

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister

Children's Services Co-operation Bill Response pro forma

For your convenience the Committee has prepared the attached pro forma to assist in responding to the main clauses of the Bill. The Bill can be found at <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/legislation/current-non-executive-bill-proposals/childrens-services-co-operation-bill-as-introduced/>

Please respond by Friday 27 February 2015 to committee.ofmdfm@niassembly.gov.uk.

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I wish for my organisation to be considered for oral evidence sessions in relation to the Committee's scrutiny of the Bill: No

Clause	Comments (200 words)
<p>1. General Duty</p> <p>Please provide comment on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The six specified outcomes relating to the well-being of children and young people as listed in the 10 Year Strategy for Children and Young People 2006 - 2016 • The duty on Northern Ireland Departments to co-operate with each other in order to further the achievement of these objectives • The mechanism in place for amending the specified outcomes 	<p>The Western Education & Library Board (WELB) continues to support the six high level outcomes of the 10 year strategy and were appropriate, is working to achieve them as they affect children and young people in its geographical location. The WELB specifically works through a range of its services to fulfil the outcome of 'enjoying learning and achieving'.</p> <p>Whilst there already is established working practice through the Children & Young Peoples Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) to put in place integrated planning and commissioning across agencies and sectors. It seems that the Bill by formalising the duty to co-operate will give these existing processes and any new processes a stronger footing enabling the achievement of the high level outcomes.</p> <p>It would be important to consult in relation to any changes that may be made to the specified outcomes including reference to existing data on children and young people in Northern Ireland, as well as consultation with all key stakeholders.</p>

Clause	Comments (200 words)
<p data-bbox="185 244 472 272">2. Co-operation Report</p> <p data-bbox="185 316 539 344">Please provide comment on:</p> <ul data-bbox="185 387 539 887" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="185 387 539 632">• The requirement for OFMDFM to publish periodically a report on the progress of departments towards achieving the specified outcomes <li data-bbox="185 675 539 887">• The requirement for other Northern Ireland Departments to co-operate in the preparation and publication of the report 	<p data-bbox="575 387 2011 451">The WELB welcomes a reporting mechanism by which OFMDFM will publish progress reports in relation to co-operation across government departments.</p> <p data-bbox="575 675 2000 738">Co-operation between Departments in preparing and publishing any progress report would be integral to the spirit and practical outworking of this legislation.</p>

Clause	Comments (200 words)
<p data-bbox="188 311 495 376">3. Sharing resources and pooling funds</p> <p data-bbox="188 416 539 448">Please provide comment on:</p> <ul data-bbox="188 491 546 767" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="188 491 546 767">• The enabling power which will permit Northern Ireland departments to establish pooled budgets and shared resources to achieve the six outcomes in clause 1 	<p data-bbox="580 491 2033 627">Integrated planning and commissioning across agencies and sectors has been in place for some time however there has been limited opportunity, if any, to pool resources across government departments. This legislation, by requiring Departments to pool funds should limit duplication of services and strengthen work across departments to achieve the six high level outcomes.</p> <p data-bbox="580 671 2033 735">However it would be important to be mindful that in the ‘administration of co-operation’ resources are not diverted from front line services and that anticipated savings as the result of greater co-operation over time are realised.</p>

Clause	Comments (200 words)
<p>4. Children’s Services Planning</p> <p>Please provide comment on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The requirement for the Health and Social Care Board to review and publish a children and young people’s plan, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Content ○ Review mechanism ○ Co-operation between public bodies • The public bodies listed at Clause 4 (7) • The duties placed on the Health and Social Care Board particularly with regard to monitoring and reporting 	<p>Clause 4 of the Co-operation Bill appears to strengthen previous Children’s Services Planning Guidance and this is to be welcomed.</p> <p>The WELB recognises that the Health & Social Care Board (HSCB) already has a number of duties in relation to reviewing and publishing a children’s plan, however the Bill will now require the HSCB to review and publish a children and young people’s plan in consultation with a range of public bodies. The list of public bodies is extensive allowing for a wealth of views to be expressed by those who work directly or indirectly to achieve the six high level outcomes for children and young people.</p> <p>A mechanism to monitor and report is welcomed.</p>

Do you have any suggested amendments to the Bill? (200 words)

The WELB has no suggested amendments to the Bill.

Do you have any other comments? (200 words)

The Board has no additional comments