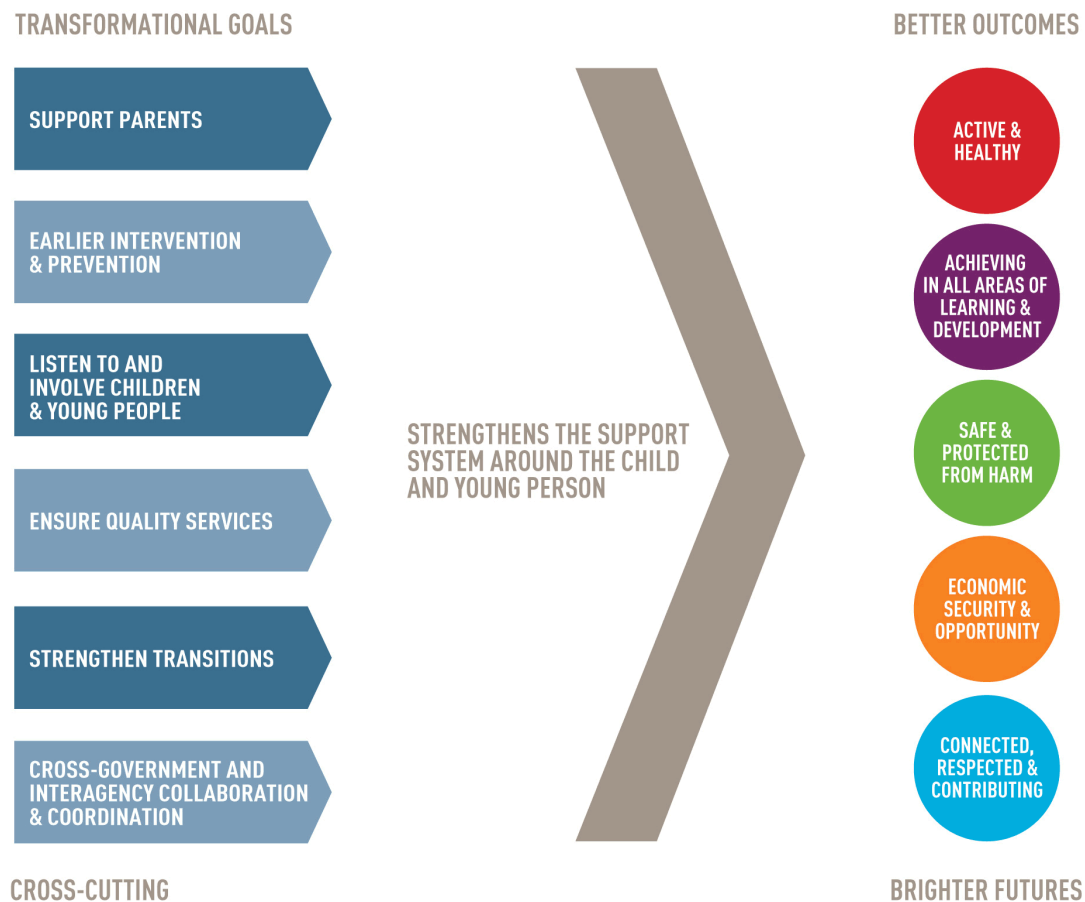


Figure 1: Five national outcomes for children and young people in relation to the six transformational goals.

1.3. Evidence Base for Interagency Working

Effective interagency working is essential at all levels of service provision, from universal to more targeted service provision. The importance of interagency working and information sharing to ensure the welfare and wellbeing of children and young people has been highlighted nationally and internationally in recent years. International literature indicates that where evidence of the impact of interagency working does exist, it is mostly positive although it takes time to become embedded in practice.

Four levels of Interagency working have been identified (Frost, 2005) these are:

1. Co-operation: Services work together toward consistent goals and complementary services while maintaining their independence
2. Collaboration: Services plan together and address issues of overlap, duplication and gaps in service provision towards common outcomes
3. Co-ordination: Services work together in a planned and systematic manner towards shared and agreed goals
4. Integration: Different services become one organisation in order to enhance service delivery.

When implemented well, interagency working can achieve changes in the way agencies work at four different levels:

Level 1: Changes to inputs/processes such as the introduction of new tools and management structures

Level 2: Changes to routines, experiences and practices of practitioners and service managers

Level 3: Changes to outcomes for children, young people and families

Level 4: Institutional/systematic embedding of the changes across organisations (Statham, 2011).

A review of international evidence on inter-agency working, to inform the development of Children's Services Committees (Statham, 2011) states that

Effective interagency working... acts to create the 'permitting circumstances' for better functioning of front-line services and front-line staff [and] is a vitally important part of improving outcomes for children, young people and their families, by means of its potential to improve all the front-line services that support them.

However, it is also acknowledged that there are challenges to interagency working such as commitment obstacles, organisational challenges and contextual barriers or political climate. Some negative impacts of interagency working have been reported, such as increased workload (at least in the initial stages) and increased demand for services as the needs of children, young people and families are identified earlier when a joined-up approach is used. Evidence about the impact of interagency working also points to positive changes, which have been identified for service users, for professionals working in services and for agencies delivering services.

The development of Children and Young People's Services Committees has been informed by and reflects evidence from similar interagency structures in other jurisdictions such as Regional Implementation Groups in New South Wales in Australia, Children's Trusts in England, the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership in Northern Ireland and Getting it Right for Every Child in Scotland.

1.4. Principles Underpinning CYPSC

The five principles underpinning the national policy framework for children and young people also underpin the work of Children and Young People's Services Committees. These are:

Children's rights: The rights of children as outlined by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) are recognised and child-centred approaches are adopted.

Family-orientated: The family is recognised as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and wellbeing of children and young people.

Equality: The diversity of children's and young people's experiences, abilities, identities and cultures is acknowledged, and reducing inequalities is promoted as a means of improving outcomes and achieving greater social inclusion.

Evidence-informed and outcomes-focused: To be effective, policies and services must be supported by evidence and focused on the achievement of agreed outcomes.

Accountability and resource efficiency: Clear implementation, monitoring and accountability mechanisms and lines of responsibility for delivery are in place to drive timely and effective policy implementation.

2. Purpose, Objective and Remit of CYPSC

2.1. Purpose

The central purpose of a CYPSC is to ensure effective interagency coordination and collaboration to achieve the best outcomes for all children and young people in its area. This is achieved through enhanced planning, coordination and oversight of policy implementation, planning and service provision locally. Children and Young People's Services Committees will act as the structure where services can work together in a systematic manner to achieve shared goals and which bridge national policy with local provision.

A well-functioning CYPSC will harness the collective strengths of constituent agencies to ensure planned, coordinated and concerted response to the needs of children and young people at local level. It is not the purpose of CYPSC to displace existing structures of accountability which apply to member agencies. However, at a local level members will have the opportunity to test local implementation and to complement national planning by identifying opportunities for collaboration, obviating duplication and ensuring that services are flexible to locally identified needs and informed by identified national priorities.

CYPSC have an explicit role to contribute to the achievement of the vision, aspirations, priorities and desired outcomes expressed in *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* so that these become a reality for children and young people at local level where front-line services are delivered. They will focus on identifying gaps and supporting synergies in service delivery leading to the development of a commonly agreed plan for children and young people in the CYPSC area. Additionally, service plans by constituent agencies should also have due regard to both government policy and local priorities as identified by the CYPSC. Committees should also actively promote the development of quality practices and the delivery of quality services within respective areas and regions.

2.2. Objectives of CYPSC

CYPSC bring together relevant statutory, community and voluntary organisations providing services to, children and young people to maximise the reach, coverage and impact of such services by pursuing the following:

Ensure that the needs of children and young people are identified and addressed:

- Identify and address local and national emerging issues relating to children and young people;

Ensure effective collaboration and interagency working:

- Ensure effective collaboration between services working with and for children and young people within the CYPSC area;
- Strengthen collaborative decision-making capacity at local level, recognising the voice of children and young people;
- Support the implementation of relevant and innovative interagency initiatives of member agencies.

Planning and coordination of services:

- Plan and coordinate services for children and young people in order to improve outcomes.
- Oversee the effective implementation of national and regional policies, strategies and priorities.

Optimise the use of resources:

- Inform the planning and provision of resources across the area covered by the CYPSC with a view to enabling the optimum use of resources at local level and ensure complementarity between CYPSC and agencies' service plans in respect of their priorities;
- Inform the allocation of resources and work towards becoming a vehicle for facilitating integrated commissioning of services for children, young people and families.
- Inform national policy and decision-making with regard to resource allocation for services for children and young people.

Promote evidence informed planning and practice:

- Promote the use of quality, evidence-informed and outcomes-focussed approaches to enhance service provision for children and young people;

Promote best participation practice:

- Support national initiatives that promote the participation of children and young people in decision-making.
- Coordinate interagency training in participation practice locally.

2.3. Mandate

The mandate for CYPSC has derived from Government policy over time and is renewed in the context of *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014 - 2020*, and the range of policies, strategies and innovations as expressed in the overarching framework. To further enhance interagency collaboration Memorandums of Understanding between DCYA and key

agencies including Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, the Local Government Management Agency, the Health Service Executive and Education stakeholders will be explored to support CYPSC and give further effect to interagency co-operation.

2.4. Remit

Children and Young People's Services Committees are the key vehicle for **interagency working** for children and young people at local level and should cover the range of services and supports that are in place for **0-24 year olds**. Existing CYPSC will need to adapt their work in light of this extended age remit to have regard to issues relating to the 18-24 age group.

The work of the committees should adhere to the concept of progressive universalism, and span policy areas and service provision from the universal to targeted services and supports for children and young people. CYPSC will accommodate the broad range of professional disciplines, policy areas and services relevant to children and young people available in the statutory, community and voluntary sector.

2.5. Geographical Area

The geographical area for a local CYPSC will be co-terminus with local authority boundaries. In some circumstances it will be appropriate to combine two counties or local authorities under one CYPSC. In some circumstances, for example as is the case for Dublin City Council, it may be appropriate to divide the local authority area into more than one CYPSC and this may be arranged in consultation with the National Co-ordinator for Children and Young People's Services Committees, the local authority and other relevant agencies.

2.6. What a CYPSC Does

CYPSC ensure the connection of national policy with local implementation through planning and co-ordinating the provision of services for children and young people in their area and by informing the deployment of resources in their area having regard to identified needs.

The committees develop and oversee the implementation of a **three-year Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP)** that is designed to improve outcomes for children and young people in their area. This CYPP outlines a committee's priorities and includes a socio-demographic profile of the area, an audit of services for children and young people in the area, an analysis of the needs of children and young people living in the CYPSC area and a detailed action plan mapping the committee's planned actions to respond to its priorities.

The plan is directly informed by constituent agencies and related structures, while also having specific regard for the voice of children and young people. In addition, the CYPP will be linked to all member agencies service plans as well as to all other local and regional plans such as the Local Economic and Community Plan for the county. The CYPSC provides the local mechanism through which statutory, community and voluntary service providers for children, young people and families will work together to leverage and make the most effective use of existing local resources to deliver on the objectives and actions of their plan. Figure two summarises CYPSC objectives, role and outcomes.

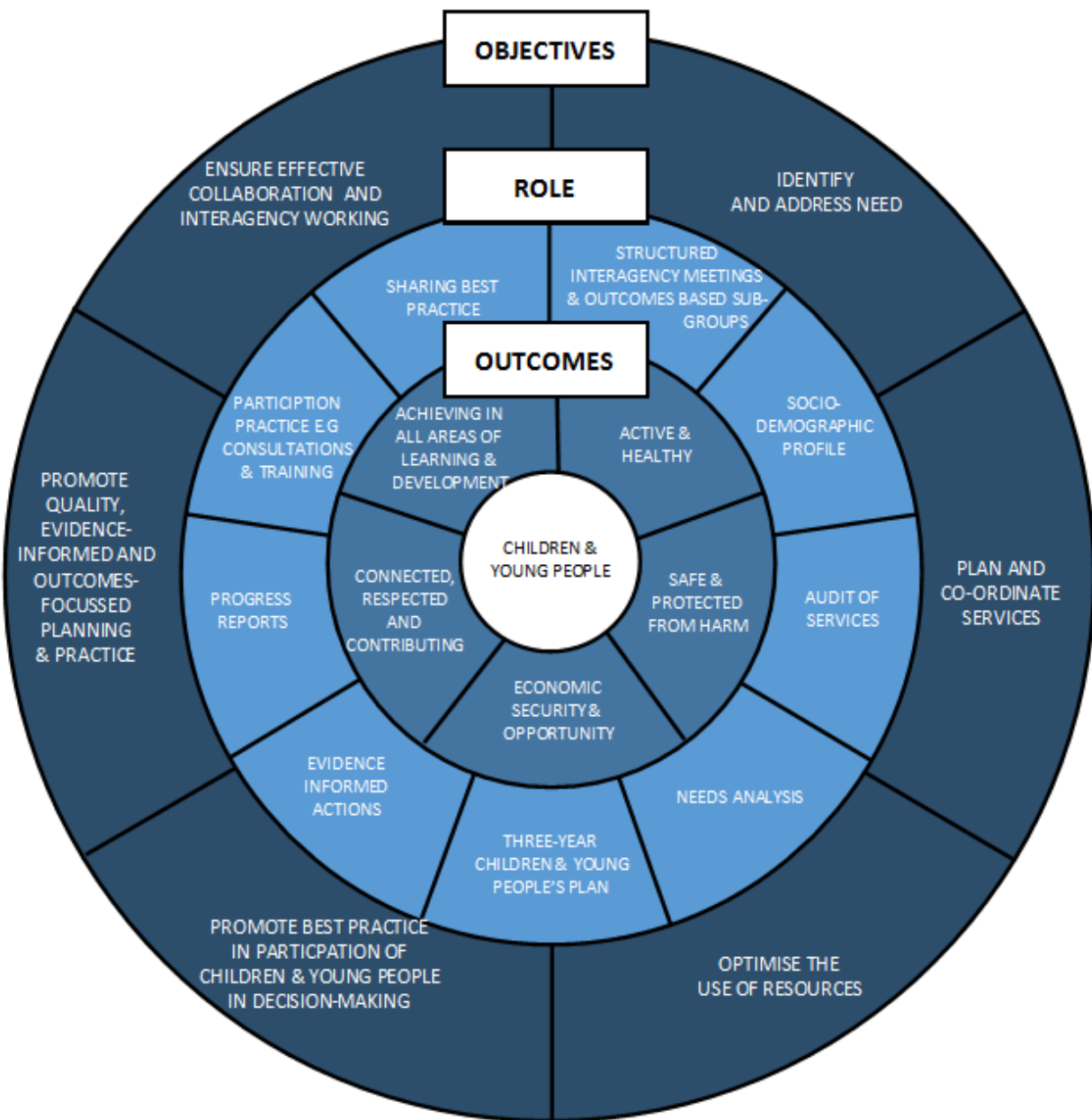


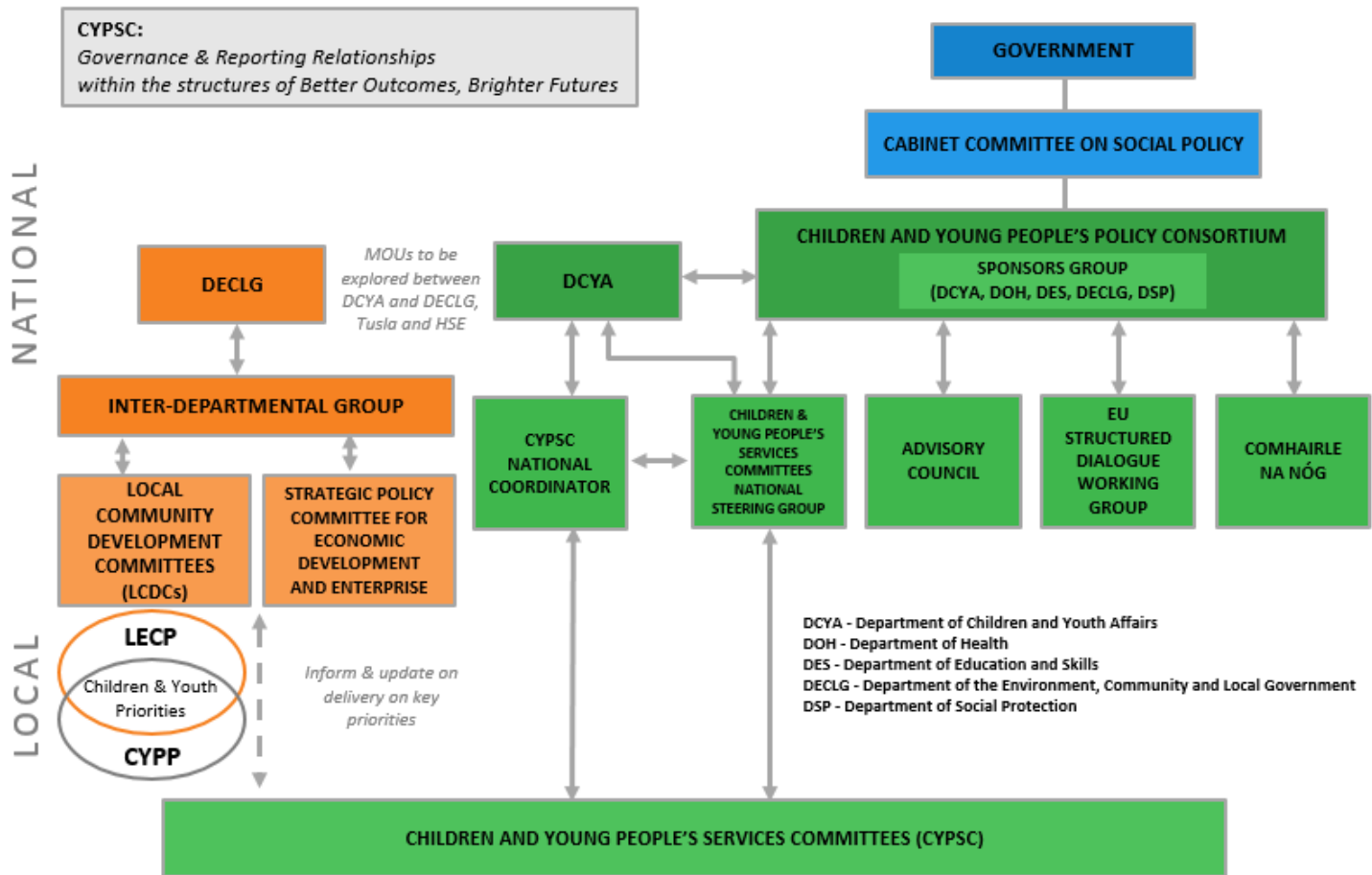
Figure 2: Summary of CYPSC Objectives, role and outcomes.

3. CYPSC Governance and Structures at National and Local Level

3.1. National Governance

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs will provide strategic and policy direction to the development of CYPSC. As the CYPSC forms an integral part of the new structures provided for in *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* they will be accountable to the CYPSC National Steering Group and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, and in turn to the Children and Young People’s Policy Consortium (See Appendix 1 for information on the Children and Young People’s Policy Consortium.) Figure 3 depicts national governance and reporting relationships.

Figure 3: National governance and reporting relationships



3.1.1. CYPSC National Steering Group

The main functions of the CYPSC National Steering Group is to support and guide local committees to achieve better outcomes for children and young people and to promote best practice and support local committees to realise their potential. The CYPSC National Steering Group will provide guidance and advice on strategic, policy and operational issues relevant to CYPSC. The CYPSC National Steering Group will address issues and obstacles that need resolution at national level as communicated to it through the reporting mechanisms set out in this document. The Chair of the CYPSC National Steering Group is a member of the Children and Young People’s Policy Consortium and will utilise that forum to promote the work of CYPSC and highlight any pertinent issues that require consideration at a national level.

The functions of the Steering Group include to:

- Provide leadership and direction for CYPSC at national and local level
- Operationalise, support and seek requisite supports for the development of CYPSC
- Have oversight of CYPSC planning, implementation and reporting
- Provide guidance on significant operational issues across all CYPSC
- Synthesise the intelligence from local CYPSC in relation to achievements, challenges, needs and obstacles; surfacing emerging trends, issues or themes requiring a national response

- Refer obstacles to appropriate Departments with recommendations for resolution if same cannot be resolved by the Steering Group
- Report on the work of CYPSC into the Children and Young People’s Policy Consortium
- Provide a national forum for learning from across CYPSC areas via an annual national CYPSC event
- Provide advice and information on policy issues and strategies relevant to CYPSC
- Promote the work of the CYPSC and best practice in the work of local committees.

The CYPSC National Steering Group will be reconstituted to ensure effectiveness in terms of operational size, representation of interagency stakeholders and alignment with the implementation infrastructure for *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*. The composition of the reconstituted CYPSC Steering Group will aim to include:

- Chairperson
- Tusla, the Child and Family Agency
- Local Authority representative who is a CYPSC Vice Chairperson
- Health Service Executive representative
- Department of Education and Skills Inspectorate
- Department of Environment Community and Local Government
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs
- Education and Training Board Ireland representative
- Community and voluntary sector representative with experience of CYPSC (as proposed by the Advisory Council)
- Young person aged 18 – 24 years¹
- CYPSC Chairperson
- National Coordinator for CYPSC
- CYPSC Co-ordinator
- 1-2 nominees co-opted by Chairperson in consultation with DCYA and having regard to local CYPSC

3.1.2. CYPSC National Co-ordinator

The role, focus and objectives of the National Co-ordinator for Children and Young People’s Services Committees is as outlined below. The National Co-ordinator for Children and Young People’s Services Committees, under the strategic direction of DCYA will:

- Provide leadership for CYPSC at national level and lead the implementation of the strategic plan for CYPSC.
- Ensure there is coherence and that a common approach is adopted across local CYPSC and that CYPSC are embedded into the wider system.
- Ensure that the CYPSC maintain an outcome focus and operate to the highest standard informed by current and emerging evidence
- Build understanding of and commitment to CYPSC at local and national level.
- Provide and coordinate support for CYPSC e.g. research and data, communications, facilitation and implementation including support to individual CYPSC at start-up stage and as required thereafter.

¹ Young person aged 18-24 years nominated from DCYA participation structures

- Have oversight of progress and impact of CYPSC, coordinating collective reporting to the national CYPSC Steering Group and DCYA, ensuring accountability and a focus on learning.
- Harness the knowledge and expertise of CYPSC to inform national policy and strategy.

3.1.3. Participation of Children and Young People

Both the CYPSC National Steering Group and local CYPSC will work to ensure meaningful participation by children and young people to inform the work of CYPSC. CYPSC may utilise the children's and young people's participation and consultation mechanisms including Comhairle na nÓg, the EU Structured Dialogue process and should also have regard to the DCYA Participation Strategy and Action Plan which will be published in 2015. CYPSC will also consider how they consult with and ensure participation of children and young people who are outside of the structures listed above.

In supporting CYPSC, and as reflected in the National Strategy for Children and Young People's Participation in Decision Making 2015 – 2020, DCYA will develop guidelines on a broader strategy of participation by children and young people in the work of the Children and Young People's Services Committees in co-operation with representatives from Children and Young People's Services Committees.

3.2. Local Governance

3.2.1. Chairperson

CYPSC will be chaired by Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, with Local Authorities (City and County Councils) holding the role of vice-chairperson. This configuration is to be maintained up to 2017 when it will be reviewed. The CYPSC Chairperson will provide strategic leadership and direction for the CYPSC and ensure CYPSC priorities are addressed and that objectives are actioned and achieved.

The key responsibilities of the CYPSC Chairperson are to:

- Provide leadership and direction for the Committee
- Ensure the effectiveness of the Committee in all aspects of its role, including delivery of its Children and Young People's Plan
- Ensure active participation and contributions from all members across all sectors
- Ensure appropriate interaction between the Committee and external stakeholders
- Uphold the core public sector values of probity and integrity, openness and transparency.

3.2.2. CYPSC Vice-Chairperson

The vice chairperson of the CYPSC will be the Local Authority (City or County Council). The responsibilities of the Vice-Chairperson are to:

- Support the Chairperson in the performance of her/his duties
- In the case of unavailability of the chairperson at any Committee meeting, to take the role of Chairperson for that meeting
- Ensure an appropriate balance between the voice of the Chairperson's organisation and that of other member organisations through advice and engagement with the Chairperson
- Take appropriate action to mitigate any potential conflicts of interest in consultation with the Chairperson.

3.2.3. CYPSC Co-ordinator

The Children and Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC) Co-ordinator will support the Children and Young People's Services Committee in its work to bring together a diverse group of agencies in local county areas to engage in joint planning and coordination of services for children and young people. The co-ordinator role is essential to realising the potential of a CYPSC. The key responsibilities of the CYPSC Co-ordinator are to:

- Support the establishment of the CYPSC and its subgroups
- Communicate a clear sense of purpose and direction on behalf of the CYPSC
- Co-ordinate the development and implementation of the CYPSC three year work plan
- Assist the overall committee and sub-groups to implement the three year plan and monitor progress in line with the five national outcomes for children and young people as set out in *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People 2014 – 2020*.

It is envisaged that CYPSC co-ordinators will be employed under a standardised set of arrangements (See the Resourcing section for more details). The overall work plan of a CYPSC Co-ordinator will be defined by the committee through the Children and Young People's Plan. CYPSC Co-ordinators will report to the CYPSC Chairperson with regard to management of their day to day work and general matters of their employment. Local co-ordinators will liaise with the National Co-ordinator for Children and Young People's Services Committees and follow the overall policy direction set by the DCYA and the Children and Young People's Services Committees National Steering Group.

3.2.4. CYPSC Membership

Each CYPSC will have senior managers, directors and chief executive officers from the main statutory providers of services to children, young people and families in the area so that it can address issues in relation to local and nationally identified priorities and the five National Outcome areas for children and young people. Members will be of sufficient seniority to represent their agency and to exercise decision-making powers and should be expressly supported by their parent organisation to communicate CYPSC work across their organisation in order to ensure meaningful representation and engagement. Membership should include representatives from the following sectors and organisations:

- Tusla the Child and Family Agency
- Local Authority (City and/or County Council)
- Health Service Executive (HSE)
- Education and Training Board (ETB)
- An Garda Síochána
- Representatives from Community and Voluntary sector providers for children and young people
- Irish Primary Principals Network (IPPN) (primary school sector)
- National Association of Principals and Deputies (NAPD) (post-primary school sector)
- City/County Childcare Committee (CCC)
- Probation Service
- Department of Social Protection (DSP)
- A young person aged 18 – 24 years old, supported by the youth sector
- A third level institution located in or close to the CYPSC area
- Social inclusion partners e.g. Local Development Company

Figure 4 depicts the composition of a Children and Young People’s Services Committee.

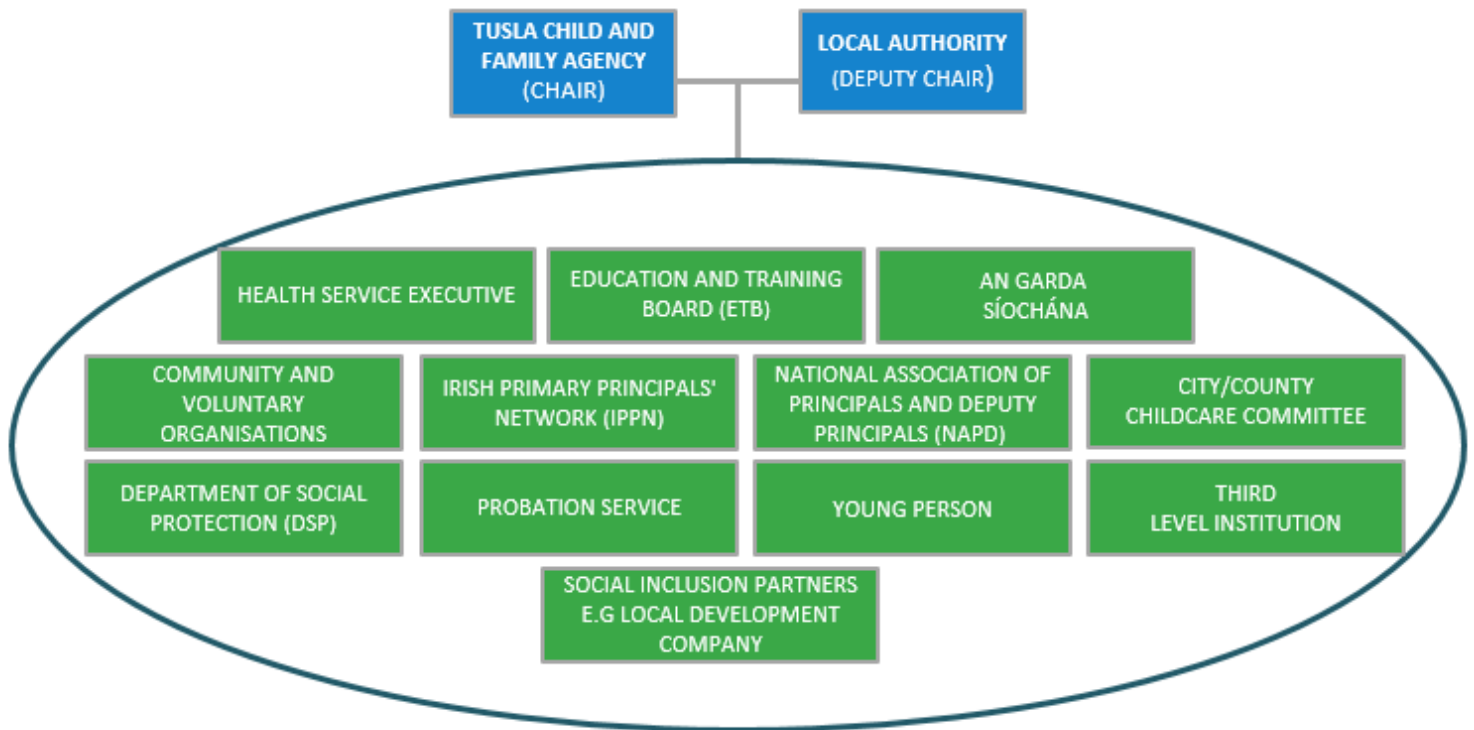


Figure 4: Children and Young People’s Services Committee membership.

In situations where any of the above or other relevant organisations/structures are not represented, liaison arrangements should be put in place between the CYPSC and that organisation/structure. This will ensure that there are opportunities to source requisite expertise or information or data in a timely manner. The CYPSC Sub Group infrastructure (see section 3.2.6) will also be a forum in which to progress key thematic actions.

Voluntary or community organisations that are large providers of services to children, young people and families in the CYPSC area should be invited by the CYPSC Chairperson to become members of the CYPSC. The inclusion of the community and voluntary sector is crucial particularly in respect of services that are commissioned or out-sourced to this sector. Community and voluntary organisations can sometimes be the sole providers of such services accessing and out-reaching to particular areas and groups.

Consideration of membership of the CYPSC should be determined by the contribution or influence an agency/organisation can have on the planning, funding prioritisation or alignment of services within the area, while having regard to the need for the committee to be representative and to function effectively. Guidance in this regard will be developed in 2015.

3.2.5. Terms of Reference

To arrive at enhanced, standardised operating procedures each local CYPSC will develop a Terms of Reference informed by the Terms of Reference template included as Appendix 2.

3.2.6. CYPSC Sub-Groups

Each CYPSC should have in place a number of structured sub-groups which align to the National Outcome and Transformational Goal areas in *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*. This will ensure that substructures are established and aligned to the broad range of needs of children and young people. These subgroups can accommodate existing or new initiatives, for example the Prevention Partnership and Family Support groups being established by Tusla can act as the standing subgroup under Outcome 3. Many of the cross-cutting issues referenced as Transformational Goals e.g. Supporting Parents; Participation; Ensuring Quality Services can be catered for in sixth subgroup. All subgroups should be responsive to local needs and trends and the work of the respective groups should reflect both national and local priorities.

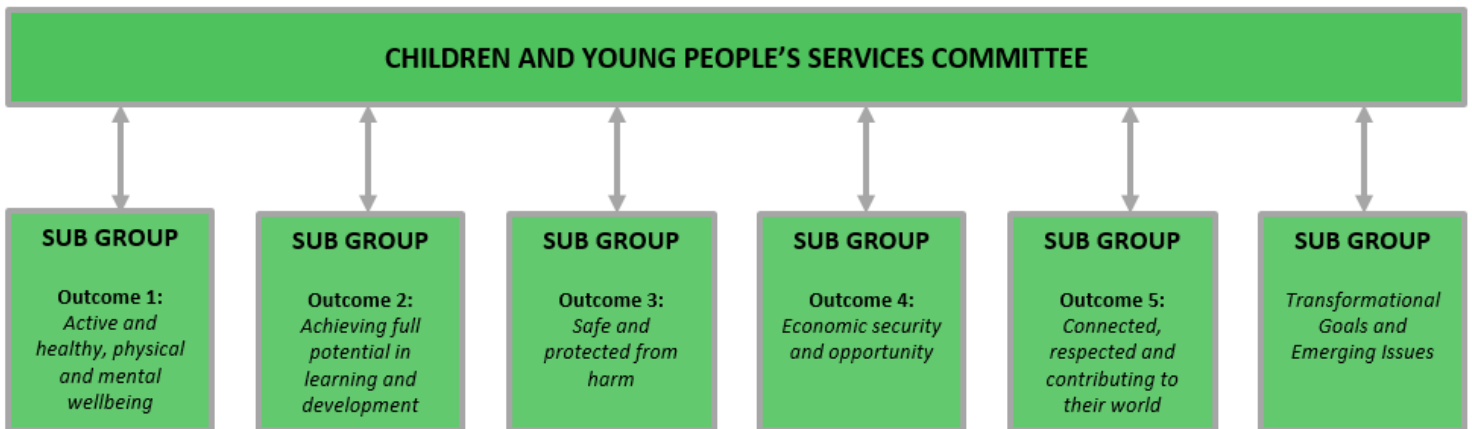


Figure 5: Local CYPSC structure

All sub-groups will have regard to the views of children and young people in line with section 3.1.3 on participation. The Chairperson of each sub-group will provide a progress update at each CYPSC meeting and sub-group updates will be a standing agenda item at each CYPSC meeting.

3.2.7. Local Community Development Committees

The development of CYPSC will have specific regard to the significant changes in local government. Locally the CYPSC will agree key priorities with the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), as they relate to the work of CYPSC and constituent members, for inclusion in the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) of the local authority (city or county council). These key priorities will contribute to the overarching Sustainable Community Objectives and Sustainable Economic Development Objectives in the LECP. This engagement will be informed in the first instance by an interagency protocol issued by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG). The Department of Children and Youth Affairs will work with DECLG to develop a guidance document pertaining to CYPSC and LCDC. This will involve a two-way relationship wherein local CYPSC and LCDCs (or Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs)) will engage on an on-going basis on responding to the agreed priorities and will inform each other on relevant developments and address issues of mutual interest.

3.2.8. Other Interagency Structures for Children and Young People

There are 31 City and County Childcare Committees established since 2001 with responsibility for the promotion of cross-agency cooperation and co-ordination in the delivery of childcare services at a local level and for the development of childcare locally. Such local structures dedicated to services for

children should be harnessed to contribute to the needs analysis and development of plans for each CYPSC.

DCYA will explore the formalisation and strengthening of relationships between CYPSC and the City and County Childcare Committees. Developments in this regard will be communicated in due course.

4. Planning and Resourcing

The planning and reporting functions of CYPSC and the resourcing of CYPSC are fundamental to the success of the work of the committees. These functions need to be proportionate; with the guiding aim of assisting in ensuring better outcomes for children and young people while cultivating a learning and evaluation-focused approach to the work of CYPSC.

4.1. Children and Young People's Plans (CYPP)

As stated above, each CYPSC is required to produce a three year Children and Young People's Plan which provides for national policy and local needs and priorities. The content, scale and frequency of plans will be considered to ensure that such plans are contemporary, relevant and timely and can accommodate and anticipate themes and trends affecting the child and youth population. Plans will have regard to the requirements of Local Economic and Community Plans to ensure that there is complementarity between the LECP and the CYPSC Plan.

A standardised approach to the assessment of plans and their implementation will be developed to ensure enhanced accountability and quality assurance. The National Co-ordinator for CYPSC will monitor progress in relation to the implementation of CYPPs and produce a report to the DCYA and CYPSC National Steering Group.

All Children and Young People's Plans will be posted on both the DCYA website and the national CYPSC website. Local CYPSC and constituent agencies are also encouraged to include plans on their respective websites. To embed the work of the local committees and to ensure that relevant input is acknowledged all constituent agencies are also requested to consider inclusion of reference to their work within CYPSC in their annual reports.

4.2. CYPSC Annual Programme of Work

Each CYPSC will produce an annual programme of work, which will be a succinct statement containing the objectives for the CYPSC for the year. The annual programme of work will be informed by local priorities as expressed within the Children and Young People's Plan, the priorities set out by the Children and Young People's Policy Consortium, and should have regard to other related policies and strategies where relevant.

4.3. CYPSC Progress Reports

Each CYPSC will be required to submit a succinct progress report to the National Co-ordinator for Children and Young People's Services Committees. This will be produced on a regular basis as a concise report comprising a dashboard of indicators which illustrates the status and progress of developments within the CYPSC area.

The National Co-ordinator for Children and Young People's Services Committees will lead the development of the planning and reporting requirements. This will be progressed through the establishment of a working group which will comprise key stakeholders involved in CYPSC.

4.4. CYPSC National Progress Report

The National Co-ordinator for Children and Young People's Services Committees will prepare a CYPSC National Progress Report, based on the individual CYPSC Progress Reports and other inputs, for submission to the CYPSC National Steering Group and the DCYA.

4.5. Reporting to the Consortium

The chair of the CYPSC National Steering Group is a member of the Children and Young People's Policy Consortium and will report to the Consortium on the progress and emerging issues relating to CYPSC. This will be informed by the CYPSC National Progress Report.

4.6. Managing and Leveraging Budgets

CYPSC members should work together to leverage and make effective use of existing funding of member agencies to deliver on the objectives of their Children and Young People's Plan. Informed by local need, it is anticipated and advised that the CYPSC would inform considerations of budget allocation and expenditure of member organisations utilising the wider knowledge and experience of the committee. This approach is informed by commitment G68 of *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* which commits to

Use the intelligence from Children's Services Committees [now Children and Young People's Services Committees] in relation to local need and priorities to inform the allocation of national and local funding streams.

On occasion a local CYPSC may wish to apply for funding for programmes and projects but may not be in a position to apply in their own right as a CYPSC is not a legal entity. In such circumstances, one of the member agencies of the CYPSC should apply as a fiscal agent for the CYPSC. The local CYPSC should identify an appropriate fiscal agent who can apply for funding on their behalf as the opportunity arises.

4.7. Resourcing of CYPSC

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs provides an annual allocation to Tusla the Child and Family Agency to support CYPSC and also, in certain instances, provides a funding contribution to CYPSC Co-ordinators. In addition, DCYA funds the post of National Co-ordinator for CYPSC. At present local CYPSC co-ordinators in post come from a range of disciplines and professions. There is a diversity of funding and employment arrangements across the country with a small majority of co-ordinators employed by Tusla, the Child and Family Agency; others employed by other statutory agencies and a significant minority employed by the community and voluntary sector. The current diversity of arrangements offers a richness of co-ordinator skills and approaches. However it also brings challenges in terms of co-ordinator post sustainability and standardisation.

DCYA has been working with Tusla, the Child and Family Agency in an effort at bringing greater standardisation to the role of CYPSC Co-ordinators, having regard to available resources. This will enable a baseline level of provision of co-ordinator posts in and across CYPSC, standardise structures, and maximise synergies within the CYPSC infrastructure.

In line with this standardised approach, it is intended that co-ordinator posts located within the community and voluntary sector will migrate to Tusla, the Child and Family Agency. Tusla, the Child and Family Agency will invite relevant statutory agencies to meet and discuss particular circumstances with a view to reaching mutual agreement in relation to standardising any co-ordinator post currently situated in a statutory organisation other than Tusla.

DCYA aims to maximise the resourcing of CYPSC by encouraging related sectors such as Local Government, Health Authorities and the Education sector to provide resources in support of the shared objectives identified through the CYPSC structures. This may include financial, administrative or professional supports which will enhance the ability of the CYPSC to support its key priorities and objectives. The intention is that such resourcing is in direct recognition of the effectiveness of the CYPSC to local stakeholders in terms of each member agency's commitment to improving outcomes for children and young people through interagency working. Therefore, while an amount of core funding will be provided by DCYA and Tusla the Child and Family Agency each CYPSC is expected to leverage local funding and to develop these revenue streams.

5. Communications and Capacity Building

The evolution of Children's Services Committees (CSC) presented an opportunity to update the branding to Children and Young People's Services Committees in line with current policy developments. The title of the 'Working Together for Children' Initiative and associated logo has now been retired.

5.1. Publications

CYPSC supporting documents and literature will be updated and rationalised, and accompanied by clear policy guidance and direction.

A clear and succinct composite document will be drawn up in 2015 to provide operational guidance to CYPSC.

An interagency protocol has been developed and issued by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government to establish engagement arrangements between LCDCs and committees or other bodies established by a State organisation. DCYA is currently engaging with DECLG on the interaction between LCDC and CYPSC to develop a guidance document reflecting the unique role of the CYPSC as distinct from single entity service providers. DCYA will issue further direction once this process is completed.

A guidance document outlining the interrelationship between local CYPSC and Tusla, the Child and Family Agency's Prevention Partnership and Family Support infrastructure has been drafted and will issue with the revised operational guidance. A sectoral approach to developing the linkages between CYPSC and respective sectors e.g. Education, Health etc. will also be explored to ensure the role and remit of CYPSC and related sectors is clearly charted.

These developments are intended to clarify and streamline information on CYPSC.

5.2. Communications Plan

A communications plan will be developed by the National Co-ordinator for Children and Young People's Services Committees having regard to interacting with different sectors to ensure that they are informed by up-to-date developments in CYPSC and vice versa. This plan will have regard to the role of CYPSC in the context of the implementation of *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*.

5.3. Website

The national website www.cypsc.ie has been developed as a national focal point for information on CYPSC and a gateway to information on individual county level committees. It will promote interagency working through CYPSC to a wide ranging audience across sectors, professions and disciplines; provide current information to all levels of CYPSC infrastructure; will allow local CYPSC to connect with each other and support them to locate themselves within the larger community/national initiative. It will also facilitate information exchange between local CYPSC.

5.4. Capacity building and development support for CYPSC

Training will be made available to CYPSC Chairpersons, Vice Chairpersons, committee members and co-ordinators subject to the identification of need and the availability of resources.

A national event for CYPSC will continue to be held and further developed in order to provide an opportunity for knowledge exchange, networking and to ensure that best practice models are identified and shared.

5.5. Data, evaluation and dissemination of best practice

DCYA will seek to support the development of data and evaluation capacities which can support the CYPSC initiative to integrate with other data sources and make use of existing data available. The County Level Data work which is on-going is a good example in this regard.

An evaluation framework for CYPSC will be developed.

DCYA will also consider the development of support material to strengthen implementation capacity and dissemination of best practice which could actively support the work of CYPSC.

6. Key Actions 2015 - 2017 for the Development of CYPSC

Key Action	Partners	Timeframe
National roll-out		
The roll-out nationally of Children's Services Committees [now Children and Young People's Services Committees] in a coordinated fashion, connecting them with Local Government and Tusla, The Child and Family Agency. (BOBF, G47. Page 40.)	<i>DCYA, Tusla CFA, LCDCs, Local Government & National Co-ordinator for CYPSC</i>	2015
Planning & Coordination		
Ensure planning and coordination of parenting supports at local level through Children's Services Committees [now Children and Young People's Services Committees]. (BOBF, G2. Page 28.)	<i>CYPSC, Tusla CFA, DCYA, DJE, HSE, Local Government</i>	2016
Streamline planning and decision-making structures at local level, including Children's Services Committees [now Children and Young People's Services Committees], to be consistent with the Government's public sector reforms, and specifically the alignment of local Government and Local Community Development Committees. (BOBF, G52. Page 40.)	<i>DCYA, Tusla CFA, Local Government, DECLG</i>	2015
Use the intelligence from Children's Services Committees [now Children and Young People's Services Committees] in relation to local need and priorities to inform the allocation of national and local funding streams. (BOBF, G68. Page 43.)	<i>DCYA, DECLG, DH, Tusla CFA, HSE, AGS, Local Government & National Co-ordinator for CYPSC</i>	2017
Development of County-level Children and Young People Plans	<i>Local CYPSC</i>	2015 and 2016
Finalise guidance document on CYPSC and LCDC	<i>DCYA, DECLG</i>	2015
Formalise and strengthen relationship with County Childcare Committees	<i>DCYA</i>	2015
Explore the development of MoUs with relevant Agencies	<i>DCYA and others</i>	2015
Ensure the optimum mechanism for engagement and active participation of the Community and Voluntary Sector	<i>DCYA</i>	2015

Key Action	Partners	Timeframe
Resources		
Put in place an agreed resourcing framework for Children’s Services Committees [now Children and Young People’s Services Committees], drawing on existing financial support from the CFA, Local Government and DCYA. (BOBF, G48. Page 40.)	<i>DCYA, Tusla CFA, Local Government</i>	2015
Data		
Deliver the County-level Data Analysis Initiative to support the Children’s Services Committees [now Children and Young People’s Services Committees]. (BOBF, G62. Page 42.)	DCYA, National Co-ordinator for CYPSC	2015
Monitoring, Reporting, Learning & Evaluation		
Learning and evaluation framework for CYPSC at local and national level will be explored.	<i>National Co-ordinator for CYPSC, local CYPSC, DCYA</i>	2015
Development of Reporting framework for CYPSC	<i>National Co-ordinator for CYPSC, local CYPSC, DCYA</i>	2015
Quality assurance reviews of CYPSC plans	<i>National Co-ordinator, DCYA, Tusla CFA, Centre for Effective Services</i>	2015 and 2016
Ensure local county-level implementation and monitoring through the Children’s Services Committees [now Children and Young People’s Services Committees], which will be formally linked with the new Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) being established in each Local Authority area under an initiative of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government. BOBF, Commitment 3. Page 113.	<i>DCYA, Local Government</i>	2015
Implementation		
Updated “operations guide” which brings together and updates existing operational documentation for CYPSC	National Co-ordinator for CYPSC, DCYA, local CYPSC	2015
Implementation support to new and established CYPSC	National Co-ordinator for CYPSC	2015, 2016, 2017
Capacity building: Training for local CYPSC leadership	National Co-ordinator for CYPSC, DCYA, local CYPSC,	2015, 2016, 2017

Key Action	Partners	Timeframe
Annual event for CYPSC	<i>National Co-ordinator for CYPSC, local CYPSC, CYPSC SG, DCYA</i>	2015, 2016, 2017
Guidance on enhancing children and young people's participation in CYPSC	<i>DCYA, National Co-ordinator for CYPSC, local CYPSC</i>	2016
Convene meeting with key agencies and explore development of shared MoUs on the work of CYPSC	<i>DCYA, DECLG, CCMA, Tusla CFA, HSE, Education sector, National Co-ordinator for CYPSC</i>	2015,2016
Transmit learning on evidence informed approaches emerging from existing DCYA initiatives with a view to informing the work and planning of local CYPSC	<i>DCYA</i>	2016
Communications		
National CYPSC communications plan and materials	National Co-ordinator for CYPSC	2015

Appendix 1

Children and Young People's Policy Consortium

Chair: Secretary General, DCYA

Deputy Chair: Department of the Taoiseach

Members: Assistant Secretaries from DT, DPER, DF, DH, DES, DSP, DECLG, DJE, DTTS, DJEI, DAHG and DCENR; senior representatives from Tusla, HSE, An Garda Síochána, County/City Manager nominated by CCMA; the Chair and three members of the Advisory Council; and the Chair of the Children's Services Committees National Steering Group.

Function: To have oversight of and drive cross-Government implementation of Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures and its supporting strategies, and report annually to Government on progress achieved.

Appendix 2

Template Terms of Reference for a Children and Young People's Services Committee

1. Purpose

The purpose of (name of CYPSC) will be to provide strategic direction and leadership to ensure effective interagency coordination and collaboration in order to achieve the best outcomes for all children and young people in (name county / counties). (CYPSC may wish to elaborate further with localised vision statement.)

2. Term

This Terms of Reference is effective from (insert start date) and continues until the (insert expected date of review of the ToR) / will be terminated by agreement between the parties.

3. Membership

(name of CYPSC) will comprise:

- Name, Title, Organisation (Chairperson)
- Name, Title, Organisation (Vice-chairperson)
- Name, Title, Organisation
- Name, Title, Organisation

4. Roles and Responsibilities

To be discussed by the CYPSC.

5. Meetings

- All meetings will be chaired by (insert name and organisation)
- A meeting quorum will be (insert number) members of the CYPSC
- Decisions made by consensus (i.e. members are satisfied with the decision even though it may not be their first choice). If not possible, CYPSC Chairperson makes the final decisions.
- Meeting agendas and minutes will be provided by (Insert name and organisation), this includes:
 - Preparing agendas and supporting papers
 - Preparing meeting notes and information
- Meetings will be held (how often) for (specify time) at (specify location).
- If required sub group meetings will be arranged outside of these times at a time convenient to sub group members.

6. Amendment, Modification or Variation

This Terms of Reference may be amended, varied or modified in writing after consultation and agreement by (insert name of CYPSC) members.