



Children's Commissioner's Advisory Board Terms of Reference

Purpose

- To provide strategic advice and challenge to the Children's Commissioner and her team acting as a critical friend and sounding board for the Children's Commissioner regarding policies and proposals, informing the policy and strategic priorities.
- To advise on how the powers of the Children's Commissioner can be used to best effect in order to promote and protect children and young people's rights, and improve outcomes for children and young people in England.
- As experts in their own fields, to provide advice, support, scrutiny and challenge to the Commissioner to secure the effective delivery of the Children's Commissioner's statutory responsibilities.
- To advise the Children's Commissioner on key issues and challenges facing children, families and the sector at large.
- To help strengthen relationships between the Children's Commissioner and the wider children's services network across the statutory and voluntary sectors as appropriate.
- To promote the work of the Children's Commissioner.
- Board members are to treat all Board business, and communications with the Commissioner in their roles as Advisory Board members as confidential, unless it is clearly indicated that a public statement will follow their discussions.

Constitution

The Advisory Board is a requirement of the Children and Families Act 2014. It is expected to be made up of representatives from across Children's and wider sectors.

- The Children's Commissioner will chair meetings.

- Secretariat will be provided by the OCC.
- This Advisory Board is not accountable for the policies or financial or other management affairs of the Office.
- Individual members carry no personal liabilities or risks.

Membership, including mechanisms for ending membership on either side

- The Advisory Board will comprise a group of influential figures from across the children's sector and wider civil society, each member bringing specific expertise and knowledge
- Membership is by the formal invitation of the Children's Commissioner, members being approached and invited to be members on the basis of the following considerations, to be taken across the Board membership as a whole:
 - A track record of excellence at a strategic policy and delivery;
 - A track record of high strategic or operational performance to support services relevant to children young people and families.
 - Proven knowledge and experience of policymaking and public affairs;
 - Knowledge of the role, remit, powers and duties of the Children's Commissioner as defined in legislation.
- The work of the Advisory Board will be undertaken paying due regard to the seven principles of the Code of Conduct for those in Public Life.
- Board positions are not remunerated. Expenses incurred as a member will be reimbursed on proof of their having been incurred. All expenses claims must comply with the regulations contained in the Children's Commissioner's Office published Financial Procedures
- A member of the Board may at any time and in writing stand down from the Advisory Board by giving three months' notice of the intention to leave.
- In the unlikely event that such an issue should arise, as a result of exceptional circumstances and only on the grounds of firm evidence, if the Commissioner deems it necessary to remove an Advisory Board member because of substantial risk to the Children's Commissioner by their

continued membership of the Advisory Board, the Children's Commissioner will write to the individual concerned stating in detail the reasons for terminating membership, and giving twenty working days allowing the member to respond in writing.

Frequency of meetings and attendance expectations

- The Advisory Board will meet 4 times per annum. Dates will be published a year in advance and not subsequently changed unless in exceptional circumstances. Board members are expected to attend a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 4 meetings per annum and be available between meetings via email or phone, on a limited basis and only as strictly necessary
- Membership of the Advisory board is for 1 year. The Commissioner has the option to extend the term