

THE LINK NEWSLETTER

March 2019

The Reform of Regional Facilities for Children and Young People Programme

Hello and welcome to the first edition of The Link, a newsletter to keep you updated on the progress of the Reform of Regional Facilities for Children & Young People Programme.

This issue will provide you with the context for the Programme and explain the approach that will be taken to implement the recommendations of the recent Review of Regional Facilities for Children and Young People.

The Departments of Health and Justice are looking forward to working collaboratively to deliver the best possible outcomes for some of the most troubled children and young people in Northern Ireland.

We promise to keep you informed of developments as the Programme progresses.

Seán Holland and Ronnie Armour
(Programme Co-Chairs)



Seán Holland, Deputy Secretary, Social Services Policy Group, Department of Health



Ronnie Armour, Director, Reducing Offending, Department of Justice

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The Review

“Current services work extremely hard to improve outcomes for vulnerable young people, and I believe that implementation of the recommendations of the review offers clear and achievable opportunities to build upon current strengths, and further improve, both the effectiveness of the system, and outcomes for young people.”

David Archibald

Independent Chair

(Source: Review foreword)

Background

In January 2017, the Department of Health, in collaboration with Department of Justice, commissioned the Health and Social Care Board to undertake a review of regional specialist facilities for children and young people in Northern Ireland. This was following on from an inspection of the Regional Secure Care Centre at Lakewood and a Scoping Study undertaken to look at a child's experience of the Criminal Justice system.

The review extended to:

- **Donard House** - a residential Children's home
- **Woodlands** - Juvenile Justice Centre
- **Lakewood** - Secure Care Centre
- **Beechcroft** - Inpatient Hospital for Children and Young People

Its Aim

The aim of the review was to undertake a holistic examination and analysis of the provision of services offered across the four regional facilities. It considered the relationship between the facilities, including the criteria and practice in relation to admission and discharge, the pathways

of children and young people into and between these facilities and consideration of options for consolidating and improving the relationship between the facilities to better meet the needs of the children and young people. The Review was led by the HSCB, overseen by a Project

Board and facilitated by a Project Team, which was independently chaired by David Archibald. The review report was published on 13 December 2018.

Please access the following link to view the full report:

[Review Report](#)

Findings

The review identified a number of strengths across all four facilities, including multi-disciplinary working and a range of therapeutic intervention models, a sound leadership ethos, strong partnership working, and a system of independent visiting and advocacy for the young people placed in the facilities.

However, the review also identified a number of areas for improvement, including inconsistent interfaces between - for example - youth justice and social services and between adolescent and adult mental health services; high levels of incidents of self-harm and harm to other residents and staff; high levels of

admissions and reoffending rates; and lack of continuing therapeutic support after discharge.

Recommendations

The Review Team made eleven recommendations in total, across five broad categories. The recommendations mentioned in the review align with the wider system reform of Children's Services being led by a Transformation Team set up by the HSC Board.

The primary recommendation is the establishment of a new integrated Regional Care and Justice Campus for Northern Ireland comprising the current Secure Care Centre at Lakewood and the Juvenile Justice Centre at Woodlands.

Programme Board

A Programme Board, co-chaired by Seán Holland (Department of Health) and Ronnie Armour (Department of Justice), has been established to oversee the implementation of the review report's recommendations. It will meet on a quarterly basis to monitor progress and work collaboratively to ensure the delivery of the Programme objectives.

Membership of the Programme Board is made up of senior representatives of the:

- ◆ Department of Health
- ◆ Department of Justice
- ◆ Department of Education
- ◆ Youth Justice Agency
- ◆ Health & Social Care Service
- ◆ PSNI
- ◆ Education Authority

Programme Team

A Programme Team was established in December 2018 to lead on the implementation of all the recommendations made in the review, working closely with colleagues in the Health & Social Care service and in the Juvenile Justice sector. A time-frame of around three and a half years has been set for full implementation of the report's recommendations. It is expected that design proposals for the new Campus will be fully developed by December 2019.

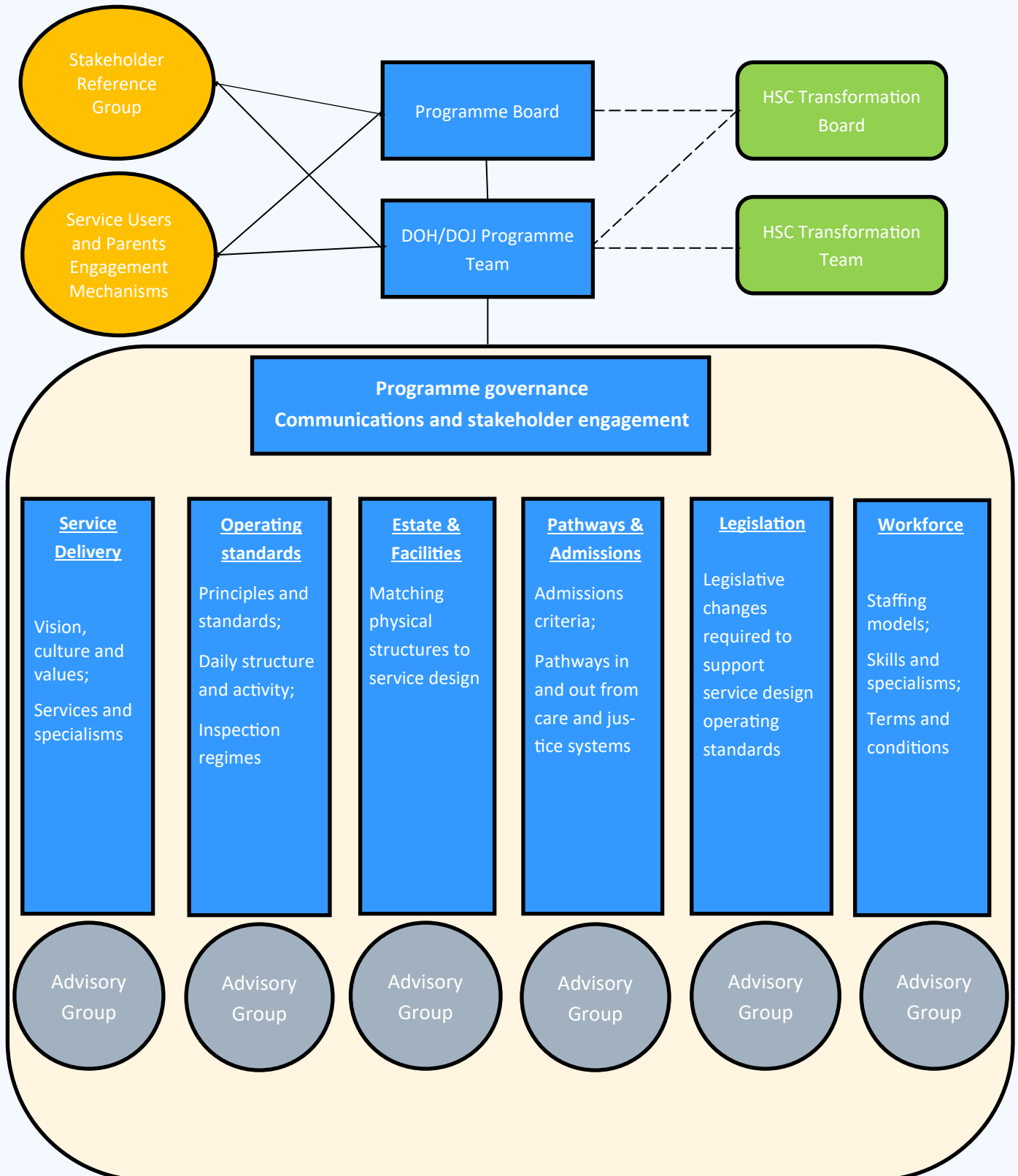


Back (L-R): Lawrence Hyland, Liz Hall, Peter Cash and Adam Miskimmin

Front (L-R): Jennifer Mooney, Joan O'Hara and Fiona Lennon

Programme Workstreams and Stakeholder Engagement Structures

The Programme Board has agreed a number of workstreams and stakeholder engagement structures. In light of links to other work being led by the Health & Social Care (HSC) Service, the Programme Team will work closely with colleagues leading on transformation of children’s services in the HSC.



Next Steps

Following the first meeting of the Programme Board in February 2019, the Programme Team will now move to:

◆ Establish the Stakeholder Reference Group

The Stakeholder Reference Group will be established to fulfil a 'critical friend' function, providing comments and advice on Programme outputs. This group will consist of voluntary and community sector organisations, rights and advocacy groups, professional bodies and academics. It will include members from outside Northern Ireland to ensure that the Programme is informed by perspectives and experience from other regions. Membership of the Stakeholder Reference Group has been agreed by the Programme Board.

◆ Establish various Workstream Advisory Groups

Workstream Advisory Groups will be populated by representatives from a wide range of stakeholder groups with the necessary experience, expertise and knowledge to inform the development of the Campus. The Programme Team are in the process of writing out to all identified stakeholders to offer them a place on one or more Advisory Group.

◆ Progress Phase 1 of the Programme

Develop service design proposals, in conjunction with the Workstream Advisory Groups and Stakeholder Reference Group, for the new Care and Justice Campus.

Future Editions

We intend to issue quarterly Newsletters to keep stakeholders informed as the Programme progresses. The next edition will follow the Programme Board meeting on Thursday 9 May 2019.

If you wish to be removed from the mailing list please email RegFacilitiesProgrammeTeam@health-ni.gov.uk