

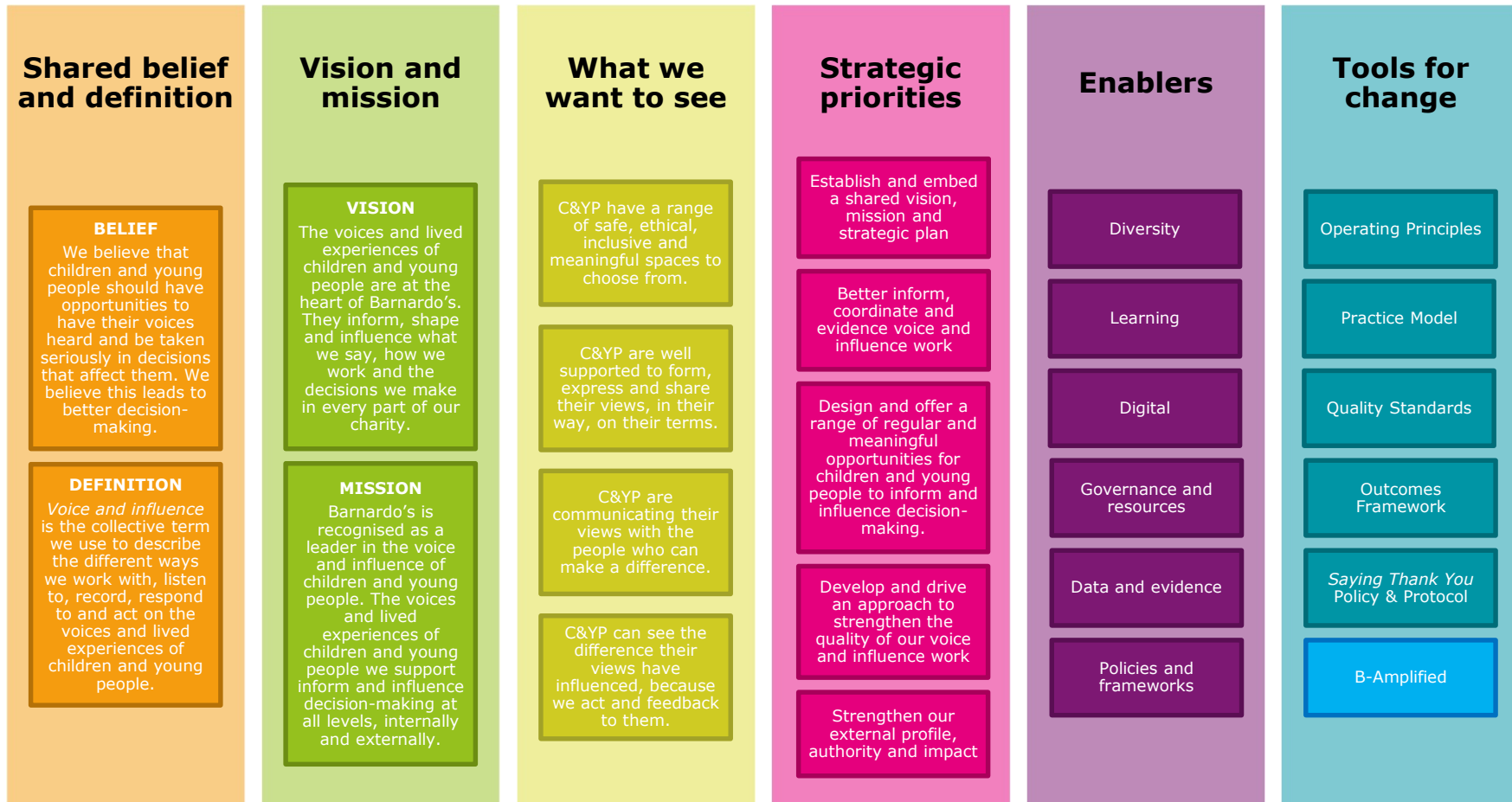
Voice and influence of children and young people

UK Strategic Plan 2021-25

Author:
Reporting to:
Date approved:
Date of next review:

Head of Voice and Influence
Director of Strategic Partnerships
August 2021 (CLT)
March 2022; thereafter annually

Plan on a page





1: Our ambition

Our shared belief

We believe that children and young people should have opportunities to have their voices heard and be taken seriously in decisions that affect them.

We recognise this is their right under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We believe this leads to better decision-making and improved services.





Our shared definition

Voice and influence is the collective term we use to describe the different ways we work with, listen to, record, respond to and act on the voices and lived experiences of children and young people.

Our vision

The voices and lived experiences of children and young people are at the heart of Barnardo's.

They inform, shape and influence what we say, how we work and the decisions we make in every part of our charity.





Our mission

Barnardo's is recognised as a leader in the voice and influence of children and young people.

The voices and lived experiences of children and young people we support inform and influence decision-making at all levels, internally and externally.



2: Our strategic priorities and how we'll measure progress

Our 5 strategic priorities

1. Embed our **shared vision, mission and strategic plan** for the voice and influence of children and young people across our charity.
2. Better **coordinate, monitor and evidence the impact of children and young people's voice and influence** across our charity.
3. Design and offer a range of **regular and meaningful opportunities for children and young people** to inform and influence decision-making at all levels, internally and externally.
4. Develop and drive **an approach to strengthen the quality of our voice and influence work**, ensuring it is always safe, ethical, inclusive and impactful.
5. Strengthen our **external profile, authority and impact** as both leaders in voice and influence work and advocates of children and young people's voices and lived experiences.

Our 5 strategic priorities cont'd

A bit more detail...

1 **Embed our shared vision, mission and strategic plan for the voice and influence of children and young people across our charity.**

*This means **children and young people**:*

- ↪ Know what they can expect when they work with us.
- ↪ Have a consistent experience when they do.
- ↪ Are valued, respected and appropriately 'thanked' for their input.

*This means **we**:*

- ↪ Work with a shared sense of purpose.
- ↪ Work collaboratively, ethically and inclusively.
- ↪ Facilitate the voice and influence of children and young people as part of our *business as usual*, at all levels of decision-making.

Our 5 strategic priorities cont'd

A bit more detail...

1 Embed our shared vision, mission and strategic plan for the voice and influence of children and young people across our charity.

*To start with, **we will:***

- ✓ Co-produce a set of operating principles, to lay out our commitment to children and young people when they engage in with us.
- ✓ Co-produce a set of frameworks, policies and procedures around how we ethically and inclusively involve them in different aspects of our work.
- ✓ Co-produce an outcomes framework, to help us better understand, monitor and measure the impact on children and young people, and our decision-making.
- ✓ Build 'voice and influence' into all new job descriptions (as appropriate) across the charity and begin re-aligning all "participation" roles to this strategic plan.

Our 5 strategic priorities cont'd

A bit more detail...

2 Better coordinate, monitor and evidence the impact of children and young people's voice and influence across our charity.

*This means **children and young people**:*

- ↪ Only have to express their view about something once.
- ↪ Can keep a record of their work with us and the benefits it brings.
- ↪ Can shape and co-design these activities with us.

*This means **we**:*

- ↪ Know where and how we are delivering this work across the charity.
- ↪ Clearly and robustly record what we are told and what we do with it.
- ↪ Can continually learn, develop, innovate and pilot new ideas.

Our 5 strategic priorities cont'd

A bit more detail...

2 **Better coordinate, monitor and evidence the impact of children and young people's voice and influence across our charity.**

*To start with, **we will:***

- ✓ Co-produce a rights-based practice model that can be used 'on the ground' for developing, delivering and evaluating all voice and influence across Barnardo's.
- ✓ Develop a process or system that enables more routine and central recording of young people's views, experiences, feedback, insights and complaints.
- ✓ Pilot a Development Fund to support and enable voice and influence work to be undertaken, supported or piloted at a team, local or region/nation level.
- ✓ Further develop use of our online monitoring tool to record young people's engagement with voice and influence opportunities and the impact this has.

Our 5 strategic priorities cont'd

A bit more detail...

3 Design and offer a range of regular and meaningful opportunities for children and young people to inform and influence decision-making at all levels, internally and externally.

*This means **children and young people**:*

- ↪ Trust us to provide genuine spaces for them to have a voice.
- ↪ Have a 'menu' of opportunities to choose from, to share their views.
- ↪ Know how their views were used or acted on.

*This means **we**:*

- ↪ Provide a range of different opportunities for children and young people.
- ↪ Are always clear about what we are asking for their views on.
- ↪ Always feedback how we used or acted on their views.

Our 5 strategic priorities cont'd

A bit more detail...

3 Design and offer a range of regular and meaningful opportunities for children and young people to inform and influence decision-making at all levels, internally and externally.

*To start with, **we will:***

- ✓ Co-produce a range of safe, ethical, inclusive and meaningful voice and influence opportunities for involving young people in our strategic and corporate decision-making, including for young people no longer accessing our services.
- ✓ Co-produce a learning, development and 'benefits' offer for children and young people who engage in voice and influence opportunities.
- ✓ Establish a quality assurance process for all voice and influence opportunities (internal and external) for children and young people.
- ✓ Scope, develop and build an approach to working with children under 11, including those in their early years (0-5).

Our 5 strategic priorities cont'd

A bit more detail...

4 **Develop and drive an approach which strengthens the quality of our voice and influence practice, ensuring it is always safe, ethical, inclusive and impactful.**

*This means **children and young people**:*

- ↪ Are well supported to form and express their views.
- ↪ Are enabled to express themselves in different forms and formats.
- ↪ Have a consistently good experience working with us.

*This means **we**:*

- ↪ Deliver consistently good voice and influence activities.
- ↪ Actively harness collaboration and encourage learning.
- ↪ Have the skills and know-how to '*do it yourself*' and well.

Our 5 strategic priorities cont'd

A bit more detail...

4 **Develop and drive an approach which strengthens the quality of our voice and influence practice, ensuring it is always safe, ethical, inclusive and impactful.**

*To start with, **we will:***

- ✓ Co-produce a set of quality standards for voice and influence work, incorporating these into the new Children's Services Effectiveness Strategy.
- ✓ Co-produce a staff learning and development offer, including training, e-learning, webinars and good practice sharing events.
- ✓ Co-produce a 'hub' of resources, toolkits, guides and similar materials to support the design, planning, delivering and evaluating of V&I activities.
- ✓ Build 'voice and influence' into every staff member's induction plan through our new B-Learning Moodle module.

Our 5 strategic priorities cont'd

A bit more detail...

5 **Strengthen our external profile, authority and impact as both leaders in voice and influence and advocates of children and young people's voices and lived experiences.**

*This means **children and young people**:*

- ↪ Get the best experience because we learn from others.
- ↪ Can be confident we know what we're doing.
- ↪ Can see we are advocating for them and their experiences.

*This means **we**:*

- ↪ Continually learn, grow and develop our expertise.
- ↪ Foster a sense of community with other organisations.
- ↪ Form strong, trusted and influential relationships and alliances with current and prospective commissioners and partners.

Our 5 strategic priorities cont'd

A bit more detail...

5 Strengthen our external profile, authority and impact as both leaders in voice and influence and advocates of children and young people's voices and lived experiences.

*To start with, **we will:***

- ✓ Co-chair the National Participation Forum, building collaborative and supportive relationships with other charities and Children's Commissioners' offices.
- ✓ Explore paid opportunities for 'voice and influence experienced' young people to help us lead the sector.
- ✓ Establish an externally-facing consultancy and commercial offer, including exploring the development a Voice & Influence Centre of Expertise/Excellence and the development of national products or services we could deliver.
- ✓ Increase our publication output to inform and influence practice across the sector, including research, 'good practice', blogs and positive news stories.

Valuing the unique worth of every person

In delivering our strategic priorities, we acknowledge that achieving:

Equality

- is about making sure children and young people have **equal access to opportunities**, whoever they are, whatever they have been through, whatever their needs.

Equity

- is about recognising every child or young person has a different set of circumstances, so **different opportunities and approaches** will be needed to achieve equality of access.

Diversity

- is about recognising **difference of expression and experience** between and among children and young people we work and seek to work with.

Inclusion

- is about embracing diversity, enabling all children and young people to **be and feel included**, proactively removing barriers they may experience.

Belonging

- is about children and young people feeling and being part of something bigger – they feel **valued for who they are and whatever they contribute**, without judgement, worry or fear.

What we want to see

We will know we are fulfilling our belief and are delivering our vision, mission and strategic priorities when children and young people:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a range of safe, ethical, inclusive and meaningful opportunities to choose from. 	They have SPACE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are well supported to form, express and share their views, in their way, on their terms. 	They have VOICE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are communicating their views directly with the people who can make a difference. 	They have an AUDIENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can see the difference their views have influenced, because we respond (or act) and feedback to them. 	They have INFLUENCE

Lundy's Rights-Based Model of Participation¹

These will inform and form the basis of our new *tools for change*, in turn informing our longer-term outcome and impact measures.



¹ [Lundy, L. \(2007\). 'Voice' Is Not Enough: Conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

What we want to see cont'd

Indicative intermediate outputs and outcomes to pilot measuring:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a range of safe, ethical, inclusive and meaningful opportunities* to choose from. 	They have SPACE
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Output measures	Outcome measures
Number of internal V&I opportunities provided to children & young people.	% of children & young people telling us they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • had opportunities to share their views and experiences. • felt safe working with us. • felt respected and valued working with us. • learnt something new (e.g. a new skill). • feel they will be able to use what they have learned or experienced in the future.
Number of external V&I opportunities facilitated for children & young people.	
Number of teams, services or departments offering voice & influence opportunities.	
Number of services children & young people working with us are drawn from.	
Number of children & young people participating in staff recruitment.	
Number of learning & development opportunities offered to children & young people.	
	% increase of teams, services or departments offering voice & influence opportunities.

** here, 'opportunities' refers to those which sit at strategic or corporate level, as explained on [this slide](#). It does **not** include those which are facilitated at an individual, team/service or local level at this stage.*

What we want to see cont'd

Indicative intermediate outputs and outcomes to pilot measuring:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are well supported to form, express and share their views, in their way, on their terms. 	They have VOICE
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Output measures	Outcome measures
Number of children & young people working with us in voice & influence opportunities.	% of children & young people telling us they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • were supported to form and express their views. • grew in confidence. • were acknowledged (thanked) for their input.
Number of children & young people attending learning & development opportunities.	
Number of children & young people receiving formal accreditation for their work with us.	
Number of professionals accessing/downloading and actively using our tools for change.	% of professionals or decision-makers telling us they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feel more confident facilitating voice & influence work with children & young people. • feel their knowledge about voice and & influence has increased/improved.
Number of professionals delivering direct voice & influence work or opportunities.	
Number of teams, services or departments delivering direct voice & influence work or opportunities.	

*Within this indicator, we will also measure all **equalities data** of children & young people working with us in voice & influence opportunities.*

What we want to see cont'd

Indicative intermediate outputs and outcomes to pilot measuring:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are communicating their views with the people who can make a difference. 	<p>They have an AUDIENCE</p>
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Output measures	Outcome measures
Number of activities facilitated with children & young people and internal decision-makers.	% of children & young people telling us they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • had opportunities to talk to decision-makers. • felt listened to, valued and respected by decision-makers. % increase of decision-makers engaging in voice & influence opportunities directly with children & young people
Number of children & young people engaging in these sessions.	
Number of activities facilitated with children & young people and external decision-makers.	
Number of children & young people engaging in these sessions.	
Number of children & young people participating in staff recruitment.	

What we want to see cont'd

Indicative intermediate outputs and outcomes to pilot measuring:

- Can **see the difference** their views have influenced, because we respond (or act) and feedback to them.

They have
INFLUENCE

Output measures	Outcome measures
Number of reports or publications produced of children & young people’s voice & influence.	% of children & young people telling us they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • were informed how their input was used or acted on. • felt valued for their input. % of decision-makers telling us children & young people’s input had an impact on a decision or action they took. % of influencing outputs ² that have included or evidenced the voices and lived experiences of children and young people supported by us.
% of opportunities following which feedback activities were delivered.	
% of recruitment decisions involving children & young people	
% of business development opportunities involving children & young people	
% of children & young people recommending Barnardo’s voice & influence opportunities to others (peers).	



² Ref for examples: Jones, H. (2011). [A guide to monitoring and evaluating policy influence](#) (Overseas Development Institute)

What we want to see cont'd

Developing a baseline

During the initial implementation period, September 2021 – March 2022, we expect to begin recording against the indicative intermediate measures outlined. This will enable us to establish a **baseline** set of data, as well as assess usefulness and value.

Generating KPIs

Assessing this baseline data, coupled with the development of a new V&I [Outcomes Framework](#), we will then identify a core set of **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** to begin reporting against from 1 April 2022.

We expect to establish a **Task and Finish Group** to build this KPI set from our baseline.

Performance reporting

KPI reporting will occur **once annually to CLT** within a new *V&I Annual Report* (see later section on [Governance](#)).



3: Delivering our strategic plan

Delivering our strategic plan

Voice and influence is everybody's **business as usual**. They are central to how we deliver services that achieve *Stronger Families, Safer Childhoods* and *Positive Futures*.

Every team, service, department and directorate has a responsibility for ensuring our vision and delivery of our strategic priorities are **embraced, reflected** and **evidenced** in their work.

This might look different for different teams. For some, they could be incorporated into wider business or delivery plans; for others, it could be a separate action plan that sits alongside your wider strategies and plans.

Then, to help us evidence the work we do and the impact it has, we will ask you to report on your voice and influence work – however broad – regularly:

- For our **Children's Services**, this will be incorporated into your existing quarterly performance reporting.
- For **all other areas**, this will be expected twice a year, or as agreed.

Our enablers

There are some critical things we need to ensure are reflected and embedded in the delivery of this strategic plan to enable us to achieve our vision and mission. These are:

Corporate enablers

Diversity
Putting equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of voice and influence work.

Learning
Equipping our workforce to deliver excellent voice and influence work; and harnessing what we learn from the process.

Digital
Embracing technology, building a blended model for voice and influence work.

Secondary enablers

Governance & resources
Ensuring we have what we need to deliver excellent voice and influence work.

Data & evidence
Monitoring and using data to inform and evidence voice and influence work.

Policies & frameworks
Building those which are clear and enable consistent delivery of voice and influence work.

Basic principles

We support children and young people who need us the most. This means there are four fundamentals for all voice and influence work we do:

We do it
safely

Making sure children and young people are kept safe and we work in a way which is trauma-informed and responsive.

We do it
ethically

Making sure how we work is ethical, fair and respectful, and informed consent is obtained.

We do it
inclusively

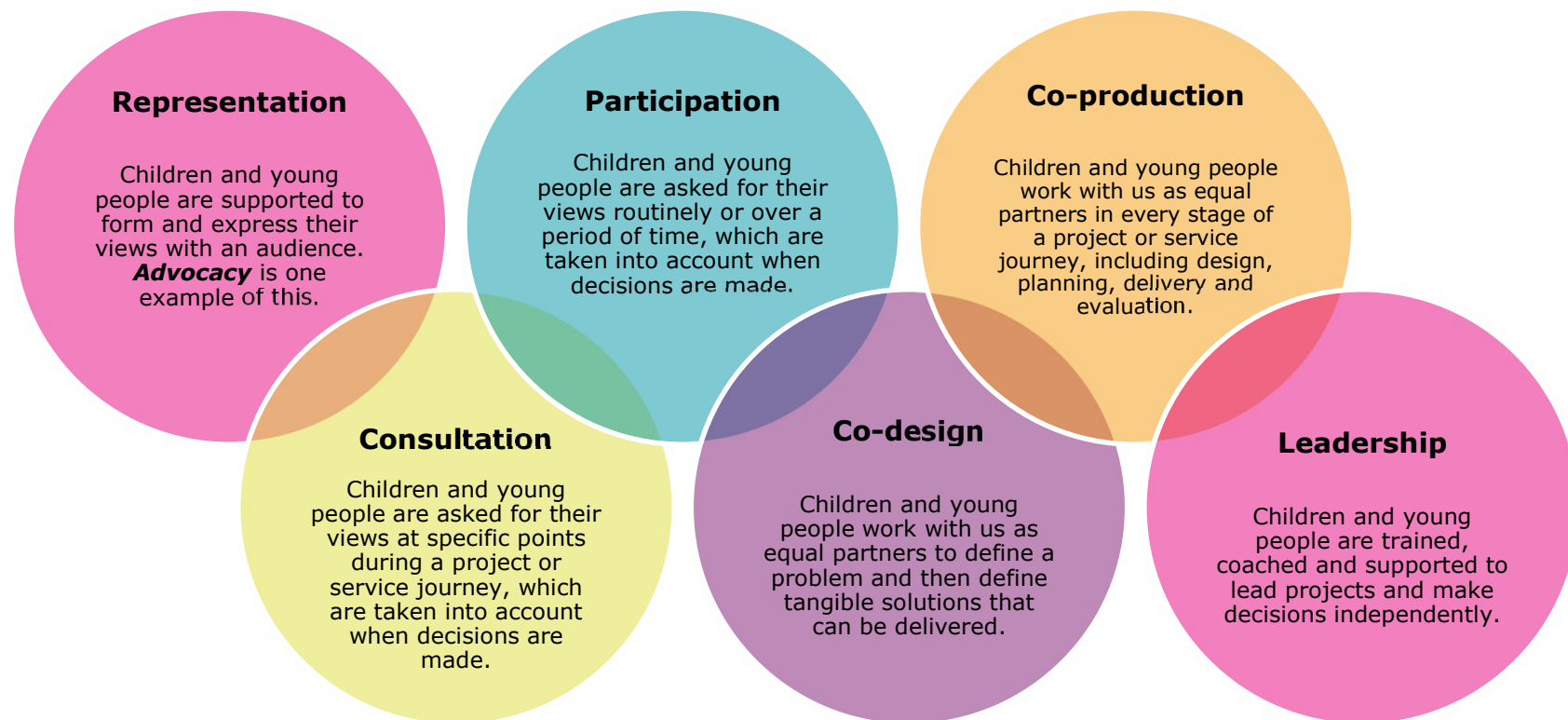
Making sure we ensure equity of opportunity, actively removing barriers to working with us.

We do it
meaningfully

Making sure opportunities we provide are genuine and at the right time, so children and young people can have a real impact.

Types of voice and influence

Voice and influence work can be delivered meaningfully in a range of ways, depending on how much time children and young people want to give to work with us.

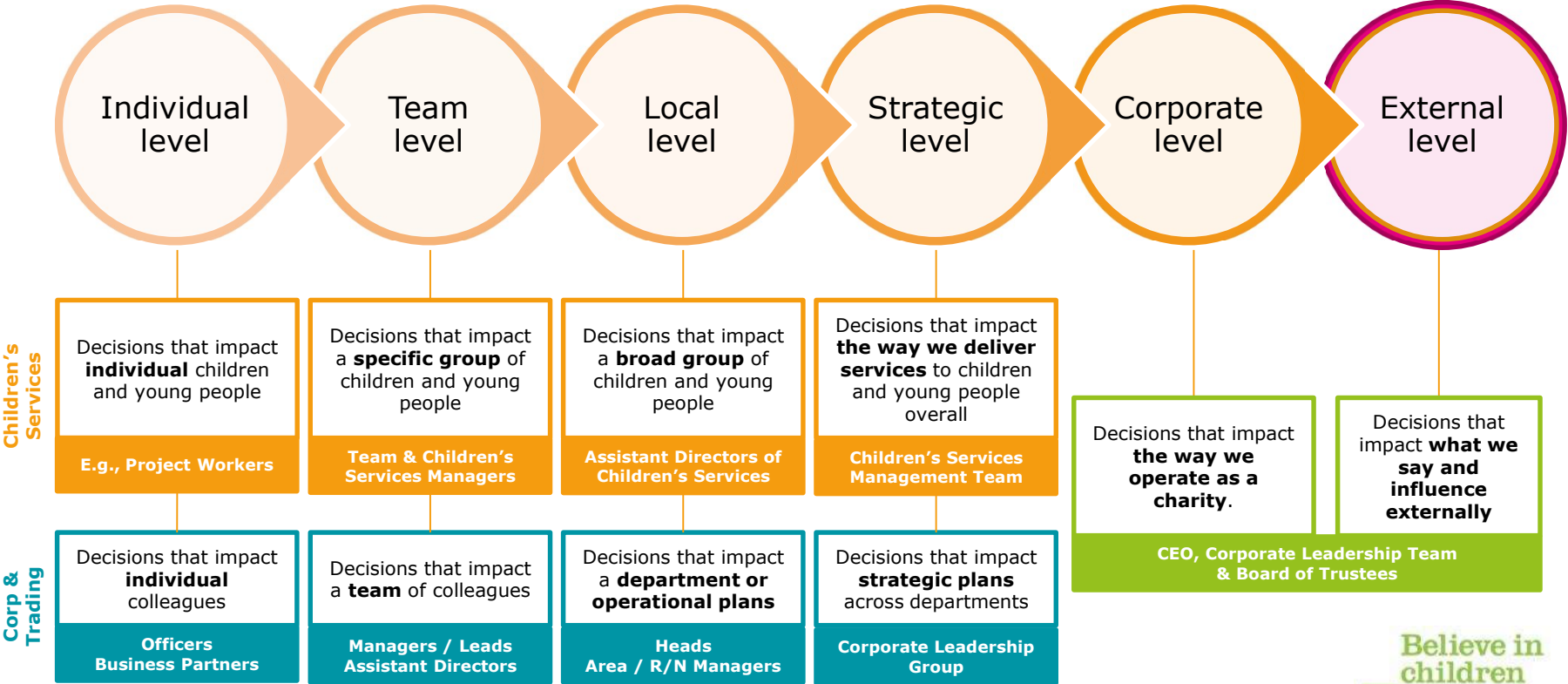


More information about each of these will be made available on the Voice and Influence pages on Inside Barnardo's.

Levels of decision-making

We make decisions everyday across our charity. These range from decisions with individual children and young people in our frontline services, to decisions at our corporate leadership team and board of trustees.

Understanding where decisions are made, on whom they have an impact and who facilitates them is critical to us enabling children and young people to work with us meaningfully.



Tools for change

There are several elements that form the foundation of the strategic plan. This is the work that needs to happen first, to enable us to deliver everything else.



Saying 'thank you'

An essential part of voice and influence work is how we say 'thank you' to the children and young people who have taken the time to work with us.

There are five things we will need to consider:

Incentive

Something that encourages children and young people's involvement.

Recognition

Something that demonstrates that young people's involvement is valued and appreciated.

Reward

Something tangible that is of value to a child or young person. This isn't always monetary.

Accreditation

A form of reward, something tangible that is of value to a child or young person which recognises their specific contributions.

Remuneration

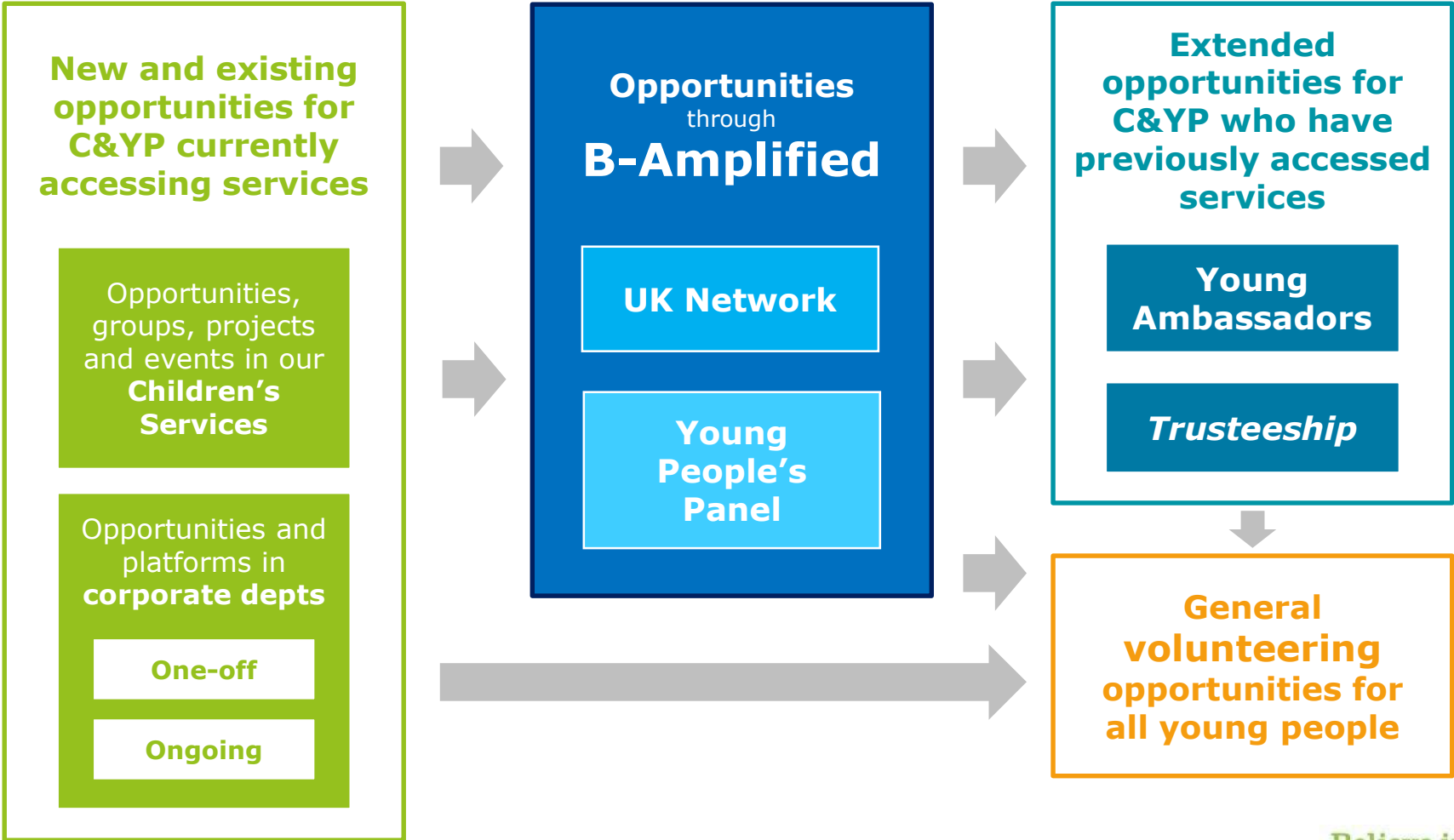
Payment for a service, subject to a contract of employment and which may have an impact on welfare support and/or benefits.

As part of the delivery of this strategic plan, we will develop a clear policy and protocol around each of these so we adopt a new and consistent approach across the charity.



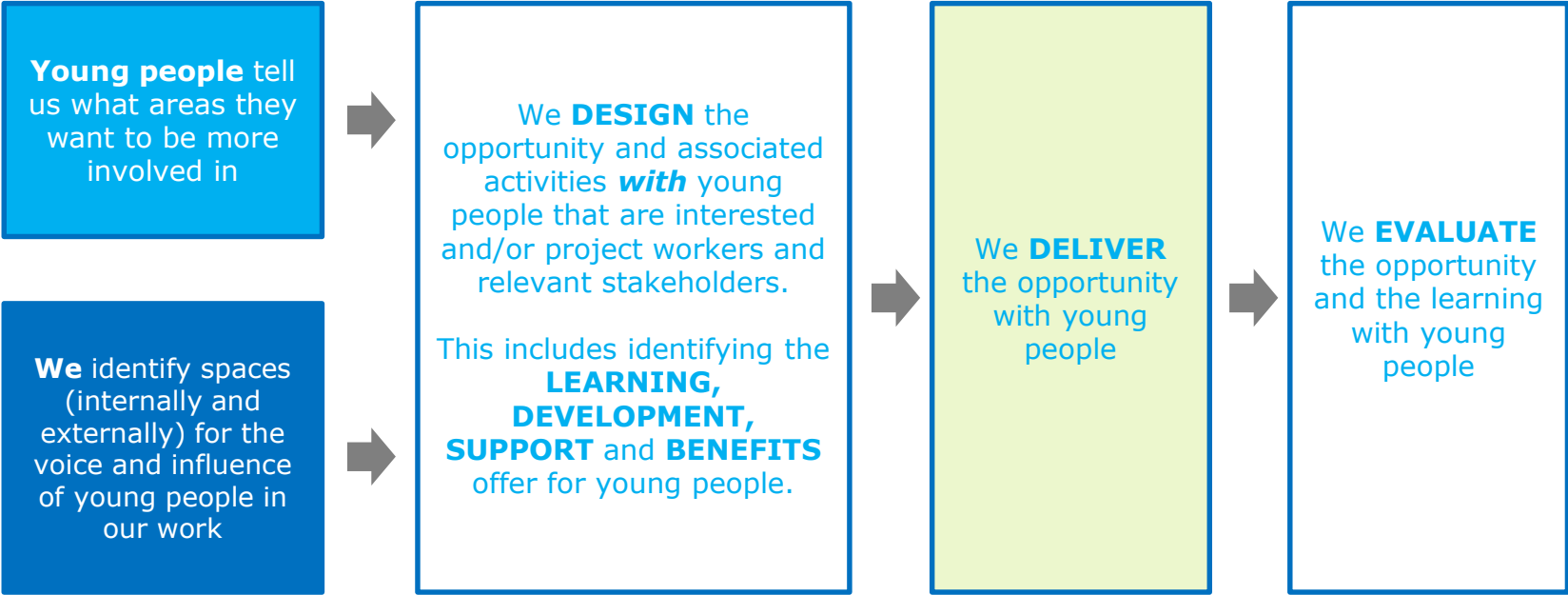
4: Direct work we do with children and young people

Opportunity pathway for young people*



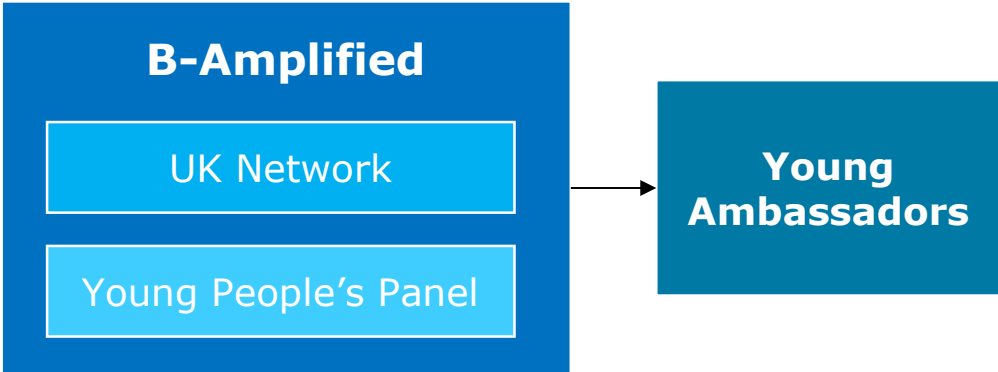
* Plans for work with children (5-11) and early years (0-5) need fully scoping

Identifying and designing opportunities for young people



B-Amplified: the headlines

Our new model for amplifying the voice and influence of children and young people in **corporate and strategic** decision-making, and in our **external influencing** work.



UK Network	A network of young people aged 11-25 across the UK , who are current users of Barnardo’s services, who engage in voice and influence opportunities that interest them, and receive learning, development and accreditation opportunities in doing so.
Young People’s Panel	A group of network members , who have lived experience of issues identified as focus areas, who work directly with our strategic and corporate decision-makers (e.g. Trustees, CLT etc) and receive specific support, training and accreditation in doing so.
Young Ambassadors	An opportunity for young people aged 18+ and who are former users of Barnardo’s services, who wish to remain connected to the charity, give something back and gain new skills and opportunities. <i>NB: this is currently only a pilot across 3 areas: North of Tyne locality, South East region and Northern Ireland.</i>

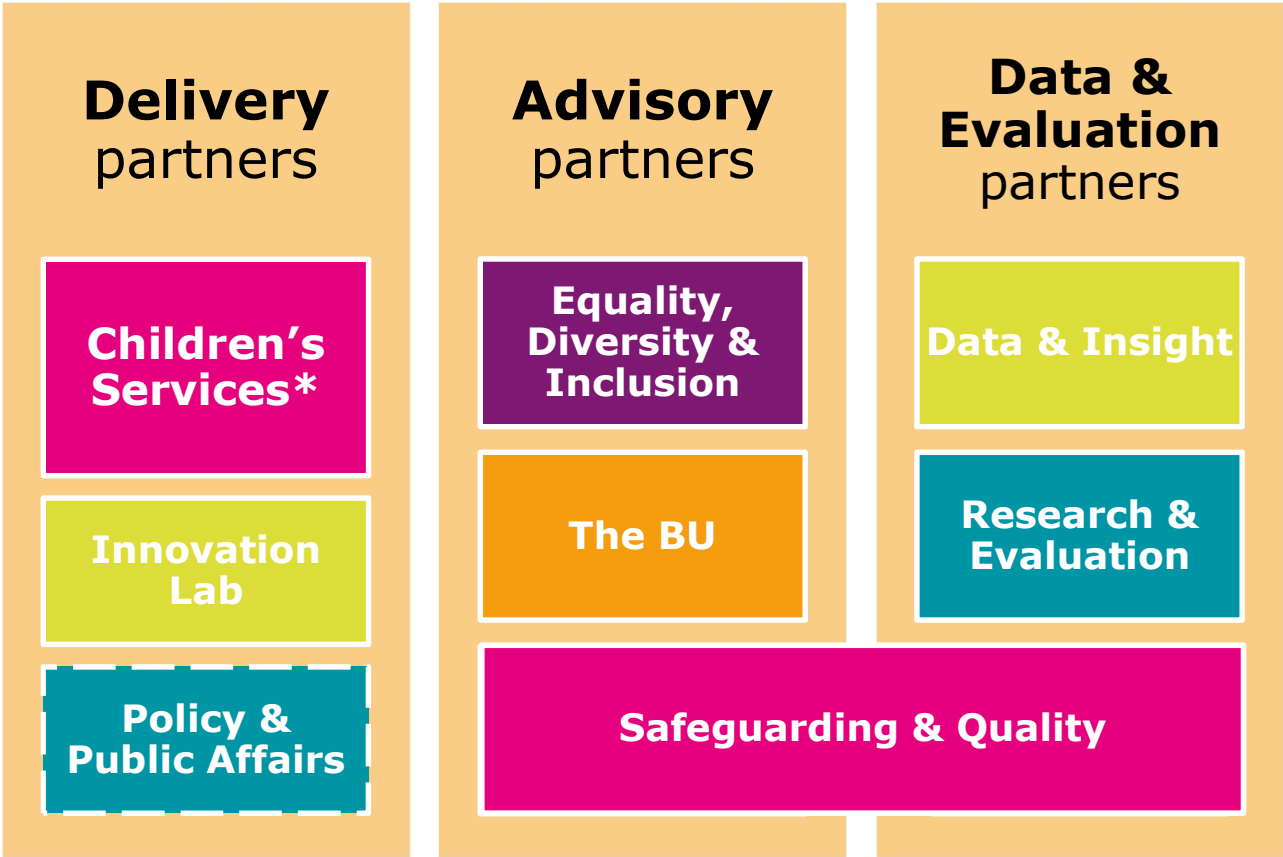
For more detail about B-Amplified and Young Ambassadors, [visit our FAQs](#)



5: Governance and reporting

Key inter-/dependencies

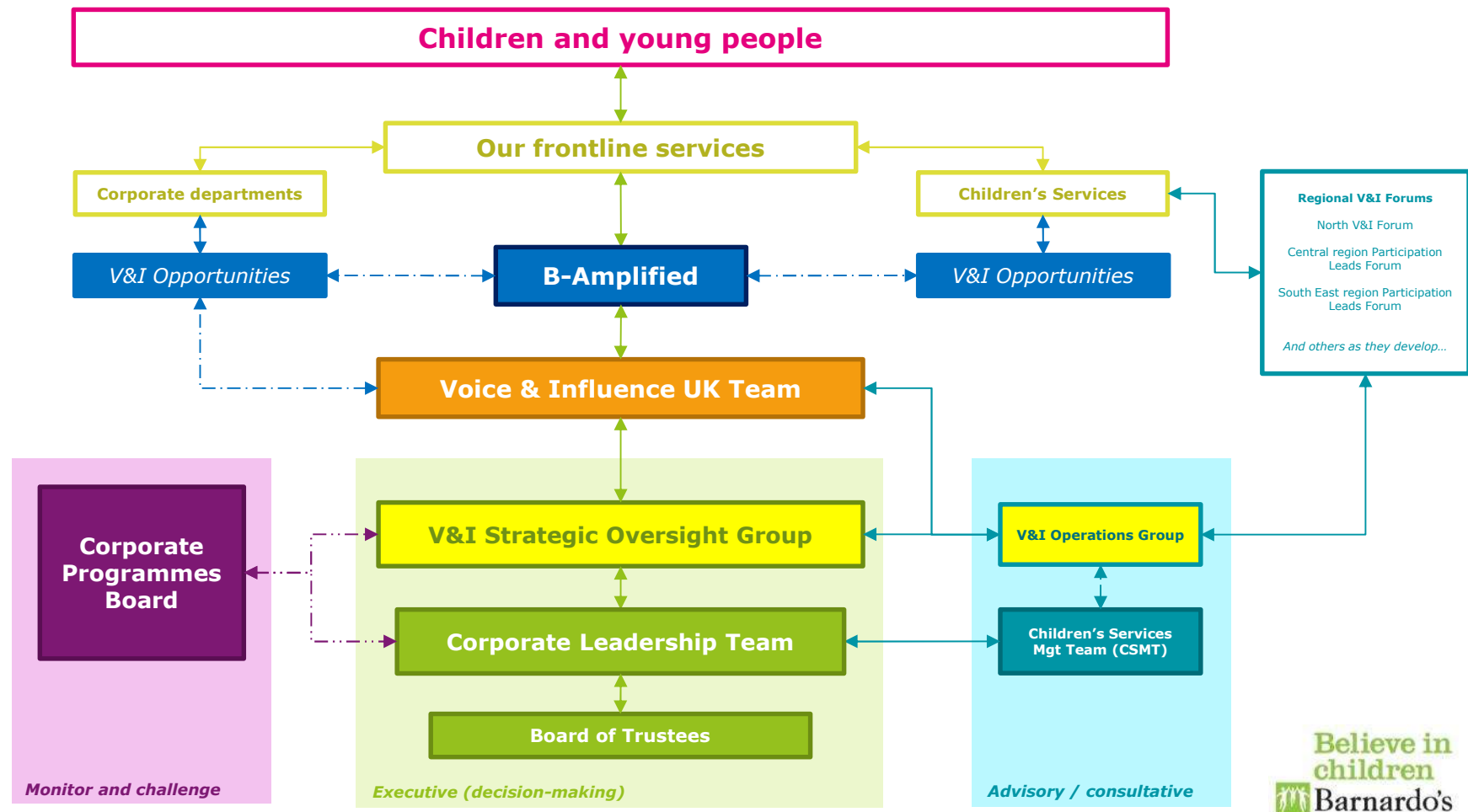
Delivering this strategic plan will rest on dependencies between a number of key stakeholders with the UK Voice and Influence Team.



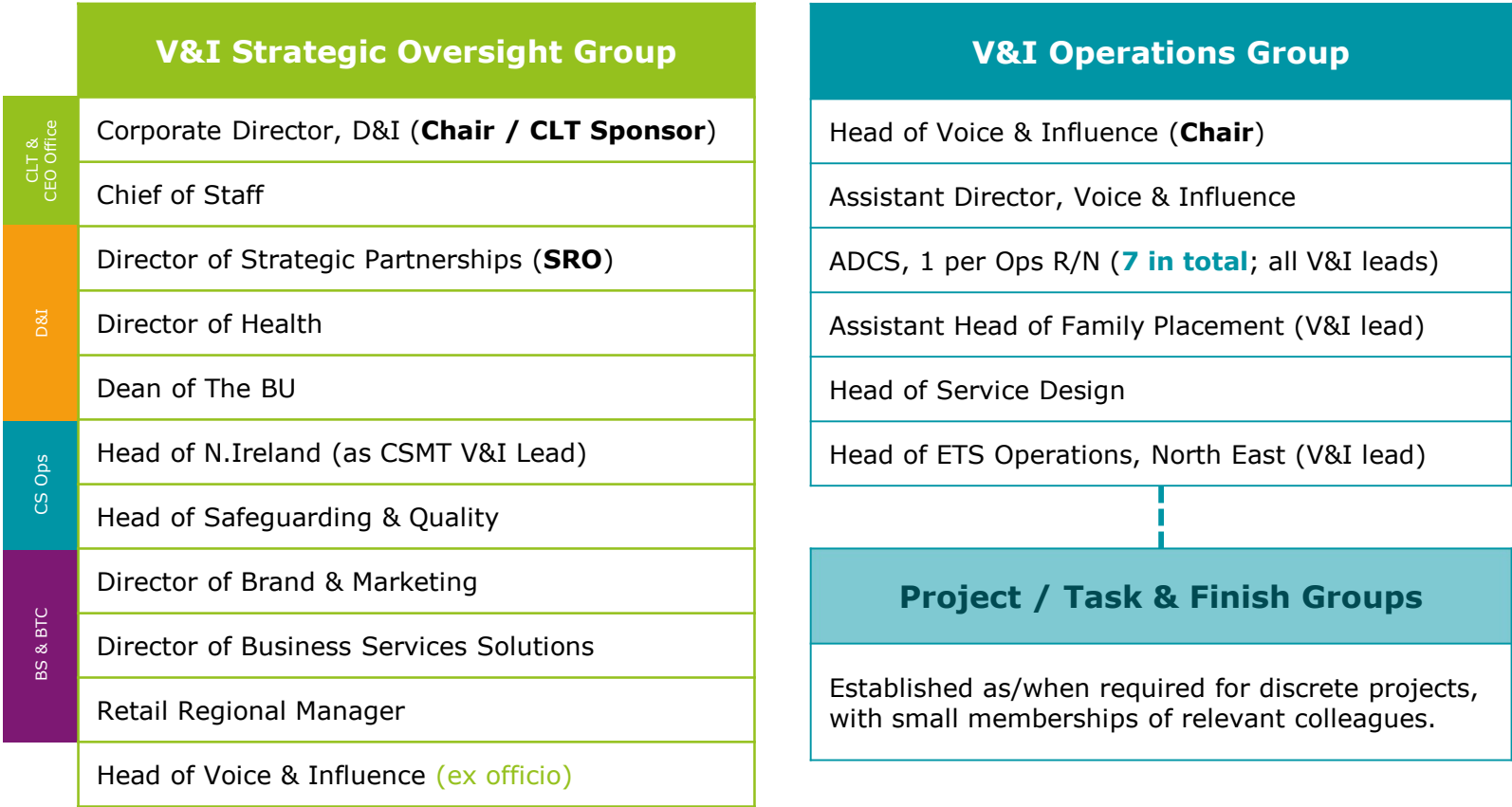
* This includes CS Operations and Business Lines (Family Placement, ETS and Core Priority Programmes)

Governance

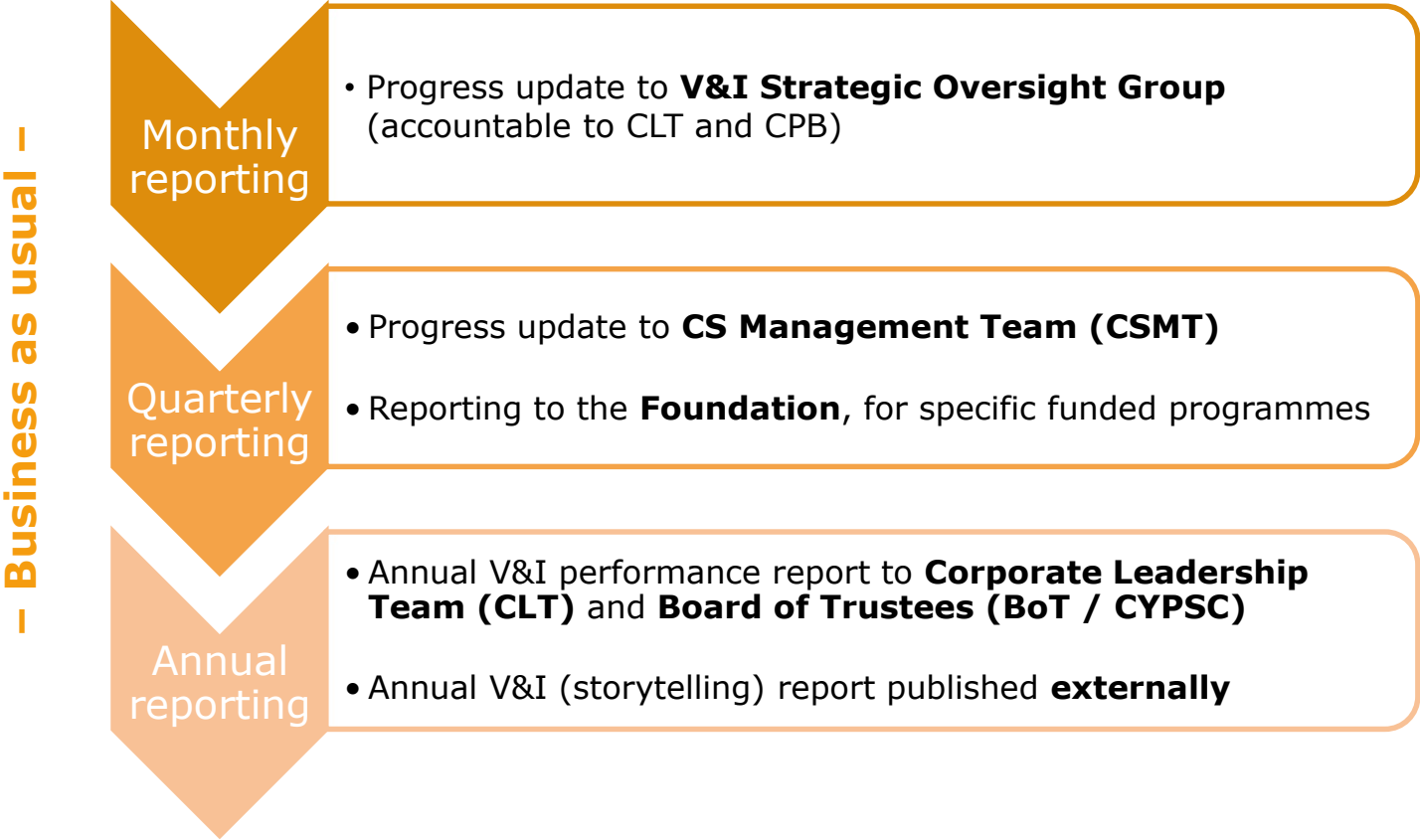
There is a clear governance structure for this strategic plan, to make sure we are able to deliver our vision and mission successfully. The diagram below illustrates this structure:



Proposed governance group memberships



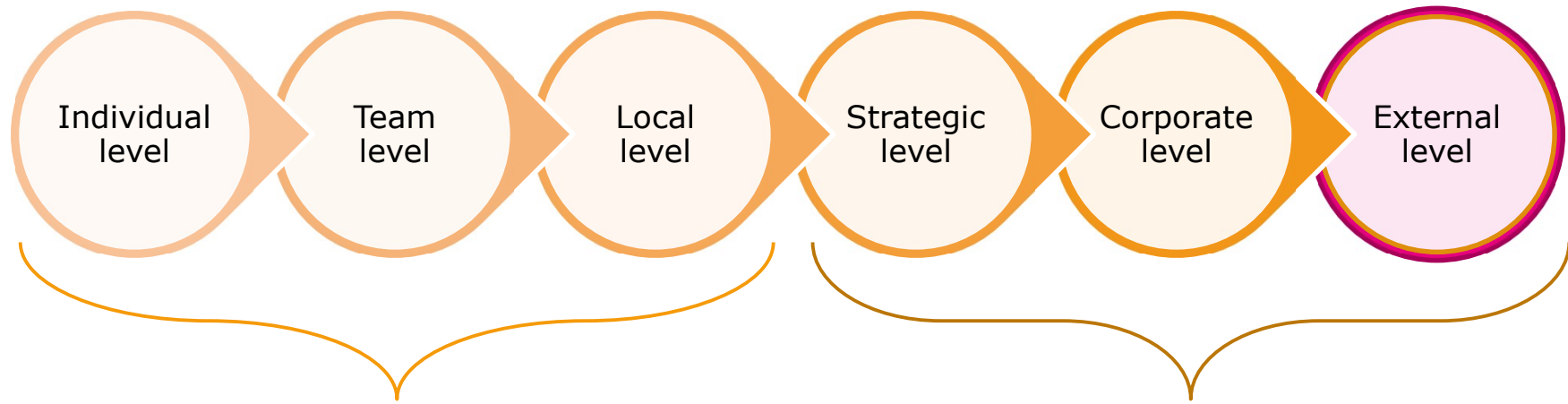
Proposed reporting arrangements



UK Voice and Influence Team

Our core purpose:

To play a leading, coordinating and enabling role in delivering our vision and mission for the voice and influence of children and young people.



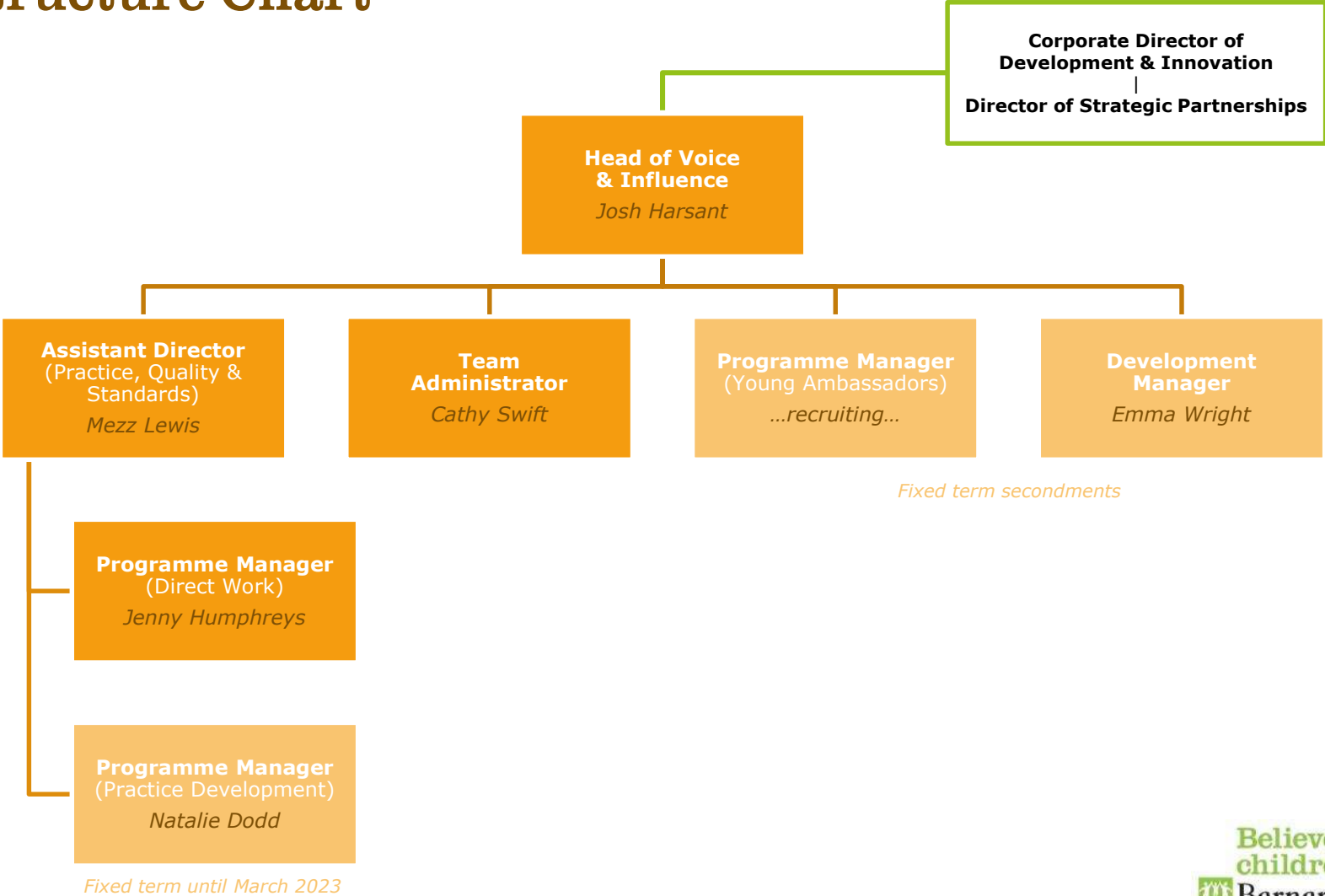
We **enable** by providing advice, training and support to colleagues

We **deliver** by leading and facilitating direct work with children and young people

More information: inside.barnardos.org.uk/voice-and-influence
Contact: voiceandinfluence@barnardos.org.uk

UK Voice and Influence Team

Structure Chart





6: Delivery timeline

Timeline for delivery

1. SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2021

Launching our new strategic plan, alongside our B-Amplified and Young Ambassador programmes, new B-Learning module AND V&I Development Fund.

2. SEPTEMBER 2021 → MARCH 2022

Establishing our foundation – the initial actions we need to complete in order to get ourselves ‘ready’ to enable delivery of our strategic plan (*next slide*). This work will be mainly undertaken by the UK V&I Team, building on what we’ve already done across the charity . **A progress report will be presented to CLT in April 2022.**

3. APRIL 2022 → MARCH 2025

Delivering our strategic plan – now we’re ready, we’ll turn our attention to delivering the actions that will help us achieve our strategic priorities. These actions will be recorded in our **delivery plan(s)**. Progress will reported to CLT as described.

