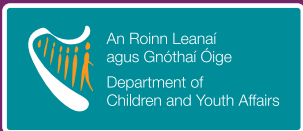




BLUEPRINT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEES





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1. INTRODUCTION



Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSCs) 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 CYPSCs 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 co-ordination of activity and for oversight of local policy and provision, to ensure that children, young people and their families receive optimum services. Their role is to enhance interagency co-operation and to realise the five national outcomes set out in *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People, 2014-2020*, namely: to be active and healthy; to be achieving in all areas of learning and development; to be safe and protected from harm; to enjoy economic security and opportunity; and to be connected, respected and contributing.

Well-implemented interagency working can contribute to bringing about those improved outcomes for children and young people through systemic and cultural change in services. In this way, CYPSCs have the potential to effect transformative change impacting on aspects of the lives of children and young people as expressed through the five national outcomes.

CYPSCs have, to date, engaged in many successful interagency innovations and initiatives at both strategic and operational levels that respond to the identified needs within their areas and have developed 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;
- the delivery of evidence-based parenting programmes.

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

1.1 BACKGROUND

This document provides a blueprint for the development of CYPSCs 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 CYPSCs based on policy and strategic direction from the DCYA, the CYPSC National Steering Group and the Children and Young People's Policy Consortium, with input from relevant sectors.

The document was developed with a Task Group established by the DCYA in September 2014 with a view to prioritising key issues to be addressed in the strategic and operational development of CYPSCs. The DCYA circulated a discussion document on Children's Services Committees (the former name for the CYPSCs), 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 them with specific regard to the development of CYPSCs in the following areas:

- central purpose, mandate and remit of CYPSCs;
- governance of CYPSCs 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 CYPSCs;
- data, evaluation and dissemination of best practice.

In addition to the DCYA's discussion document, the work of the Task Group was also informed by recent organisational and policy developments, such as the establishment of Tusla – Child and Family Agency; significant developments in Local Government reform; and the implementation of *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*. An immediate consequence of unifying children and young people's policy domains through *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* and aligning children's services within this framework is the extension of the remit of the CYPSCs beyond 18 up to 24 years of age, to ensure that CYPSCs cover the respective policy domains and broad range of constituencies that work with children and young people, from the statutory to the voluntary sectors.

This document aims to chart succinctly a blueprint for the development of CYPSCs going forward over the next three years (2015-2017), taking account of the organisational and policy developments mentioned above, to ensure co-ordinated, comprehensive, evidence-informed and outcomes-focused policy, planning and provision of services for all children and young people up to the age of 24.

This blueprint seeks to bring a specific focus to many of the key strategic and structural issues that need to be addressed in the development of CYPSCs. In developing this document, it is also recognised that there are other more operational and process considerations that need to be further addressed to support the effective implementation and operation of CYPSCs. It is envisaged that these will be addressed and developed in an implementation guide, which will be developed later in 2015.

This blueprint outlines a number of initial key actions for the development of CYPSCs, which are listed in Section 6 of this document with details of partners and timeframes involved.

This blueprint for the development of CYPSCs 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 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 *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* is to provide a framework through which to co-ordinate policy and implementation across Government departments, agencies and constituent sectors to achieve better outcomes for children and young people. Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSCs) 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.

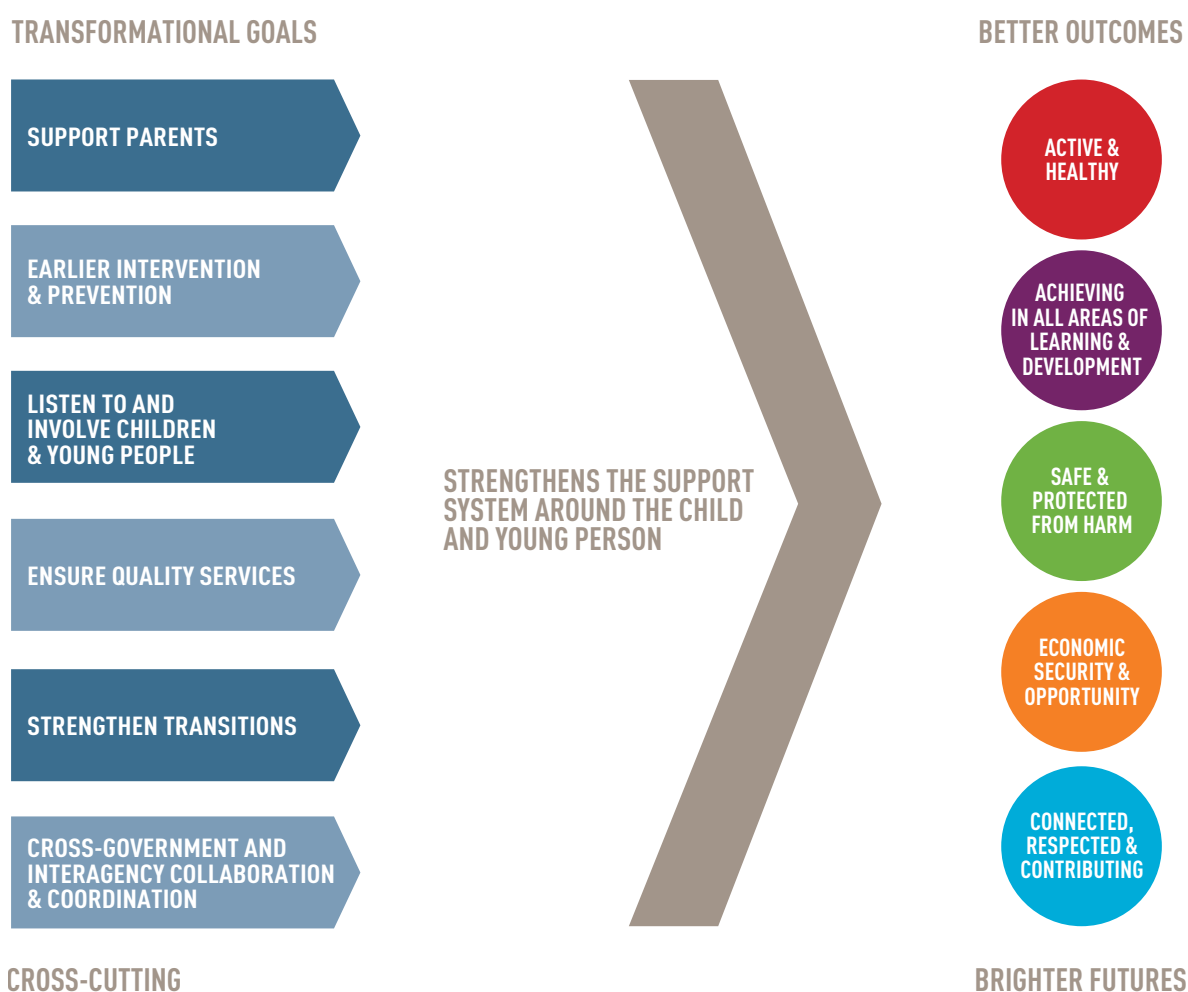
Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures sets out five national outcomes and six transformational goals for children and young people (see Figure 1). These are the overarching and unifying outcomes and goals structuring policy for children and young people across Government, agencies and sectors which have a role and remit for working with children and young people. The five national outcomes span the key policy domains that impact on the lives of children and young people, while the six transformational goals are identified as the enablers required to realise these outcomes. The work of the CYPSCs will be framed according to these outcomes and transformational goals.

In line with the age range of *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*, the **age range of Children's Services Committees has now been extended beyond 18 years, up to 24 years of age, and to reflect this the name 'Children's Services Committees' has been changed to Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSCs)**. 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 that align with their developmental needs and aspirations.

Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures is predicated on cross-departmental and interagency collaboration, both nationally and locally. It underscores the necessity of interagency working and tasks CYPSCs with a key role in this regard. Through the local CYPSCs and the 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 DCYA will continue to develop the role of CYPSCs and to expand the establishment of local CYPSCs, 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 CYPSCs will underpin and structure the direction of the CYPSC work programme in the future, along with other identified priorities and 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 important across the range of levels of service provision, from targeted to universal. The importance of interagency working and information sharing to ensure the welfare and well-being of children and young people has been highlighted nationally and internationally in recent years.

Four **levels of interagency working** have been identified (Frost, 2005)¹, as follows:

- 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 (Statham, 2011):²

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.

A review of international evidence on interagency 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. 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.

¹ Frost, N. (2005) *Professionalism, partnership and joined-up thinking: A research review of front-line working with children and families*. Dartington: Research in Practice.

² Statham, J. (2011) *A review of international evidence on interagency working, to inform the development of Children's Services Committees in Ireland*, Department of Children and Youth Affairs. Dublin: Government Publications. Available at: <http://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/publications/wtfchildren.pdf>

The development of Ireland's 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 CYPSCs

The five principles underpinning *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* also underpin the work of CYPSCs. 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 well-being of children and young people.
- **Equality:** The diversity of children 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, OBJECTIVES AND REMIT OF CYPSCs



2.1 PURPOSE OF CYPSCs

The central purpose of a Children and Young People's Services Committee is **to ensure effective interagency co-ordination and collaboration to achieve the best outcomes for all children and young people in its area**. This is achieved through enhanced planning, co-ordination and oversight of policy implementation, planning and service provision locally. Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSCs) will act as the structure whereby 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 its member agencies to ensure a planned, co-ordinated and concerted response to the needs of children and young people at local level. It is not the purpose of a 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 of effort and ensuring that services are both flexible to locally identified needs and informed by identified national priorities.

Each CYPSC has an explicit role to play in contributing 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. Each CYPSC 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 its local area. In addition, service plans by member agencies should also have due regard to both Government policy and local priorities as identified by the CYPSC. Each CYPSC should also actively promote the development of quality practices and the delivery of quality services within its area.

2.2 OBJECTIVES OF CYPSCs

CYPSCs 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 through:

Ensuring 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.

Planning and co-ordination of services

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

Ensuring 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 and responding to the voice of children and young people.
- Support the implementation of relevant and innovative interagency initiatives of member agencies.

Promoting quality, evidence-informed planning and practice

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

Optimising 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 CYPSCs and agencies' service plans in respect of their priorities.
- Inform the allocation of resources and work towards becoming a vehicle for facilitating joint 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.

Promoting best participation practice

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

2.3 MANDATE

The mandate for CYPSCs 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 the DCYA and key agencies (including Tusla – Child and Family Agency, the Local Government Management Agency, the Health Service Executive and stakeholders in the Education sector) will be explored to further support CYPSCs and give full 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 have regard to the range of services and supports that are in place for **0-24 year-olds**, reflecting the different developmental phases and associated needs and challenges of each stage of childhood, youth and extending into early adulthood. Existing CYPSCs will need to adapt their work in light of this extended age remit to take account of specific transitional issues relating to the 18-24 age group.

The work of CYPSCs should adhere to the concept of progressive universalism³ and span policy areas and service provision, from the universal to targeted services and supports for children and young people. CYPSCs will accommodate the broad range of policy areas, services and professional disciplines relevant to children and young people available in the statutory, community and voluntary sectors.

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 other circumstances, it may be appropriate to divide the Local Authority area into more than one CYPSC, as in the case of Dublin City Council, and this may be considered in consultation with the National Co-ordinator for CYPSC, the Local Authority in question and other relevant agencies. In meeting their objectives, CYPSCs will be cognisant that children and young people may engage with services across CYPSC boundaries.

2.6 FUNCTIONING OF CYPSCs

CYPSCs ensure the connection of national policy with local implementation in their areas through planning and co-ordinating the provision of services for children and young people and by informing the deployment of resources, taking into account locally identified needs and those identified at national level, which can be advanced through a standardised approach across all CYPSCs (*see Figure 2*).

Each local committee develops and oversees the implementation of a **3-year Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP)**, which is designed to improve outcomes for children and young people in the area. This CYPP outlines a committee's priorities and includes:

³ Progressive universalism refers to the concept that 'all children would be supported, but those with particular needs would be supported more than others'. NESCC (2005) *The Developmental Welfare State*, Report No. 113. Dublin: National Economic and Social Council.

- 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 area;
- a detailed action plan mapping the committee’s planned actions to respond to its priorities.

The CYPP is directly informed by a CYPSC’s member 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). Each committee 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 its plan.

Figure 2: Summary of objectives, role and outcomes of CYPSCs



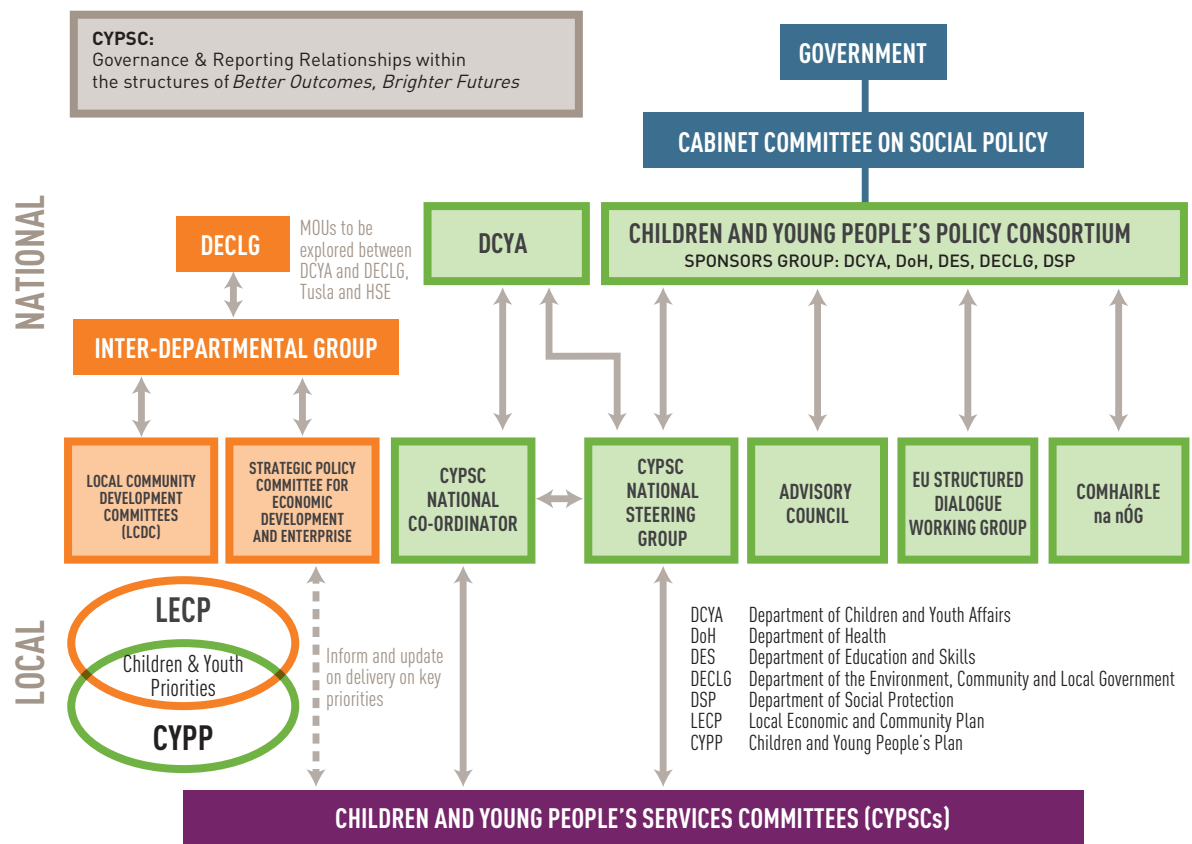
3. CYPSC GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURES AT NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVEL



3.1 NATIONAL GOVERNANCE

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) will provide strategic and policy direction to the development of CYPSCs. As the CYPSCs form 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 DCYA, and in turn to the Children and Young People’s Policy Consortium (see Appendix 1 for information on the latter). Figure 3 shows the national governance and reporting relationships of CYPSCs, with each structure described in further detail below.

Figure 3: National governance and reporting relationships of CYPSCs



3.1.1 CYPSC National Steering Group

The main functions of the CYPSC National Steering Group are (1) to support and guide local committees to achieve better outcomes for children and young people, and (2) 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 CYPSCs. It 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 CYPSCs and highlight any pertinent issues that require consideration at a national level.

The **functions of the CYPSC National Steering Group** include to:

- provide leadership and direction for CYPSCs at national and local level;
- operationalise, support and identify requisite supports for the development of CYPSCs;
- have oversight of CYPSC planning, implementation and reporting;
- provide guidance on significant operational issues across all CYPSCs;
- synthesise the intelligence from local CYPSCs in relation to achievements, challenges, needs and obstacles, as well as to emerging trends, issues or themes requiring a national response;
- refer obstacles to appropriate Government departments with recommendations for resolution if these cannot be resolved by the National Steering Group;
- report on the work of CYPSCs to 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 CYPSCs;
- promote the work of CYPSCs and best practice in their respective sectors.

The CYPSC National Steering Group has been 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 Steering Group includes:

- National Chairperson;
- National Co-ordinator for CYPSC;
- Tusla – Child and Family Agency;
- Local Authority representative;
- Health Service Executive representative;
- Department of Education and Skills;
- Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government;
- Department of Children and Youth Affairs;
- Education and Training Boards Ireland;
- Community and voluntary sector representatives with experience of CYPSCs;
- Young person aged 18-24 years;
- CYPSC Chairperson (local);
- CYPSC Vice-Chairperson (local);
- CYPSC Co-ordinator (local);
- 1-2 nominees co-opted by National Chairperson in consultation with DCYA and having regard to local CYPSCs.

3.1.2 National Co-ordinator for CYPSC

The role of the National Co-ordinator for Children and Young People's Services Committees is outlined below. Under the strategic direction of the DCYA, the National Co-ordinator will:

- provide leadership for CYPSCs at national level and lead the implementation of the strategic plan for CYPSCs;
- ensure there is coherence across the CYPSC structure and that a common approach is adopted across local CYPSCs and that they are embedded into the wider system;
- ensure that the CYPSCs maintain an outcomes-focused approach and operate to the highest standard, informed by current and emerging evidence;
- build understanding of and commitment to CYPSCs at local and national level;
- provide and co-ordinate support for CYPSCs (e.g. research and data, communications, facilitation and implementation), including support to individual CYPSCs at start-up stage and as required thereafter;
- have oversight of progress and impact of CYPSCs, co-ordinating collective reporting to the CYPSC National Steering Group and the DCYA, ensuring accountability and a focus on learning;
- harness the knowledge and expertise of CYPSCs to inform national policy and strategy.

3.1.3 Participation of children and young people

Both the CYPSC National Steering Group and local CYPSCs will work to ensure meaningful participation by children and young people to inform the work of CYPSCs. CYPSCs may utilise the existing children's and young people's participation and consultation mechanisms (e.g. Comhairle na nÓg and the EU Structured Dialogue process) and should also have regard to the DCYA's *National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-making* (2015). CYPSCs will also consider how they consult with and ensure participation of children and young people who are outside of the established structures ('hard-to-reach' groups).

In supporting CYPSCs and as reflected in its *National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-making*, the DCYA will develop guidelines on a broader strategy of participation by children and young people in the work of CYPSCs, in co-operation with representatives from local committees.

3.2 LOCAL GOVERNANCE

3.2.1 CYPSC Chairperson

Each CYPSC will be chaired by Tusla – Child and Family Agency, with a representative from the Local Authority (City/County Council) holding the role of Vice-Chairperson. This configuration will be subject to review. The CYPSC Chairperson will provide strategic leadership and direction for the CYPSC and ensure its 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 local 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.

3.2.2 CYPSC Vice-Chairperson

The Vice-Chairperson of each CYPSC will be a representative from the Local Authority (City/County Council). The responsibilities of the Vice-Chairperson are to:

- support the CYPSC Chairperson in the performance of his or her 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.

3.2.3 CYPSC Co-ordinator

Each CYPSC Co-ordinator will support the CYPSC in its work to bring together a diverse group of agencies in its local county area to engage in joint planning and co-ordination 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 and development of the CYPSC and its sub-groups;
- communicate a clear sense of purpose and direction on behalf of the CYPSC;
- co-ordinate the development and implementation of the CYPSC's 3-year Children and Young People's Plan;
- assist the overall committee and sub-groups to implement the 3-year work plan and monitor progress in line with the five national outcomes for children and young people as set out in *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*.

It is envisaged that CYPSC Co-ordinators will be employed under a standardised set of arrangements (see Section 4.7 below on 'Resourcing'). The overall work of a CYPSC Co-ordinator will be defined by the local CYPSC 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 CYPSC and follow the overall policy direction set by the DCYA and the CYPSC National Steering Group.

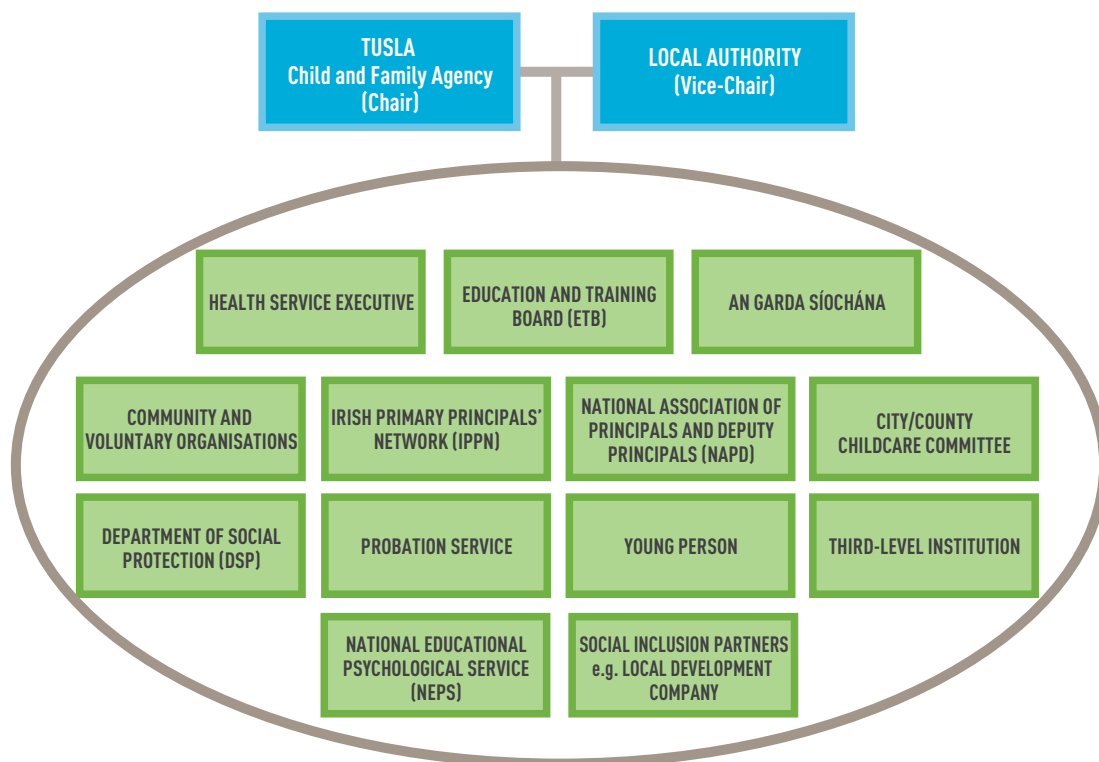
3.2.4 CYPSC Membership

Each CYPSC will have a membership of 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 – Child and Family Agency;
- Local Authority (City/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;
- Third-level institution located in or close to the CYPSC area;
- National Educational Psychological Service;
- Social inclusion partners (e.g. Local Development Company).

Figure 4 shows the composition of a typical Children and Young People's Services Committee.

Figure 4: Membership of a Children and Young People's Services Committee



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 for services that are commissioned or outsourced to this sector. Community and voluntary organisations can sometimes be the sole providers of certain 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 also considering the need for the CYPSC to be representative and to function effectively.

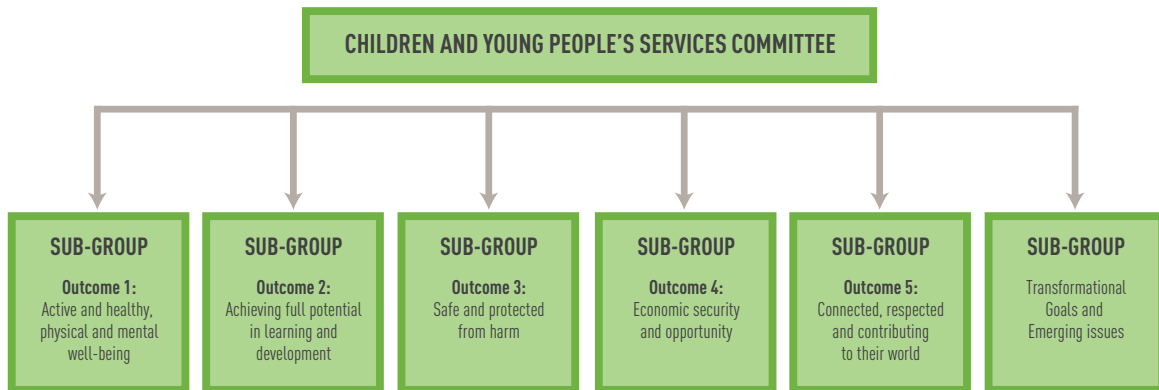
3.2.5 Terms of Reference

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

3.2.6 CYPSC Sub-groups

Each CYPSC should have in place a number of structured sub-groups, aligned to the 'national outcome' and 'transformational goal' areas in *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* (see *Figure 5*). This will ensure that sub-structures are established and allied to the broad range of needs of children and young people. These CYPSC sub-groups can accommodate existing or new initiatives (e.g. the Prevention, Partnership and Family Support groups being established by Tusla can act as the standing sub-group 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 the sixth sub-group ('Transformational Goals and Emerging Issues', see *Figure 5*). All sub-groups should be responsive to local needs and trends, and the work of the respective sub-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, as described in Section 3.1.3 above on participation. The Chairperson of each sub-group will provide a progress update at each CYPSC meeting, with this sub-group update being a standing agenda item at each CYPSC meeting. The Chairperson of each sub-group will, in turn, relay information from the CYPSC meeting to their respective sub-group.

3.2.7 Local Community Development Committees

The development of CYPSCs will have specific regard to the significant changes in local government. Locally, each CYPSC will agree key priorities with the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) as they relate to the work of the CYPSC and its member agencies for inclusion in the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) of the Local Authority (City/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 the Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG). The Department of Children and Youth Affairs will work with the DECLG to develop a guidance document pertaining specifically to the relationship between CYPSCs and LCDCs.

This will involve a two-way relationship wherein local CYPSCs and LCDCs (or Strategic Policy Committees/SPCs) 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 currently 31 City/County Childcare Committees across the country, each with responsibility for the promotion of cross-agency co-operation 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.

The DCYA will explore the formalisation and strengthening of relationships between CYPSCs and the City/County Childcare Committees.

4. PLANNING, REPORTING AND RESOURCING



The planning, reporting and resourcing functions of CYPSCs are fundamental to their success. These functions need to be informative yet proportionate, with the guiding aim of assisting in ensuring better outcomes for children and young people while also cultivating a learning and evaluation-focused approach to the work of CYPSCs. This is a core area of activity, which will be reviewed and further developed in a reporting framework for CYPSCs later in 2015.

4.1 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLANS

As described in Section 2.6, each CYPSC is required to produce a 3-year Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP), which provides for national policy and local needs and priorities. The content, scale and frequency of plans will be considered to ensure that they are contemporary, relevant and timely, and can accommodate and anticipate themes and trends affecting the child and youth population in each local area. Plans will also take into account the requirements of Local Economic and Community Plans to ensure that there is complementarity between these plans and the local CYPSC plans.

A standardised approach to the development and quality assurance of plans and their implementation will be developed as part of the wider reporting framework for CYPSCs 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 CYPPs will be posted on both the DCYA website (www.dcy.ie) and the national CYPSC website (www.cypsc.ie). Local committees and their member agencies are also encouraged to include plans on their own respective websites. To embed the work of the local committees and to ensure that relevant input is acknowledged, all member agencies are also requested to consider inclusion of reference to their work within CYPSCs in their annual reports.

4.2 CYPSC ANNUAL PROGRAMME OF WORK AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Each CYPSC will produce an Annual Programme of Work, which will be a succinct statement containing the committee's objectives for the year. It will be informed by local priorities as expressed within the Children and Young People's Plan and 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. It may also address processes to support local implementation of national policies and strategies that may be directed from time to time by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

Each CYPSC will be required to submit a Progress Report to the National Co-ordinator for CYPSC. This will be produced on a regular basis in the form of a concise report drawing from developed indicators and illustrating the status and progress of developments within the CYPSC area.

The National Co-ordinator for CYPSC will lead the development of the planning and reporting requirements. This will be progressed through the establishment of a Working Group, comprised of key stakeholders involved in CYPSCs, to develop a reporting framework.

4.3 CYPSC NATIONAL PROGRESS REPORT

The National Co-ordinator for CYPSC 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.

4.4 REPORTING TO THE CONSORTIUM

The Chairperson of the CYPSC National Steering Group is also 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 CYPSCs. This will be informed by the CYPSC National Progress Report (*see above*).

4.5 MANAGING AND LEVERAGING BUDGETS

CYPSC member agencies should work together to leverage and make effective use of existing funding to deliver on the objectives of their Children and Young People's Plan. Informed by local need, it is anticipated and advised that each CYPSC would inform the budget allocation and expenditure of member agencies, 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.'

A local CYPSC may, upon occasion, wish to apply for funding for programmes and projects, but may not be in a position to apply in its own right since 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. All local CYPSCs should identify appropriate fiscal agents who can apply for funding on their behalf as the opportunity arises.

4.6 RESOURCING OF CYPSCs

The DCYA provides an annual allocation to Tusla – Child and Family Agency to support CYPSCs and also currently provides, in certain instances, a funding contribution to local CYPSC Co-ordinators. In addition, the DCYA funds the post of National Co-ordinator for

CYPSC. At present, local CYPSC Co-ordinators in posts 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, while others are employed by other statutory agencies and a significant minority are employed by the community and voluntary sector. The current diversity of arrangements offers a richness of skills and approaches in the Co-ordinators' role. However, it also brings challenges in terms of sustainability and standardisation of the Co-ordinators' post.

The DCYA has been working with Tusla in an effort to bring greater standardisation to the role of CYPSC Co-ordinators, having regard to available resources. This will enable a baseline level of provision of Co-ordinators' posts in and across CYPSCs, standardise structures and maximise synergies within the CYPSC infrastructure.

In line with this standardised approach, it is intended that CYPSC Co-ordinators' posts located within the community and voluntary sector will migrate to Tusla. Tusla 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's post currently situated in a statutory organisation other than Tusla.

The DCYA aims to maximise the resourcing of CYPSCs by encouraging related sectors (such as Local Government, Health Authorities and the stakeholders in the Education sector) to provide resources in support of the shared objectives identified through the CYPSC structures. These may include financial, administrative or professional supports that will enhance the ability of CYPSCs to support their 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 the DCYA and Tusla, 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 presented an opportunity to retitle the initiative 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 have now been retired.

5.1 ISSUING OF GUIDANCE FOR CYPSCs

The following developments are intended to clarify and streamline information on CYPSCs:

- CYPSC supporting documents and literature will be updated and rationalised, and accompanied by clear policy guidance and direction, which will reflect the extended age remit of CYPSCs.
- A clear and succinct composite document will be drawn up in 2015 to provide implementation guidance to CYPSCs.
- An interagency protocol has been developed and issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government to establish engagement arrangements between LCDCs and other local committees/bodies. The DCYA is currently engaging with the DECLG to develop a guidance document on the interaction between LCDCs and CYPSCs, reflecting the unique role of the CYPSCs as distinct from single entity service providers. The DCYA will issue further guidance once this process is completed.
- A guidance document outlining the interrelationship between local CYPSCs and Tusla's Prevention, Partnership and Family Support infrastructure has been drafted and will be available with the revised implementation guidance.
- A sectoral approach to developing the linkages between CYPSCs and respective sectors (e.g. Education, Health) will also be explored to ensure the role and remit of CYPSCs and related sectors are clearly charted.

5.2 COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

A communications plan will be developed by the National Co-ordinator for CYPSC, taking into account interactions with different sectors to ensure that they are informed by up-to-date developments in CYPSCs and vice versa. This plan will focus on the role of CYPSCs in the context of the implementation of *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*.

5.3 WEBSITE

The national website for Children and Young People's Services Committees (www.cypsc.ie) has been developed as a focal point for information on CYPSCs and a gateway to information on individual county-level committees. It will serve several functions, including:

- to promote interagency working through CYPSCs to a wide-ranging audience across sectors, professions and disciplines;
- to provide current information to all levels of CYPSC infrastructure;
- to facilitate information exchange between local CYPSCs;
- to support CYPSCs to locate themselves within the larger community/national initiative.

5.4 CAPACITY-BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT FOR CYPSCs

Capacity-building and development support for CYPSCs will be provided through:

- Training, which will be made available to local CYPSC Chairpersons, Vice-Chairpersons, committee members and Co-ordinators, subject to the identification of need and the availability of resources.
- A national event for CYPSCs, which will continue to be held and further developed in order to provide an opportunity for knowledge exchange and networking, and to ensure that best practice models are identified and shared.

5.5 DATA, EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION OF BEST PRACTICE

The DCYA will seek to support the development of data and evaluation capacities that can support the CYPSC initiative to integrate with other data sources and to make use of existing data available. The County-level Data Analysis Initiative, which is ongoing, is an example in this regard.

Other related developments will include:

- Consideration of the development of a learning and evaluation framework for CYPSCs.
- The development of support material to strengthen implementation capacity and dissemination of best practice, which can actively support the work of CYPSCs.

6. KEY ACTIONS 2015 – 2017 FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CYPSCs



These actions will be subject to review as the roll-out evolves.

Key Actions	Partners	Timeframe
National roll-out		
The roll-out nationally of Children's Services Committees [now Children and Young People's Services Committees] in a co-ordinated fashion, connecting them with Local Government and Tusla – Child and Family Agency. <i>(Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures, G47, p. 40)</i>	DCYA, Tusla, LCDCs, Local Government and National Co-ordinator for CYPSC	2015
Planning and Co-ordination		
Ensure planning and co-ordination of parenting supports at local level through Children's Services Committees [now Children and Young People's Services Committees]. <i>(Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures, G2, p. 28)</i>	Local CYPSCs, Tusla, DCYA, DJE, HSE, Local Government and National Co-ordinator for CYPSC	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. <i>(Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures, G52, p. 40)</i>	Local CYPSCs, DCYA, Tusla, Local Government, DECLG	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. <i>(Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures, G68, p. 43)</i>	DCYA, DECLG, DoH, Tusla, HSE, AGS, Local Government, National Co-ordinator for CYPSC, local CYPSCs	2016 and 2017
Development of county-level Children and Young People's Plans.	Local CYPSCs	2015 and 2016
Finalise guidance document on Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSCs) and Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs).	DCYA, DECLG	2015
Formalise and strengthen relationship of CYPSCs with City/County Childcare Committees.	DCYA	2015
Explore the development of Memorandums of Understanding between CYPSCs and relevant agencies.	DCYA and others	2015
Develop guidance on the relationship between CYPSCs and other agencies.	National Co-ordinator for CYPSC, DCYA	2015

Key Actions	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 Tusla, Local Government and DCYA. <i>(Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures, G48, p. 40)</i>	DCYA, Tusla, Local Government	2015
Data		
Deliver the County-level Data Analysis Initiative to support the Children's Services Committees [now Children and Young People's Services Committees]. <i>(Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures, G62, p. 42)</i>	DCYA, National Co-ordinator for CYPSCs	2015 and 2016
Monitoring, Reporting, Learning and Evaluation		
Learning and evaluation framework for CYPSCs at local and national level will be explored.	National Co-ordinator for CYPSC, local CYPSCs, DCYA	2015
Development of reporting framework for CYPSCs.	National Co-ordinator for CYPSC, local CYPSCs, DCYA	2015
Quality assurance reviews of CYPSCs' Children and Young People's Plans.	National Co-ordinator for CYPSC, DCYA, Tusla, Centre for Effective Services	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. <i>(Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures, Commitment 3, p. 113)</i>	DCYA, Local Government	2015

Key Actions	Partners	Timeframe
Implementation		
New implementation guide to be developed for CYPSCs, bringing together and updating existing operational documentation.	National Co-ordinator for CYPSC, DCYA, local CYPSCs	2015
Implementation support to new and established CYPSCs.	National Co-ordinator for CYPSC	2015, 2016, 2017
Capacity-building: Training for local CYPSC leadership.	National Co-ordinator for CYPSC, DCYA, local CYPSCs	2015, 2016, 2017
Annual event for CYPSCs.	National Co-ordinator for CYPSC, local CYPSCs, CYPSC National Steering Group, DCYA	2015, 2016, 2017
Guidance on enhancing children and young people's participation in CYPSCs.	DCYA, National Co-ordinator for CYPSC, local CYPSCs	2016
Transmit learning on evidence-informed approaches emerging from existing DCYA initiatives with a view to informing the work and planning of local CYPSCs.	DCYA	2016
Communications		
National CYPSC Communications plan and materials.	National Co-ordinator for CYPSC	2015

APPENDICES



Appendix 1: Children and Young People's Policy Consortium

Chair: Secretary General, Department of Children and Youth Affairs

Deputy Chair: Department of the Taoiseach

Members: Assistant Secretaries from the Departments of the Taoiseach; Public Expenditure and Reform; Finance; Health; Education and Skills; Social Protection; Environment, Community and Local Government; Justice and Equality; Transport, Tourism and Sport; Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation; Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht; and Communication, Energy and Natural Resources; senior representatives from Tusla, HSE and An Garda Síochána; City/County Manager nominated by City and County Managers' Association; the Chair and three members of the Advisory Council; and the Chair of the CYPSC 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 for Terms of Reference for a Children and Young People's Services Committee

The following text can be used to create a Terms of Reference document for an individual CYPSC, inserting specific information where indicated by the blue text in square brackets.

1. Purpose

The purpose of [name of CYPSC] will be to provide strategic direction and leadership to ensure effective interagency co-ordination and collaboration in order to achieve the best outcomes for all children and young people in [name county/counties].

Note: A CYPSC may wish to elaborate further with, for example, localised vision statement.

2. Term

These Terms of Reference are effective from [insert start date] and continue until the [insert expected date of review of Terms of Reference or when they will be terminated by agreement between the parties].

3. Membership

[Name of CYPSC] will comprise:

- [Name, Title, Organisation] (CYPSC Chairperson)
- [Name, Title, Organisation] (CYPSC Vice-Chairperson)
- [Name, Title, Organisation] (CYPSC Co-ordinator)
- [Name, Title, Organisation]

4. Roles and Responsibilities

[To be discussed by the CYPSC]

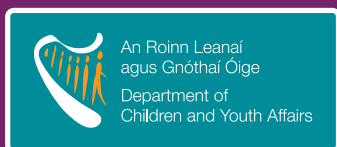
5. Meetings

- 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 minutes/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

The Terms of Reference may be amended, modified or varied in writing after consultation and agreement by [insert name of CYPSC] members.



DUBLIN
PUBLISHED BY THE STATIONERY OFFICE

To be purchased from
GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS,
52 ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN, DUBLIN 2
[Tel: 01 647 6834 or 1890 213434; Fax: 01 647 6843]
or through any bookseller

Price: €5.00

ISBN 978-1-4064-2876-6

