

**CHILDREN, FAMILIES & EDUCATION - VULNERABLE
CHILDREN AND PARTNERSHIPS POLICY OVERVIEW
AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, 30th March, 2011

10.00 am

Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone





AGENDA

CHILDREN, FAMILIES & EDUCATION - VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND PARTNERSHIPS POLICY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 30 March 2011 at 10.00 am
Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall,
Maidstone

Ask for: **Theresa Grayell**
Telephone: **01622 694277**

Tea/coffee will be available before the meeting

Membership

- Conservative (11): Mrs A D Allen (Chairman), Mr A H T Bowles, Mrs P T Cole,
Mr H J Craske, Mr D A Hirst, Mr P J Homewood,
Mr J D Kirby, Mr S Manion, Mr M J Northey, Mr C T Wells
Mr K Smith
- Labour (4): Mrs E Green
- Liberal Democrat (1): Mr M J Vye
- Church Representatives (3): The Reverend N Genders, Dr D Wadman Mr A Tear
- Parent Governor (2): Mr P Myers Mr B Critchley
- Teacher Advisers (6): Mr T Desmoyers-Davies, Mrs J Huckstep, Miss S Kemsley,
Mr R Straker, Mr S Thompson Mr J Walder

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

Item No

A COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- A1 Introduction/Webcasting
- A2 Membership
Members are asked to note that Mr P Homewood has replaced the late Mr Godfrey Horne MBE as a Member of this Committee.
- A3 Substitutes
- A4 Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting
- A5 Minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2010 (1 - 8)
- A6 Children's Champions Board Minutes 21 October 2010 (9 - 14)

B ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- B1 Update by the Cabinet Member and Acting Managing Director (15 - 18)

- B2 Governance Arrangements for Children's Social Care Improvement (19 - 28)
- B3 Update regarding the work of the Virtual Head Teacher for Looked After Children.
(29 - 32)
- B4 Preventative Services Manager Update (33 - 36)
- B5 Equality and Engagement (year overview) (37 - 58)

C SELECT COMMITTEE WORK

- C1 Select Committee - update (59 - 60)

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

Peter Sass
Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership
(01622) 694002

Tuesday, 22 March 2011

Please note that any background documents referred to in the accompanying papers maybe inspected by arrangement with the officer responsible for preparing the relevant report.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

**CHILDREN, FAMILIES & EDUCATION - VULNERABLE CHILDREN
AND PARTNERSHIPS POLICY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting of the Children, Families & Education - Vulnerable Children and Partnerships Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at Medway Room on Thursday, 21st October, 2010.

PRESENT: Mrs A D Allen (Chairman), Mrs P T Cole, Mr H J Craske, Mr D A Hirst, Mr S Manion, Mr C T Wells, Mr M J Vye, Mrs E Green and Mr A T Willicombe (Substitute for Mr A H T Bowles)

CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES: Dr D Wadman

PRESENT: Mrs S V Hohler and Mr L B Ridings

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms H Davies (Director For Specialist Children's Services Group), Mrs J Wainwright (Director Commissioning (Specialist Services)), Ms H Jones (Joint Commissioning Officer, Canterbury), Mrs L Totman (Head of Corporate Parenting) and Mrs C A Singh (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

37. Dates for Future Meetings 2011
(Item A3)

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the meeting dates for 2011 as follows:

Wednesday, 30 March 2011
Tuesday, 21 June 2011
Thursday, 13 October 2011
(All meetings will commence at 10.00 am)

(After each meeting of this POSC the Children's Champions Board will meet. This is a public meeting)

38. Minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2010
(Item A4)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2010 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

39. Deputy Cabinet Member, Director of Children's Specialist Services and Director of Joint Commissioning and Partnerships Update
(Item B1)

(Verbal Reports by Mr L Ridings, Deputy Cabinet Member Vulnerable Children and Partnerships, Ms H Davies, Director of Specialist Children's Services and Mrs J Wainwright, Director of Commissioning and Partnerships)

(1) The Chairman asked Ms Davies to begin with her report. Ms Davies gave an update included the following:

- Following the unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment services in August, an improvement plan was being implemented, and an improvement and development steering group, chaired by Mrs Hohler, was put in place to monitor progress.
- Additional administrative and social work assistant capacity had been made available to all 12 duty and initial assessment teams.
- The number of trainee social workers being recruited in autumn 2010 has been increased from 10 to 22. The number of social work assistants being sponsored on the Open University training course had been increased from 10 to 20.
- 58 newly qualified social workers joined the service from 13 September. 23 more social workers had been recruited from Europe; they would take up their posts in January. The number of social worker vacancies dropped to 15% at the end of August.
- 12 preventative services managers (one per district) came into post on 1 September and were developing strategies to reduce the number of inappropriate referrals to Children's Social Services
- The number of children with child protection plans and the number of Looked After Children (LAC) continued to rise, causing capacity issues for the social work teams, along with financial pressures.
- An announced (i.e. 2 weeks notice) inspection of safeguarding and LAC services took place on 11-22 October.

(2) Mr Ridings felt confident that the funding would be available to get the staffing level up to the appropriate number within the social work teams. Recruitment of highly qualified social workers was considered as there was recognition of the need to have the very best social work teams. Every effort would be made to safeguard the service from any cuts in the budget.

(3) Members were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions which included the following:

(4) In response to questions by Mr Wells, Ms Davies advised that in terms of principal social worker posts the current vacancy rate was 20%, and every effort was being made to find suitable staff. In terms of capacity, there were 1350

children with child protection plans in Kent and approximately the same number of LAC in Kent this did create pressures for the experienced social workers within the teams as the less experienced staff would not be able to deal with those cases. Ms Davies assured the Committee that all of those cases were allocated to a social worker.

(5) Mr Wells mentioned that there were issues being highlighted outside the social workers' normal role that were having an impact such as leased cars.

(6) In response to a question by Mr Manion, Ms Davies said that the service was in the process of recruiting trainee social workers. The graduates being selected had to have a minimum of a 2:1 degree. Ms Davies was confident the graduates chosen in the recruitment process would have the potential to become good social workers. The successful graduates would then work in a team for 9 months before studying for a 2 year diploma. The Universities were also working with KCC on this.

(7) In response to a question by Mr Hirst, Ms Davies advised that the current focus was to improve and review the ICS computer system which was due to be finalised in November. She concurred that the next step would be to work on the social workers' paperwork.

(8) In response to a question by the Chairman, Ms Davies explained that ICS stood for 'Integrated Children's System', a nationally prescribed computer system for recording children's social services data. There had been concerns about the system. Work had been carried out to change the exemplars of the system.

(9) In response to a question by Mrs Cole, Ms Davies advised that the best way to retain social workers was to ensure that they had sound supervision, support and a manageable workload. In terms of supervision, a new supervision policy had been launched in August 2010 and training was currently being carried out. Ms Davies agreed to the request for a report on the Supervision Policy and the progress on the ICS computer system.

(10) In response to a request, Ms Davies agreed to supply Members with monthly statistics on the Kent social worker vacancies.

(11) Mrs Wainwright then highlighted the key issues affecting the Commissioning and Partnership Team which included the renegotiation of the last two years of a three year contract with Connexions, with an aim to reduce the price of the contract with the least possible impact on the contractual outcomes that were jointly sought. Mr Ridings advised the Committee that Mr G Bernard had retired and had been replaced by Mr S Kearns as Chief Executive of Connexions.

(12) Mrs Wainwright then spoke about work being undertaken on the attainment and wellbeing of children whose parents were in the armed forces in Kent, the results of which would help to advise teachers of how to support those children better. In response to a question by Mr Manion, Mrs Wainwright advised that there were approximately 700 service children in Kent; the majority of which reside in East Kent with small pockets of children in other areas of Kent. Mr Ridings added that the children's parents mainly worked for the Army as there were very few naval and air force personnel in Kent. Some of the children had changed school up to 6 and 7 times depending on their parent's posting. Mr Willicombe advised that

because the Royal Engineers were posted individually and were away from home for very long periods their children may need more support.

(13) In reply to a question by Mr Wells, Mrs Wainwright said that there had been no discussion for service children to have the same status as LAC in the school admissions process but agreed to take the request forward.

(14) Mrs Wainwright spoke on the support her team had given to the Local Children's Trust Board in understanding their new role. A full report would be made to the Kent Children's Trust Board on how that was progressing in the future and would include the next steps.

(15) Mrs Wainwright concluded by clarifying a mistake made by the DFE. This involved a proposal for the Kent schools complaints procedure to change. The original procedure was as follows: *Stage One* - Where a parent complained about the school this should be made to the headteacher in the first instance. *Stage Two* - If the parent felt that the complaint had been dealt with unsatisfactorily dealt with by the headteacher it would be referred to the governing body. *Stage Three* - If following the governing body's response the parent was unhappy that they had not followed due procedures then the local authority would be asked to take a view, but the local authority had no power of redress, and could only comment on the procedure. The new procedure was agreed through legislation that the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) would take on the 'stage three' role rather than the local authority.

(16) This was to be done in two stages of pilots; Kent was in the second pilot. The LGO trained many Kent headteachers in the new process. At the beginning of September 2010, KCC learnt that this was no longer going to happen and would be reverting to the previous process. However this was an administrative error on the DFE's part as it was written in primary legislation and could not be repealed easily so we were back to where we were. Mrs Wainwright suggested that this was good for the schools as the Ombudsman could adjudicate and also offer financial redress where necessary. In reply to a question by Dr Wadman, Mrs Wainwright advised that she thought the referral for the denominational schools followed the same route but agreed to check.

(17) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the Committee receive monthly statistics on the social worker vacancies by district in Kent be noted;
- (b) the request for a report on the Supervision Policy and the progress on the ICS computer system be noted;
- (c) consideration be given to the request that children whose parents were in the armed forces receive the same status as Looked After Children with regard to the School Admissions criteria be noted;
- (d) the complaints procedure for denominational schools be checked on whether it followed the same routes as non denominational schools and reported to Members outside the meeting; and
- (e) the verbal updates be noted.

40. Virtual Head Teacher for Looked After Children

(Item B2)

(Ms R Turner, Managing Director, Children, Families & Education Directorate and Mrs S Hohler, Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education)

(Ms H Davies, Director of Children's Specialist Services was present for this item)

(1) The Committee discussed a report that identified the key roles around the Virtual School evidenced the current educational context of Kent Looked After Children (LAC) and highlighted issues within the current service (Integrated Looked after Children Support Service) and provided an outline programme of work to develop the service into the Virtual School.

(2) The Chairman advised that Mr Doran was expected to attend today's meeting but had received a sporting injury. The Committee agreed to invite Mr Doran to the next meeting.

(3) Members were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments which included the following:

(4) In response to a question by Mrs Green Mrs Davies advised that in terms of being able to intervene, Mr Doran had the authority to work with all partners in the education system. He would work with the Kent headteachers to ensure that the LAC were a top priority in the schools and to act as an advocate for the pupils where necessary. With regards to resources, he is the Leader of the Integrated LAC Support Service, a multi agency team including the Education Advisors. Mrs Hohler advised that Mr Doran had attended headteachers meetings and his ambition was to meet all LAC in Kent.

(5) In response to a question by Mr Vye, Ms Davies agreed to forward a structure chart of the Virtual School to the Committee Members.

(6) The Chairman advised that she had attended the Foster Care Awards and wished to thank all the foster carers for all the work they did and those staff that organised the event.

(7) RESOLVED that:

- (a) the responses to questions by Members be noted;
- (b) Mr Doran be invited to the next meeting of the Committee and a structure chart of the Virtual School be forwarded to Members outside the meeting;
- (c) the variation in attainment of Kent Looked After Children and Other Local Authority Looked After Children placed in Kent be noted and support be given to the proposed programme of work in response to this issue be noted.

41. Costs of Residential, Foster Care and Placements. Challenges and Issues
(Item B3)

(Report by Mrs J Wainwright, Director, Commissioning & Partnerships, Ms R Turner, Managing Director and Mrs S Hohler, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education)

(Mrs L Totman, Head of Corporate Parenting, was present for this item)

(1) The Committee considered a report that outlined the management actions and measures that were in place to reduce the number and cost of Private and Voluntary (P&V) and Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements across the County.

(2) Members were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions which included the following:

(3) In reply to a question by Mr Craske, Mrs Totman advised that Outcomes Based Care Plans were being introduced so that before a child was placed in residential or IFA care, it was very clear to the providers exactly what they were expected to achieve with the young people; this agreement would be reviewed on a six monthly basis. At present because there were no outcomes identified from the placements it was difficult to challenge.

(4) In reply to a question by Mr Hirst, Mrs Totman explained that Thanet did have the highest number of LAC. The aim was to return children back to their family and it was important to keep LAC at their current schools. Having looked at the issue of LAC in Thanet schools a small number had moved into the area but no unaccompanied LAC were placed in Thanet. She explained that local authorities could not disadvantage a child by placing them out of their area when it was not necessary as it was difficult to rehabilitate the child when they had to return home.

(5) Mr Wells requested a progress report on the Thanet Enquiry 2005.

(6) RESOLVED that:

(a) the responses to Members' questions and comments be noted;

(b) the request for a progress report on the Thanet Enquiry 2005 be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee and the report be noted.

42. Joint Commissioning in Children's Services - Outcomes & Priorities
(Item B4)

(Report by Ms R Turner, Managing Director, Children, Families & Education Directorate and Mrs S Hohler, Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education)

(Ms H Jones, Head of Commissioning was present for this item)

(1) The Committee considered a report that identified the national and local context for commissioning; examples of jointly commissioned services in Kent which have improved outcomes for children and young people; and the commissioning priorities for the Commissioning Unit.

(2) Following a brief introduction by Ms Jones Members were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions which included the following:

(3) Mr Vye requested future reports on joint projects to demonstrate that the children's services were more efficient and effective.

(4) RESOLVED that:

(a) the responses to questions by Members be noted;

(b) the request for future reports on joint projects that demonstrate that the children's services were more efficient and effective with the joint planning and commissioning be noted;

(c) the examples of jointly commissioned services in Kent be noted; and

(d) agreement be given to the key priorities for the Commissioning and Partnership Group as outlined in section 4 of the report, be noted.

43. Select Committee - update
(Item C1)

(Report by Mr P Wickenden, Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager)

(1) The Committee considered a report that highlighted the current topic review work programme as follows:

- Renewable Energy – which was due to submit its final report to the Cabinet in November 2010 and County Council in December 2010
- Extended Services (previously called Extended Schools) – which was due to submit its final report to the Cabinet in November 2010 and County Council in December 2010
- Educational Attainment of Pupils and Schools in Areas of High Deprivation – which was due to start its work in the Autumn of 2010
- Dementia which was due to start work in the Autumn of 2010 and report to County Council in April 2011.

(2) Mr Wells, Chairman Elect for the Select Committee for Educational Attainment of Pupils and Schools in Areas of High Deprivation anticipated that the focus of this review would be made wider to include Key Stage 2 results.

(3) Members agreed to revisit the need for a topic review on the attainment of Looked After Children (LAC) including children in hospital and hospices at a later date. Mr Wells suggested that following the work being started by the Virtual School headteacher for LAC a Select Committee be set up if necessary in 2-3 years time.

(4) RESOLVED that:

- (a) the suggestion of a topic review on the attainment of Looked After Children including children in hospital and hospices be added to the Committee's forward items list;
- (b) the current select committee topic review programme as detailed in paragraph (1) above be noted; and
- (c) Members agreed to advise the Democratic Services Officer of any items that they would like to suggest for inclusion in the select committee topic review programme.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

CHILDREN'S CHAMPIONS BOARD

MINUTES of a meeting of the Children's Champions Board held in the Medway Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 21 October 2010.

PRESENT: Mrs A D Allen (Chairman), Mr M J Vye (Vice-Chairman), Mrs P T Cole, Mrs V J Dagger, Mr L B Ridings, Mrs P A V Stockell and Mrs J Whittle

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs S V Hohler, Cabinet Member

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms H Davies (Director For Specialist Children's Services Group), Ms P Davies (Kent Safeguarding Children Board Manager), Mr P Brightwell (Policy & Performance Manager - Looked After Children), Ms D Marriott (Acting Safeguarding Policy & Performance Manager), Mrs M Blanche (Policy Manager-asylum & Migration) and Mrs C A Singh (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

36. Minutes of Meeting held on 19 May 2010

(Item A3)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 May are correctly recorded subject to the word 'by' being altered to read 'but' on page 3 paragraph 31 (1) bullet point 6 and that they be signed by the Chairman.

37. Meeting Dates for 2011

(Item A4)

Members noted that the following dates had been reserved for the Board's meetings in 2011:-

Wednesday, 30 March

Tuesday, 21 June

Thursday, 13 October

(All meetings will commence at 2.00 pm at Sessions House, County Hall)

38. Chairman's Announcements

(Item A5)

(1) The Chairman advised that she had attended the Foster Carers Awards and wished to congratulate the organisers of the event and the very moving evening where she had met guests who had been Forster Carers for over 30 years.

(2) Ms Davies advised that the nomination for the Foster Carers Awards came from a mix of people including young people and social workers. The nominations were received by a Board. The Board made the final decisions on the award winners

which came in categories that included; Bronze, Silver, Gold and long service. A press release was also issued.

(3) Mrs Davies confirmed that Ofsted had been carrying out a 2 week announced inspection which was due to conclude on Friday, 22 October 2010.

39. Deputy Cabinet Member's Update

(Item A6)

(1) Mrs Hohler confirmed that there had been an unannounced inspection of the Council's Duty and Initial Assessment teams in the Summer. A verbal report had been made to Cabinet on 11 October. She added that this was followed by an announced inspection that had taking place over two weeks and would conclude on 22 October. The inspection report would be published on 19 November and would be reported to the next appropriate meeting of Cabinet.

(2) Mrs Hohler advised that a multiagency/cross party Improvement Steering Group had been set up. The Group met on a monthly basis. She was very impressed by the positive feedback from the practitioners who concurred that this was an important area that needed improvement and put forward ideas.

(3) The Chairman requested a report on the outcome of the announced inspection.

(4) In response to a question, Ms Davies advised that the Ofsted considered that the CSS thresholds were in the right place but were applied inconsistently across the County.

(5) RESOLVED that the verbal update be noted, with thanks.

40. DVD - 'Care to Listen': feedback from Members and the Children in Care Council (CICC) and discussion of how and when to use the DVD

(Item B1)

(1) Mr Brightwell tabled the 12 recommendations from the Children in Care Council on the DVD- 'Care to Listen'. The recommendations were divided into 3 areas; Going into care, Being in care and Leaving care.

(2) The Chairman sought Members comments on each of the recommendations. Members suggested the following:

Going into care

- (1) *Make all foster families produce a family pack*
 - Members advised that fostering already do this
- (2) *Talk to us not about us*
 - This was an ongoing issue
- (3) *Dedicate time to us to explaining each stage of the process*
 - This was over and above the IRO role. Voice for us had an independent system. There was a list of things already being carried out.

- (4) *Introduce a buddy system to we can pick an adult who can support us*
- The Buddy system could be piloted with the older children who had been through the system the social workers would have to be briefed.
 - There could be a panel of people. Ask the young people what qualities they require in a Buddy.
 - Members could fulfil this role to as part of their Corporate Parenting Role

Being in care

- (5) *Give us a consistent IRO and make sure they meet with us a day before the review*
- (6) *Make our social workers meet with us regularly*
- (7) *Make Children and Families and 16+ work together better*
- Members had no comments to add

Leaving care

- (8) *Schedule 1 on 1 drop in surgeries with social workers*
- (9) *Provide more support to help us find work and make plans for the future*
- (10) *Take our pathway plans seriously, don't just fill in the form*
- (11) *Require case social worker to schedule hour long fortnightly visits*

- Members had no comments to add

- (12) *Provide us with a contract of entitlement*

- Members felt that this was a way of showing that they were being taken seriously
- There were already documents that met this criteria
- The Pledge could be used as the basis for the contract Mr Brightwell advised that all of the children would not be aware of the Pledge
- Could there be a formal launch
- This could be discussed at the statutory review
- The Children in Care Council was developing a website which may also be a way of reaching all children. Children in care were able to write to them. On the front of the website there would be a link to the KCC website.
- Mr Brightwell advised that the copyright of the DVD was owned by KCC. The Children in Care Council had given permission for the DVD to be used for training and had already been used for Foster Carers/Adoption training. He advised that the Children in care Council were already engaged with recruiting.
- Members felt that it would be useful as part of their training.

- (3) RESOLVED that the comments and suggestion made by Members be considered when Mr Brightwell draws up a list of actions for each of the recommendations and submits them to a future meeting of the Board and Children in Care Council.

41. Progress report in response to Safeguarding Children in Kent: Defending and Developing the Service

(Item B2)

(Report by Mrs S Hohler, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education and Mrs R Turner, Managing Director for Children, Families and Education)

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the report that had been presented to County Council on 14 October 2010 and the summary of the actions taken in response to Safeguarding Children in Kent: Defending and Developing the Service.

42. Kent Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2009 - 10 / Business Plan 2010 - 2013

(Item B3)

(Report by Mrs S Hohler, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education and Mrs R Turner, Managing Director for Children, Families and Education)

(1) The Board considered a report that presented the Kent Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report for 2009/10 and Business Plan for 2010 – 2013 and had previously been debated at the County Council meeting on 14 October 2010.

(2) Mrs Whittle opened the discussion by advising the Board that she had recently visited a Special School in Maidstone where she was approached regarding the Form B she then referred Members to page 41 of the report that covered 'Child Death Review Processes'. The concerns were that the Form B, that the school had to complete, was cold and insensitive. Mrs Whittle suggested that the schools should be encouraged to have support from a member of the Safeguarding Team when completing the form. Ms P Davies said that the staff at the Special Schools knew the children very well and were in the best position to complete the forms but support was offered in filling in the forms.

(3) In reply to a question, Ms P Davies advised that there had been 94 child deaths in Kent the previous year that covered a range of issues including to accidents. Every death had to be looked into. She agreed that the forms were bureaucratic, there were 15 forms in total from the Department of Education but they were required for statutory returns. An expert Advisory Group produced the detail of each case. She stated that very few cases were deemed to be preventable deaths. If a death was preventable such as in the case of an accident, measures were put in place to reduce the risks of it happening again.

(4) In response to concerns that not all the agencies were signed up to working together, Ms P Davies advised that the Kent Safeguarding Children's Board was the best way of making sure agencies worked together. Mr D Worlock, Chairman was aware of this. Each member of the Board was required to share their agency's inspection reports and improvement plans. Mrs Hohler advised that Ms Turner, CFE Managing Director was working on this and was optimistic following the feed back she had received from representatives such as health that considered reducing the 23 districts to 12 was better with a Preventative Services Manager appointed to each and would reduce duplication.

(5) Mrs Whittle advised that following a visit to a special school she was made aware of 3 multiservice hubs in special schools based at Ashford, Sittingbourne and Thanet where the health authority building was on the same site as the school. She suggested that if the health service was on site it would be easier to integrate other agencies. Ms H Davies concurred that this was an excellent example of the local authority and health service working together in the Multi Agency Service Hub (MASH) and reduced the need for children having to travel to appointments.

(6) RESOLVED that the report be noted, with thanks

**43. Looked After Children and Children with a Child Protection Plan:
Statistics**

(Item C1)

The Committee was forwarded statistics on children with a child protection plan and looked after children within each district of Kent for information.

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By: Jenny Whittle, Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services
Malcolm Newsam, Acting Managing Director, Children, Families & Education Directorate

To: Vulnerable Children and Partnerships Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 30st March 2011

Subject: Update by the Cabinet Member and Acting Managing Director

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: The verbal update clarifies for all Members of the POSC the improvement priorities for Specialist Children's Services. The priorities come together to form the plan that is presented to the Improvement Board, independently chaired by Liz Railton to support rapid and sustainable improvement of services that safeguard children and support looked after children. This will include monitoring the targets set out in the Kent Improvement Notice issued by the Secretary of State in January 2011.

In order to provide some additional national context to the improvement priorities this update also provides Members with a short overview of the interim report published by Professor Eileen Munro on child protection.

1. Improvement Priorities

Putting Children First, Kent County Council Safeguarding and Looked After Children improvement Plan, is the document that will guide the work of the service over the next two years. This plan, developed in response to the Ofsted Inspection in October 2010, describes the actions to improve services to children and/ or support looked after children. We are dealing with immediate priorities for action as well as the longer term focus that will embed and sustain improvements irrespective of challenges in the local or national landscape.

The improvement programme and associated actions are built around six key themes. These are outlined below and provide an overview of the priorities we are taking forward. Each priority is underpinned by key tasks, with officers assigned and accountable to the Improvement Board for delivery.

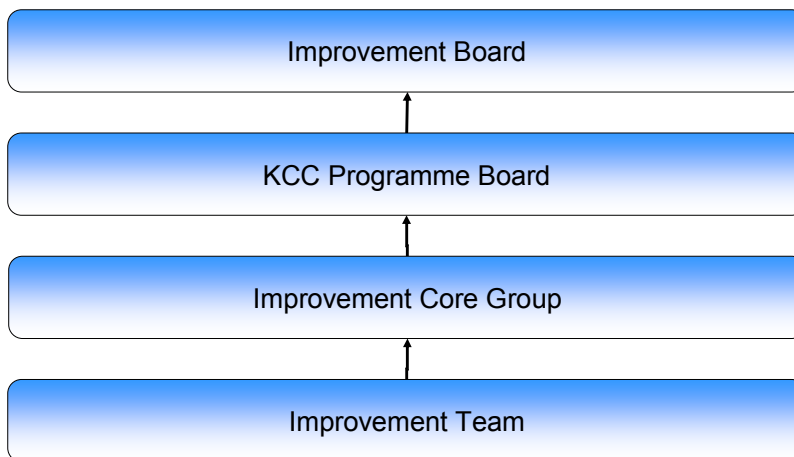
1. **Leadership and Management** – Providing confident leadership with clear vision and sense of direction, modelling professional competence, confidence and self belief. This requires leadership at every level prioritising swift action to achieve change that is manageable, achievable and can be sustained. This requires that we hold people to account and that management response is proactive and solution focussed. We must reward and celebrate success and ensure that at all times we communicate clear expectations throughout the organisation and across our key partnership groups.
2. **High Quality Front Line Practice** – Will be achieved through effective multi-agency early intervention and prevention. We will build a range of services that ensure families and their children are supported at the earliest point of need. This will support the management of risk and ensure professionals have the confidence to know when to intervene. We must ensure thresholds are consistently and appropriately implemented and that we have a robust system for responding to referrals. All referral points will be underpinned by high quality practice standards, with high quality, child centred social work assessment services supported by timely decision making and family support.
3. **Creating an organisation fit for purpose** – This priority will begin with the creation of a sustainable structure that is effective and accountable. Compliance throughout the organisation will be regularly reviewed and clear priorities will be established to align resources to support these priorities. Infrastructure changes that ensure front line teams receive the support they need, will include adequately supported IT and other systems, and a front door service that is delivered from offices that are fit for purpose.
4. **Strengthening partnerships to make a difference** – A shared vision by all partners and a commitment to working together to improve services that safeguard and look after children and young people is at the heart of this priority. The work of partnership boards must support high quality safeguarding (Kent Safeguarding Children Board) and ensuring better outcomes for all children and young people, (Kent Children's Trust). There will be clear lines of communication across partnerships and joint commissioning of services that keep children safe and free from harm.
5. **Becoming the employer of choice** – In the region we will work to ensure the effective source and supply of social workers and managers. We must provide a compelling offer, supporting a reward package for recruitment and retention. The long term focus on the growth and development of the Children's workforce will be supported by high quality induction for a range of staff recruited from different countries at different levels. We will have sufficient line management and supervision capacity to guide and support those at the front line. This is vital to support high quality decision making and ensure workers feel safe to carry out their duties.

- 6. Robustly managing performance** – Underpinning all management actions will be a comprehensive performance system that is informed by accurate and timely management information. Individual achievement will be measured and supervision will be robust and accompanied by effective quality assurance of practice. We must ensure staff at the front line are listened to, understood and supported to do their job. We will operate with complete transparency and will not tolerate unacceptable practice and behaviour.

1.2 Governance of improvement priorities

The Improvement Board will review the actions across the plan. Reporting structures will support the delivery of timely and sustained actions across each priority area. Officers have been assigned from across the County Council to ensure each element of the structure is appropriately supported.

Reporting Structure



Actions associated with leadership already reflect the importance of engagement with Members. We do need to undertake additional work around governance to support member's role as the corporate parent.

2. Munro Review

Professor Eileen Munro published her interim report into Child Protection on 1 February 2011. Whilst the final outcome of the review is not expected until April of this year, the interim report focuses on child protection procedures that question first whether they have helped children, and closely examines where reforms need to take place.

The report highlights the importance of having multi-agency services based in the community to help keep children safe and support their wellbeing, identify the children and families most in need and give them help as early as possible.

The areas of reform in the interim report include;

- the importance of a management and inspection process monitoring whether or not children receive the help they require
- developing social work expertise and keeping experience, senior staff on the front line, providing better support to more junior social workers
- giving other professionals easier access to social work advice
- revising and reducing statutory guidance
- considering having a national system of trained reviewers of serious case reviews.

3. Next Steps and Recommendations:

Members will be provided with regular updates on the improvement programme for Specialist Children's Services. Members are to prioritise training events and information briefings as dates are circulated. This will help to ensure we continue to take collective action to improve outcomes for children and families across the County.

Officer Names and contact information

For further information on the improvement plan priorities please contact;

Diane Trollope
Strategic Planning Manager
01622 694716

Or Jennifer Maiden-Brooks
Programme Manager
01622 222744

Background Documents:

Interim report of Munro review

Published by DFE

01.02.2011

www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/inthenews/interim-report-of-munro...

Other Useful Information

Reconstruct Research Services

www.reconstrcut.co.uk

By: Jenny Whittle, Cabinet Member, Specialist Children's Services
Malcolm Newsam, Interim Managing Director, Children, Families and Education

To: Vulnerable Children's Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 30 March 2011

Subject: Governance Arrangements for Children's Social Care Improvement

Summary: This report outlines the proposed governance arrangements for Children's Social Care Improvement.

Improvement Board

1. (1) The purpose of the Kent Improvement Board (Terms of Reference attached as appendix 1) is to support rapid and sustainable improvement of services in the county that safeguard children and/or support looked after children. Its key roles are to agree, monitor and report progress on the actions in the Kent Children's Services Improvement Plan. That will include monitoring the targets set out in the Kent Improvement Notice issued by the Secretary of State in January 2011. This report will be considered by Cabinet on 4th April and any amendments will be reported back to the Vulnerable Children POSC.

(2) The Board has appointed an independent chair, Liz Railton, which has been approved by the Parliamentary under Secretary of State for Children and Families. The Chair will report directly to the Minister and the Leader of the Council on progress on a quarterly basis

(3) The Board meets monthly and its membership includes:

- The Independent Chair
- KCC Lead Member for Children's Services
- KCC Managing Director Children Families and Education
- KCC Director of Specialist Services Children Families and Education
- Department for Education observer
- The Chair of the Kent Safeguarding Children's Board
- The Primary Care Trust Chief Executive
- Kent Police

(4) The Board's work will be reported to (see appendix 2).

- KCC Cabinet
- KCC Vulnerable Children's Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- Kent Children's Trust Board
- Kent Safeguarding Children's Board

- County Council
- PCT Executive Board

Governance within Kent County Council

2. Attached as an Appendix 2 is a diagram illustrating the governance arrangements for Children's Social Care Improvement. There is top level ownership of the Improvement Plan within the Council, as follows:

- a. The Leader will receive quarterly reports from the Chair of the Improvement Board and will meet regularly with the Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services and the Interim Managing Director of Children, Families and Education
- b. The Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services and Group Managing Director will have a key leadership role within the Improvement Board
- c. Progress on the Improvement Plan will be monitored by Cabinet and the Vulnerable Children's Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The Vulnerable Children's Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee will set up a **Children's Services Improvement Panel** to offer support and challenge and to provide the detailed monitoring of progress
- d. The Children's Services Improvement Panel will be cross party (based on proportionately) and comprise eight Members, chaired by the Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services. It will replace the CSS Improvement and Development Steering Group (a Member and Officer working group) and the Children's Champion Board. It will meet after the Vulnerable Children's Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee and will receive detailed progress reports on the Improvement Plan and up to date management and performance data. The meeting will not be webcast, however papers will be published.
- e. The Children's Services Improvement Panel will be supported by two key groups:
 - (i) **The Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP):** This Panel will be responsible for ensuring the best possible social, emotional, health and educational outcomes for all looked after children. Alongside all its other duties, it will be responsible for listening to the experiences of Looked after Children and feeding this into the Children's Services Improvement Panel. The Panel will be chaired by the Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services and will have a cross party (based on proportionately) Membership of eight Members. It will also include two foster carers and two representatives from the Children in Care Council. The CPP will also act as the governing body of the Virtual School for Looked after Children.
 - (ii) **Staff Advisory Group:** this will be the forum in which front-line staff, including managers, will be able to report directly to Members their experience of the improvement plan.

Members of the group will include the Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services and Deputy Cabinet Member, social workers, principal social workers and team leaders who are responsible for delivering front-line Children's Specialist services. The group will feed back views about the extent to which the improvement actions being taken is impacting on their day to day responsibilities and they will make suggestions about any further action required. They will also assist Elected Members in understanding the support they can provide to front-line workers.

Both the Corporate Parenting Panel and Staff Advisory Group will be held privately, in order to allow staff and carers the freedom to discuss their views. This operates to great effect in Education, where the Members' Monitoring Group supports the identification of performance trends that feed through to Policy Overview and Scrutiny.

Recommendations

3. Cabinet Members and Members of the Vulnerable Children's Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee are requested to note the proposed governance arrangements for Children's Social Care Improvement.

Malcolm Newsam
Interim Managing Director
Children Families and Education

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**KENT SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S
IMPROVEMENT BOARD**

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose

The Kent Children's Services Improvement Board will ensure effective, cross-partnership oversight of the Safeguarding and Looked After Children Improvement Plan and Programme in order to ensure delivery of all requirements outlined in the Improvement Notice.

Status of the Board

The Board will report to the Leader and Cabinet of the County Council. The Chair of the Improvement Board will report progress on a quarterly basis to the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for Education and the Leader of Kent County Council (KCC) including specific commentary against the targets set out in the Improvement Notice.

Chair

- The Board will be chaired by an independent chair.
- Liz Railton CBE, Director of National Programmes and SERCO Education and Children's Services, has been jointly appointed by KCC and the DfE to undertake this role.
- If the Chair is unable to attend any meeting then she shall appoint an appropriate person from the existing Board membership to deputise in her absence.

Board Membership

- Liz Railton CBE, Independent Chair
- Katherine Kerswell, KCC Group Managing Director
- Jenny Whittle, Cabinet Member for Families & Social Care
- Malcolm Newsam, KCC Interim Managing Director, CFE (DCS)
- Helen Davies, KCC Director of Specialist Children's Services, CFE
- Oena Windibank, Interim KSCB Independent Chair
- Ann Sutton, Joint PCT Chief Executive

- Maria Shepherd, Detective Superintendent, Kent Police

Others in Attendance

- Julian Ward, Department for Education – Observer.
- Senior colleagues from KCC CFE and partner organisations will attend and report to the Board as required.

Meeting Frequency

The Board will meet on a monthly basis and a schedule of meetings will be agreed for 2011 in the first instance.

Quorum

The Improvement Board has no quorum. It will be a matter for the Chair to determine whether there are sufficient members either present or able to attend to undertake the necessary business of the Board.

Alternates

Members of the Board will be required to attend in person or send their apologies. Deputies cannot attend in place of Board Members. For others attending the Board to support its work, deputies may attend with the prior agreement of the Chair.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board will:-

1. Consider, comment upon and agree the detail of the KCC Safeguarding and Looked After Children Improvement Plan which will provide the focus for the Board's work.
2. Ensure that the requirements of the Improvement Notice, as issued by the DfE, are adequately and appropriately addressed within the Council's Improvement Plan.
3. Receive proposals for addressing the key performance issues identified within the Improvement Notice and monitor progress including the receipt of relevant performance management information.
4. Oversee, monitor and challenge progress on the implementation of the Council's Improvement Plan.
5. Advise on the implementation of the Improvement Plan, assessing risk and addressing issues that arise that may have an impact on the progress of the plan e.g. resourcing issues.

6. Assure itself that front-line practitioners and partners are all being appropriately engaged in addressing the key performance issues identified within the Improvement Plan.
7. Agree the future workplan of the Board.
8. Support the Chair in agreeing the key issues to be formally reported to the Leader and Cabinet of KCC and the DfE as part of the formal reporting requirements and in addition, ensure effective communication of the programme's progress to the Kent Children's Trust, Kent Safeguarding Children's Board and staff within individual partner organisations.

Dissolution of the Board

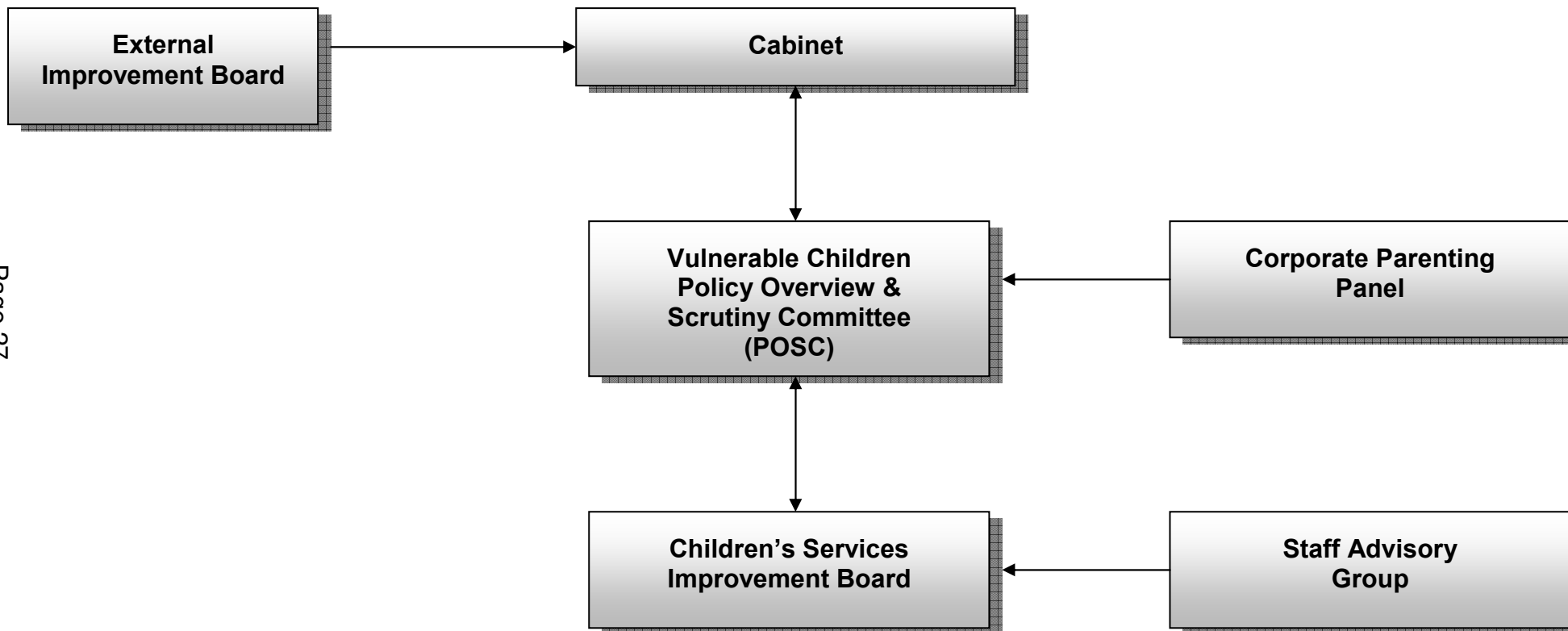
The Board will be dissolved by a joint decision of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families and KCC, following a recommendation from the Board that all of the key requirements in the Improvement Notice have been sufficiently met and are sustainable. Any change in the Board membership will need to be agreed with the DfE, KCC and the Independent Chair.

Administration

KCC will be responsible for the preparation of the agenda and papers for the meetings of the Board, in consultation with the Independent Chair. Papers will be distributed to Board Members at least 5 days in advance of any meeting. KCC will also be responsible for the administration, clerking and hosting of the Board meetings and will ensure that minutes are taken and distributed to Board Members within one week of a Board meeting. The Chair will agree minutes before circulation.

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Revised Governance Arrangements



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By: Malcolm Newsam, Interim Managing Director, Children, Families & Education Directorate
Jenny Whittle, Cabinet Member, Specialist Children's Services

To: Vulnerable Children and Partnerships Policy Overview Committee

Date: 30 March 2011

Subject: Update regarding the work of the Virtual Head Teacher for Looked After Children.

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: *This report provides Members with an overview of the priorities for the Virtual Head Teacher, and details;-*

- the progress made by the Integrated Looked After Children Support Service (ILSS) in its development into the Virtual School (VS)
- the challenges for the Virtual School in tracking the progress made by our Looked After Children (LAC)
- the next steps for the service to support our LAC to achieve their potential

Introduction

1. (1) Further to the report received by the Vulnerable Children and partnerships POSC on 21 October 2010, this report provides an overview of the positive strides made this academic year in the development of the Integrated Looked After Children Support Service (ILSS) into the Virtual School.

Significant developments include;

- the formation of the governing body,
- the virtual school identity,
- the submission of a business case to form 6 locality teams, moving to a position where all Kent LAC are supported in an improved ratio of 1 worker to on average 40 children.

These are the foundation stones of our work, and given us the basis from which to build our service.

The development of the service

2. (1) By September 2011 we are on target to achieve 5 core ambitions.
- Pan Kent Strategy for Looked after Children, including specific targets in relation to exclusions and attendance.
 - Locality teams up and running reducing ratios of key staff: LAC, implementing improved tracking and monitoring to ensure good levels of progress are being made.
 - Aim Higher mentor working within the team, deployed to support all LACs with aspirations. The worker is in place until the end of this academic year, a business case to review the feasibility of retaining this approach is underway.
 - Portfolio of assessment tools developed in conjunction with the KEP by the virtual school team rolled out and sustaining improvements in the development of the Personal Education Plan. Learning needs assessments will be completed within the first 20 days of children coming into care.
 - Information and tracking of Kent's LAC will come together in an Integrated Data Set (IDS) in order that we know where our children are, what support they are receiving and what targeted actions we need to take,

The final bullet remains a significant challenge. There have been considerable technical barriers to pulling together a robust data set that will allow us to identify, track, monitor and support our LAC. Management Information have assigned a project manager to support us with this work we are close to having an initial data tool that allows us to manage the data.

(2) Addressing our key challenges

As highlighted in October, the low profile of the service and high staff ratios meant limited support for our LAC. Very few Head teachers had heard of the service and that was also true of many LA officers. Several consultation processes have been undertaken, including reviewing the name of the service, with a view to re-launch with a more nationally recognisable name in line with the Virtual School agenda. Partner services were included and a list of potential names was shared with our LAC to canvass their opinion. The outcome identified the preferred name of **Virtual School Kent (VSK)** with 79% of all votes cast

Kent has been significantly behind other areas in reviewing the health needs of looked after children. To combat this, the service has a formal line management structure which includes the operational management of the East Kent LAC Nursing Team; this was not the case before this academic year. West Kent is

considering the integration of their nursing team within our service which will mean we can be confident of achieving our target for next year of 85%.

(3) Governance

Good progress has been made in the development of a governing body for the Virtual School where 90% of identified representatives have confirmed their support. These colleagues include representatives from key Specialist Children Service Group (SCSG) and Learning Group services, Health providers and commissioners, Headteacher/ Principal representatives, Connexions CEO and elected members.

The Numbers

3. The current number of KCC Looked After Children is 1,400, with the Asylum figures omitted. In addition there are 228 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC). District breakdown continues to highlight significant variance across the County.

(1) LAC Permanent Exclusions

The rate of permanent exclusions for LAC has not reduced over the last 3 years and is significantly above the national average of 0.4% (150% above Nat Av.). Worryingly 2010 data shows no improvement and the gap is widening against both our statistical neighbours and the national average.

(2) LAC Attendance

There is a variable picture of attendance for our Looked After Children, which again evidences the gap between our statistical neighbours and national averages. 2010 25+ days absence data set evidenced an increase in LAC from 15% 2009 to 16.3% 2010.

(3) Educational progress

To ensure that we can improve outcomes for our LAC there needs to be a holistic approach which is strategically targeted based upon accurate data. To achieve this it is imperative that there is a functional integrated data set that can be used proactively to track and monitor students progress

Next Steps

4.

- Finalise a Service Level Agreement with Attendance and Behaviour to ensure robust business processes are in place to drive down absence and exclusions for Kent's LAC.
- Provide effective induction and clear implementation priorities for our locality teams around LAC.

- Finalise the development of the integrated data, to ensure effective implementation of tracking, monitoring and targeting support.
- Identify vulnerable cohorts / learners within our LAC population and effectively deploy resources in a timely manner to maximise LAC outcomes.

Recommendations:

5. Members of the Vulnerable Children and Partnerships Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to:

- Note the proposal to change the name of the service from Integrated Looked After children Support service (ILSS) to Virtual School Kent (VSK) as supported by our LAC.
- Support the ongoing development of services for our Looked After Children

Tony Doran
Virtual School Headteacher
01622 221105
tony.doran@kent.gov.uk

Background Documents:

Virtual Headteacher for Looked After Children - Vulnerable Children & Partnership Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 21st October 2010

Other Useful Information: *None*

By: Alastair Pettigrew, Interim Director for Specialist Children's Services

Malcolm Newsam, Interim Managing Director, Children, Families & Education Directorate

Jenny Whittle, Cabinet Member for Specialist Children Services

To: Vulnerable Children and Partnerships Children, Families & Education Policy Overview Committee

Date: 30 March 2011

Subject: Preventative Services Manager Update

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report provides an update for the Members of Vulnerable Children and Partnerships POSC on the progress, developments and future remit of the Preventative Managers.

Introduction

1. (1) Preventative Services Managers (PSMs) were appointed in September 2010 to each District, co-located alongside the District Managers of Children's Specialist Services. The development of these roles is in its early days and the evolution of the roles continues.

The current PSM brief is to bring greater focus and cohesion to early intervention and preventative services in order that children, young people and their families' needs can be identified and met at the earliest possible stage. It seeks to bring together health, education and social services for vulnerable children.

Strategic Priorities

2. (1) Since September 2010 Preventative Services Managers have taken the lead in partnership with each District across several strategic priorities. The current priorities are identified below, and it should be noted that these priorities may be subject to change. Such changes could be necessary across the whole county e.g. following inspection processes or could be linked to a particular geographical area, where performance monitoring reveals a wide gap in specific services from other areas in Kent or statistical neighbours.

(i) Ensuring early intervention through CAF, Lead Professional and Team around the Child

The Government's strategy to secure prevention it to lodge that responsibility in universal services and to use a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) to identify the additional needs of children and to plan to meet those needs by the appropriate staff from the relevant agency. This process fully involves the parents who agree with the team providing the service, which member of staff should be the lead professional who takes responsibility to coordinate the service.

It is intended that the preventative measures will result in more children having their additional needs met by universal services – health and schools, thus resulting in fewer referrals for more costly interventions.

947 CAFs were completed between April 2009 and March 2010 compared to between April 2010 and January 2011 when there were 1,246, showing an increase of 299.

(ii) Children's Centres

Working with the Children's Centre central support team, PSMs have concentrated on extending the reach of Children's Centres to vulnerable families. This has included refocusing outreach resources and encouraging partners to refer vulnerable families to Children's Centres for support.

Within each District, PSMs have strengthened the governance arrangements for Children's Centres through the appointment of Independent Chairs to the District Advisory Boards. Arrangements are also in place for each Centre to have a Steering Group focused on promoting participation and engagement of all stakeholders in the life of the centre; most importantly this enables strong parental engagement.

As Centres prepare for inspection by Ofsted they have been supported by PSMs in completing a Self Evaluation Form focused on recording outcomes for service users through a process of data analysis and service evaluation.

(iii) Early Intervention Services

Working with the Commissioning Unit in Children, Families and Education, PSMs have mapped the range of local services and providers focused on early intervention in each District. Thanet and Shepway piloted a commissioning review of these services and this is now being rolled out across the County. The aim is to ensure that each District is aware of services based on outcomes for service users, evidence of high quality and value for money. It is of critical importance that all commissioning undertaken in this way is linked into the new CFE commissioning register and follows proper procurement processes in close

partnership with the work of the new Director of Strategic Commissioning when appointed.

(iv) Support to the KCC Improvement Plan

The recent Ofsted inspections have identified significant shortcomings in safeguarding and looked after children work. One element of this plan will seek to free up children's social care to work with the children with the highest levels of need by assisting preventative services to deal with some referrals which are more appropriate for universal services. Benchmarking data confirms that Kent Children's Specialist Services also receive significantly more referrals of children in need, make more children the subject of a child protection plan and place more children in care than its statistical neighbours. The challenge for the preventative service is to demonstrate that it can reduce the referrals to more expensive services. If it can do this it will prove its value both in quality and value for money. The Improvement Plan includes actions to bring this about.

Recommendations:

Members of the *Vulnerable Children and Partnerships* Children, Families and Education Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to:

Note the report

Alastair Pettigrew
Interim Director, Specialist Children's Services
01622-221573
Alastair.Pettigrew@kent.gov.uk

Background Documents:

None

Other Useful Information

None

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By: Malcolm Newsam, Interim Managing Director, Children, Families & Education Directorate
Sarah Hohler, Cabinet Member for Education, Learning & Skills

To: Vulnerable Children and Partnerships Policy Overview Committee

Date: 30 March 2011

Subject: Children, Families and Education Directorate Equality and Diversity Action Plan

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report presents an overview of the changes and development made in equality and diversity in Children, Families & Education (CFE) since April 2010. In particular this report focuses on the work that CFE has undertaken in the development of the Equality & Diversity Strategic Action Plan 2010-2013 and the achievements of the directorate in achieving the ambitions of this plan.

Introduction

1. (1) Kent County Council's Corporate Equality Strategy 2010-2013 has provided the basis and context for the Children, Families and Education Directorate Equality & Diversity Plan. The Kent Strategy and Plan have now been finalised and agreed by Cabinet. Work is now going ahead in order to prepare for the implementation of the Public Sector Equality Duties.

(2) This report sets out the key development and achievements against the first year delivery of the CFE strategic action plan for equality and diversity since POSC agreed that it would provide the strategic framework for policy development and delivery of children's services in Kent.

(3) The purpose of this Act is to harmonise over 40 years of equality legislation and case law in order to provide clarity and consistency. The Act received cross-party support prior to its enactment. Further, the Coalition government has continued with this commitment by having this agenda lead at Cabinet level. One of the major changes since its enactment and the creation of the Coalition government, has been the removal of the overarching social-economic duty which would have reinforced many of the key areas of inequality and tackling of disadvantage in Kent. However, the priorities being set in both the

Departments of Education and Health, will enable issues concerning social economic disadvantage to be picked up both in the context of education and health. For example, one of the key priorities for the Department of Education concerns the improvement of the educational performance of Looked After Children (LAC) and those on free school meals (FSM).

Achievements against Year 1 of the Action Plan

2. (1) The following report highlights and illustrates some key areas of work across the directorate to date.

(i) Knowing your community and equality mapping

The foundation of good equality practice is for those developing policy, commissioning, procuring and delivering services to have a good understanding of the profile of the communities that they serve. Year 1 ambition under this framework was to:-

“Develop support mechanisms to embed equality and diversity in our core business, for example, through disseminating information and effective practice on the Kent Trust Web to all our staff, schools, settings and providers” and to “Ensure information, guidance and effective practice is used to inform the development of responsive and evidence based service”.

This would serve to enable the effective and efficient delivery of services. Some examples of performance against the plan within CFE are:

- The Kent Children’s Trust Planning Toolkit contains an Indicator Toolkit which provides. A summary of performance data for a wide range of indicators in the KCT Performance Framework (including a number of National Indicators) and also provides analysis by locality (usually District) and comparisons with National figures, as well as analysis by gender, Special Education Needs (SEN), FSM and LAC (where datasets allow).
- This has been used alongside data sets such as the School Census data and Mosaic to enhance Children, Families Education ability to address areas of inequality. This has also allowed for better planning within frontline services and has been used in Children’s Centres in order to identify community needs and target resources effectively.

(ii) Place Shaping Leadership Organisational Commitment and Partnerships

The Year 1 ambitions under the second area of performance for the Equality Framework for Local Government were for CFE to:-

“Re-establish the Equality and Diversity Strategy Group and the CFE Champions Network, Lead CFE officers continue to identify, build and communicate the business case for a strong Equality and Diversity Strategy that will support the delivery of the Kent Vision” and “All managers have clear equality and diversity performance targets and outcomes, which are integrated into business plans and performance monitoring processes”.

- The CFE Equality and Diversity Strategy group has been re-established and meets regularly. The membership of this group has been consolidated through renewed terms of reference and the recruitment of new strand champions to lead on key areas. The group has agreed a number of key activities for itself and the Directorate. One of the key changes is that members of the group act as representatives of the management teams of their divisions. This also provides a point of reference for ensuring that equality and diversity matters are held at management levels within their division.
- The recent business planning period has enabled managers to clearly plan and identify equality and diversity issues in the context of their core business areas. The outcome of this activity has been varied across the directorate with some plans clearly identifying areas concerning equality and diversity more so than others. The business planning was supported by Business Planning and Equality and Diversity Officers who provided challenge and support in relation to this element of the plans. Group plans now have equality and diversity objectives linked to outcomes which can be carried across into the new structures after 31 March 2011.
- We have worked closely with the Kent Children’s Trust in order to ensure the Equality and Diversity is a key theme in the development of the new LCT Boards and the development of the Children and Young People’s Plan. All District Boards will have a Champion for Equality and Diversity to ensure considerations were measured at operational level. Induction sessions are planned for March 2011 to enable champions to effectively take up their roles. This has been reinforced through structures such as the reporting framework for the Children’s Trust Executive and Board which now requires that

all papers have equality implications highlighted in order to inform decision making.

- There continues to be a developing culture within the directorate with Heads of Service requesting advice, guidance and support on implementing equality and diversity in their services.

(iii) Community Engagement & Satisfaction

Ambitions for community engagement in Year 1 were to:

“Continue to develop a strategic approach to consult and engage with all children, young people and their families, specifically:

- *Looked after children*
- *Homeless children and young people*
- *Gypsy, Traveller and Roma children and young people*
- *Young Offenders*
- *Disabled children*
- *Asylum seeking and refugee children*
- *Children with parents in prison*
- *Young carers*
- *Children and young people with diminished mental health*
- *NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training)*

In partnership with Kent’s Children’s Trust, develop an approach to community engagement that facilitates ongoing dialogue that builds trust with all communities”.

- The development of the Children and Young People’s Plan (CYPP) has provided a unique opportunity for engagement with such groups. CFE has also attended key events such as the Kent Show, the Maidstone Mela and Thanet Pride in order to engage with children young people and their families. The outcome of this engagement around the plan was that a wide range of children and young people across the County were consulted about the priorities of the future plan and more specifically what they felt mattered in relation to the services that we delivered. A range of engagement activities were employed from focus groups to simple ballot box exercises and wider discussions in forums such as the Primary Children’s Council and the Kent Youth County Council.
- Minority Communities Achievement Service (MCAS) continues to encourage engagement at schools for English Gypsy young people. An example of this was undertaken with New Line Learning Academy in Maidstone. This culminated in a

celebration event which involved the whole school and was attended by family members. This event increased the confidence and engagement of the young people in school and fostered a greater sense of pride in their heritage. This increased the level of awareness within the school in relation to the culture and lifestyle of the young people. Increasing good relationships between staff and students, effective learning and greater cohesion within the school.

- Children Centres in the Isle of Sheppey continue to work closely with the Prison Service in order to ensure the well being and continuing of family bonds of children who have parent(s) in prison. Workers from the children centres provide books and toys during prison visits to enable fathers to read to their children and as far as possible to 'normalise' the wider context of the prison visit.
- In September 2010, a successful evening was held which involved the Managing Directors and Lead Cabinet Members for CFE and Communities and Cllr Paul Carter to meet with members of the Kent Youth County Council and the Children in Care Council. The session allowed senior members of the organisation to discuss key policy changes and also for the Young People to raise areas of concern to them also. The evening was a success and it was agreed that future meetings be arranged.
- The Work of the participation working group continues to ensure the engagement of children and young people and their families across the County. Working in partnership with external partners in Health and Communities has resulted in shared best practice, resources, information and intelligence which have served to influence services within Kent County Council. The development of a toolkit for those who would like to undertake consultation and engagement activity with children and young people is an example of some of the shared resources within the group. An annual conference delivered by the "Participate By Right" team will focus on the role of participation and engagement in a number of areas an example is involving children and young people in commissioning and procurement.

(iv) Responsive Services and Customer Care

The ambitions agreed in relation to the performance area of responsive Services and Customer Care were to

*"Maximise the "task and finish" model to address areas of persistent inequality;
Ensure a more rigorous relationship between engagement processes and service*

design to improve the likelihood of delivering services that communities experience as meeting their needs; Ensure Equality Impact Assessments are used to support the design, delivery and evaluation of projects and to Implement the new CFE wide complaints process”.

- The new CFE wide complaints process has now been implemented. This will provide greater consistency and clarity to the complaints process in CFE. This will lead to service improvement as the organisation responds to issues which can be managed and improved.
- An example of the task and finished model can also be seen in the creation of corporate standards in relation to interpretation and translation services across Kent County Council. In response to management request, a core group was formed with representatives from all directorates to pull together a common set of standards and processes which would enable frontline managers to make good decisions and access the most cost effective services for translation and interpretation in the County. The standards will be published in March 2011.
- Further, the same model was used to improve and bring together the framework for undertaking Equality Impact Assessments within Kent County Council in order to ensure legal compliance and most critically to ensure that managers would use the process in order to enhance and improve services that are being delivered.
- Equality Impact Assessment training continues to be a core priority within CFE. Since December 2010 the new framework for Equality Impact Assessments has been implemented in Kent County Council. This will enable managers to efficiently identify equality issues within services. An example of this is the Serious Incident protocol aimed at providing a consistent approach between the various staff groups within the Children, Families and Education Directorate in order to ensure a co-ordinated response to how serious incidents involving children are reported to senior managers has been assessed and implemented.

(v) Modern and Diverse Workforce

In relation to achieving a modern and diverse workforce, Year 1 aims were to:

Secure and publish people management data across all equality strands with an action plan to address any identified gaps; Data is actively managed at group and directorate management team level; Managers and staff are clear about the responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity; All officers

engaged in designing or delivering a community consultation or engagement strategy have advanced skills in the community capacity building agenda; Lead officers engaged in planning and policy development have a high level of equality impact analysis skills and capability; Increase participation in staff engagement survey and respond to outcomes through a robust plan.

Examples of the implementation of these ambitions are:-

- Staff capacity continues to be built through the CFE and local induction processes. Clear corporate messages are enabled through the use of KCC's "Together... making a difference" corporate induction video. This has been well received by new staff and contributed to raising levels of awareness in services.
- The Early Years and Family Group Conferencing team has developed a set of core induction materials for new and existing staff which highlights the importance of equality and diversity in the delivery of their services and the implications and risks where this is not done. Further, it aims to build the capacity and confidence of staff who may find it difficult currently to deal with issues as they arise
- An equality capture exercise 'Stand up and be counted' was undertaken across the whole organisation. The aim was to re-capture equality data of staff within Kent County Council. The outcome of this exercise will be available end March/early April. It is hoped that having a better sense of the organisation's profile will support the people management frameworks and enable Kent to be a high performing council through its workforce.
- The Staff Group Conference - Expect Respect, was successfully held in February 2011. It was agreed at the last CFE E&D strategy group meeting that support for staff attendance should be reiterated by the CFE management team. Also, the Personnel Department has been asked to explore the possibility of temporary staff being able to join and access staff groups in recognition of the fact that temporary staff is a pool of future candidates and that some remain with KCC for a significant period of time.

Related Issues

3. (1) At the six month update the changing regulatory environment related to equality and diversity was highlighted to the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This has become even more evident as a result of the challenge to the Secretary of State for Education by Kent County Council and others in relation to

Wave 4 of the Building School for the Future Programme. Further judgement was held against London Councils with regard to budgetary changes that were made which failed to fully consider the equality implications of their decision.

(2) Also it was highlighted that the Equality and Human Rights Commission has a mandate to ensure that equality legislation is realised. Consequently, specific powers have been created which enables the Commission to challenge the decision of public authorities where they believe that there has been a failure in the implementation of its duties. As such, it is critical that equality and diversity issues continue to be considered and embedded in the core business of CFE regardless of future structures.

(3) More details of the new top level structure will be needed to demonstrate how services will be supported to plan strategically and influence policy and practice. Therefore it is now more critical that officers are aware of and implement the requirements under equality and diversity legislation.

Next Steps

4. The next steps that have been identified in relation to the strategic plan are to:

- Continue to work towards achieving the outcomes identified
- Ensure that equality and diversity priorities are carried forward through to the new structural arrangements for Kent County Council in order to ensure positive outcomes for children and young people within the county and to mitigate risks in relation to those outcomes and organisational reputation.

Recommendations:

Members of the Joint Children, Families and Education Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to:

- Note the contents of the report.
- Consider the future framework for the delivery of Equality and Diversity as part of business practice and policy development as a result of the new duties that have come in force since the implementation of the Equality Act 2010 and organisational change in Kent County Council.
- Continue to receive regular reports of activity against the Equality and Diversity strategic action plan in order for the work to remain a key priority in the changing regulatory environment.

Akua Agyepong
Equality & Diversity Manager
01622 694121
Akua.Agyepong@kent.gov.uk

Background Documents:

CFE Equality & Diversity Strategic Action Plan 2010-20

Other Useful Information:

None

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Children Families & Education

Equality & Diversity Strategic Action Plan

2010-2013





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1. **Our strategic framework for equality and diversity**

As an ambitious and dynamic authority Kent aspires to be an excellent service provider and community leader. Our Equality and Diversity Strategic Plan will enable Children, Families and Education to fulfil this ambition and is informed by a strategic national and local framework:

- **Legal framework:** as a public sector organisation we have a duty eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote equal outcomes in all areas of our service design and delivery.
- **Every Child Matters Agenda for Change:** challenging our services to improve outcomes of being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.
- **The Kent Children and Young People's Plan 2011-2014:** sets out the vision for change and our priorities for improving outcomes for children, young people and their families in Kent.

Our performance on equality and diversity is assessed through the Equality Framework for Local Government, the Comprehensive Area Assessment and the wider framework for inspection for services and provision with in the Local Authority. The Comprehensive Area Assessment measures our performance across ten dimensions of equality.

KCC has committed to achieving excellent in the Equality Framework for Local Government during 2011.



2. Why have an equality and diversity strategy plan?

Kent County Council is committed to providing high quality services and working actively to involve children, young people and their families in the decisions that will affect them.

Our 2009 Comprehensive Area Assessment has assessed Kent as an Excellent Authority and a Good Authority in the provision of Children's Services.

Our Strategic Needs Assessment has identified inequality of outcomes, for example, we know that under-achievement and poorer outcomes in various aspects of their lives is evident for:

- children from low income families
- children and young people with behaviour, emotional and social needs (SEN)
- children in families where parents have mental health issues (as evidenced through safeguarding)
- boys in their attainment at different key stages.

We will address inequality through taking action across CFE and all of our partners through the Children's Trust.

This strategic plan will build our internal competence, confidence and capacity to provide effective leadership in promoting change for children and embed equality and diversity into the way we work.

3. What do we mean by equality?

The Kent County Council's Equality and Diversity Policy Statement (2004) describes our commitment to Equality and Diversity:

'As a major employer and provider of services, KCC is committed to promoting equality, valuing diversity and combating unfair treatment.'

We believe we will achieve this through our roles as community leader, service provider, employer and procurer/ commissioner.

We are committed to ensuring that service users, employees or job applicants will not be discriminated against on the grounds of social circumstances or background, gender, race, disability, sexuality, age, or religion. The principles of understanding and respect for others are central to what we believe.'

In demonstrating our effectiveness in this area we will be providing evidence against the **Equality Framework for Local Government** and its vision of an equal society:

"An equal society protects and promotes equal, real freedom and opportunity to live in the way people value and would choose, so that everyone can flourish."



An equal society recognises people's different needs, situations and goals and removes the barriers that limit what people can do and be"

We recognise the inter-relationship between our work to promote community cohesion (promoting a shared vision, sense of belonging and addressing inequality) and our strategic actions to promote equality and diversity.

4. About our equality and diversity strategic plan

This plan has been developed in consultation with key stakeholders in Children Families and Education and builds on a platform of excellent practice and outcomes from our consultation, involvement and strategic needs assessment activities.

The strategic plan is built on the five performance areas under the Equality Framework for Local Government:

- Knowing your community and equality mapping.
- Place shaping leadership partnership an organisational commitment.
- Community engagement and satisfaction.
- Responsive services and customer care.
- Modern and Diverse Workforce.

By embedding and delivering equality and diversity through CFE core business we have prioritized actions that will enable us to achieve excellence. Our strategic plan will be underpinned by an annual action plan co-ordinated by the Equality and Diversity Manager.

5. Knowing your community and equality mapping

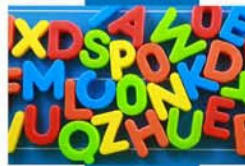
What we know we're already doing well:

CFE has invested in developing a sector wide information management system and has comprehensive MOSAIC data. We are building our understanding of the equality map across Kent.

We have a wealth of information regarding participation and achievement, based on age, location, ethnicity, disability, looked after children and socio-economic status and this already informs our needs assessment processes.

CFE is recognised in the CAA report as performing well in sharing information with our Trust Partners to build a common understanding of the community and its needs.

Our planning and policy documents address inequality of access and outcomes for children, young people and families in Kent. For example, the development of the Child Poverty Needs Assessment, JSNA – Children's Health Needs Assessment and the Every Child Matters Needs Assessment for the Children and Young People's Plan 2011-13.



Priority Actions

Year 1

Data Monitoring
 Develop support mechanisms to embed equality and diversity in our core business, for example, through disseminating information and effective practice on the Kent Trust Web to all our staff, schools, settings and providers.

Ensure information, guidance and effective practice is used to inform the development of responsive and evidence based service.

Year 2

Build an equally well informed profile for the seven identified equality strands across:

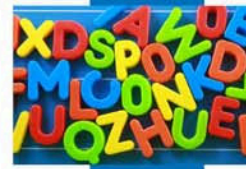
- the children’s workforce and key stakeholders (e.g. school governors)
- participants in consultation and engagement processes
- children and young people and their parents and carers.

Year 3

Systematically report to the Policy and Overview Scrutiny Committee how the community mapping process has informed service commissioning and decommissioning. Continue to explore opportunities with the third sector and local community groups to input into the community mapping processes and, in particular, to add qualitative as well as quantitative information.

We will achieve excellent when:

- ✓ CFE stakeholders report that data management processes provide them with accurate information to inform decision making and service planning.
- ✓ CFE stakeholders and partners are working with a shared and consistent understanding of the picture of inequality and community need across Kent.
- ✓ CFE stakeholders and the Kent community have a shared understanding of the equalities performance monitoring and how it improves service delivery.
- ✓ Performance monitoring against service objectives and National/Performance indicators are analysed by equality strand.
- ✓ Community mapping informs strategic service planning for example the new CYPP and Child Poverty needs assessment.



6. Place shaping leadership organisational commitment and partnership

What we know we're already doing well:

There is a clear ambition from the CFE's Senior Management Team and Lead Members to achieve excellence in the EFLG.

CFE has demonstrated strong leadership in the development of the Kent Children and Young People's Plan and through establishing projects to address inequality through service transformation such as Aiming High for Disabled Children and the Kent Pledge for Looked After Children.

Priority Actions

Year 1

Re-establish the Equality and Diversity Strategy Group and the CFE Champions Network.

Lead CFE officers continue to identify, build and communicate the business case for a strong Equality and Diversity Strategy that will support the delivery of the Kent Vision.

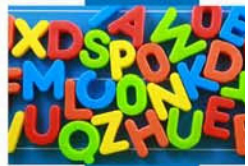
All managers have clear equality and diversity performance targets and outcomes, which are integrated into business plans and performance monitoring processes.

Year 2

Equality and diversity lead officer works closely with Kent Children Trust's Partnership Manager and strategic partners to ensure commitment to equality and diversity is incorporated into key strategies and activities of the new CYPP. Leadership competence framework.

We will achieve excellent when:

- ✓ Equality is embedded into the governance structure of the Kent Children's Trust and there is clear accountability for responding to inequality within Kent.
- ✓ CFE benchmarks its performance against other highly rated children's services in England.
- ✓ SMT has communicated the vision of equality and diversity as part of core business of CFE.



- ✓ The CFE Equality and Diversity Strategy group provides effective challenge coordination and scrutiny for the directorate.
- ✓ There is increased level of confidence and competence amongst managers in CFE together with Head teacher and school governors in leading equality and diversity.
- ✓ Equality and diversity is embedded within strategic planning and scrutiny processes.
- ✓ CFE leaders and officers are leading the equality agenda across with all Trust Partners.

7. Community engagement and satisfaction

What we know we're already doing well:

CFE has consulted with children, young people and their families to ensure their voices are included in the development of policy and services.

The Children and Young People's Survey is an excellent example of securing the views of users with over 45,000 young people responding to the survey in its first year.

There are a broad range of opportunities available for children and young people to participate in decision making processes including:

- Kent Youth County Council
- school councils
- Children in Care Council
- participation in key selection panels
- Voice for Youth Forums.

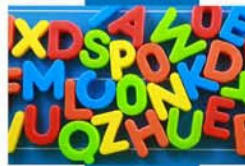
Children's Centres are a valuable and effective space for engaging with parents and carers in a wide range of issues that affect their lives.

Priority Actions

Year 1

Continue to develop a strategic approach to consult and engage with all children, young people and their families, specifically:

- Looked after children
- Homeless children and young people
- Gypsy, Traveller and Roma children and young people
- Young offenders
- Disabled children



- Asylum seeking and refugee children
- Children with parents in prison
- Young carers
- Children and young people with diminished mental health
- NEETs.

In partnership with Kent's Children's Trust, develop an approach to community engagement that facilitates ongoing dialogue that builds trust with all communities.

Year 2

Work with schools and youth providers to develop their capacity to work with children and young people through a broad range of engagement processes.

Continue to build feedback loops back to communities explaining how engagement processes influenced policy and service development.

We will achieve excellent when:

- ✓ CFE to expand the mechanisms that we use to engage the community in policy, service development and evaluation.
- ✓ CFE to expand the diversity of voices and representation on participation and consultation forums.
- ✓ CFE are achieving consistent satisfaction and participation levels reported across equality strand communities through monitoring of service delivery.
- ✓ We are able to demonstrate links back to service development and improvement through the consultative process e.g. "A Good Childhood in Kent".
- ✓ We have broad and innovative approach to engagement and consultation which is inclusive and relevant.

8. Responsive services and customer care

There are a significant number of projects aimed at tackling disadvantage at local community level, for example:

- Total Place - Margate
- Parents Consortium: provided services to disabled children and their families
- Poverty pilot (Thanet).¹
- Kent Credit Union- Gravesend.

¹[http://66.102.9.132/search?q=cache:xTlqwggYiocJ:www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/UserFiles/CW/File/Policy/Unit_Briefing_Summaries/Poverty.doc+Poverty+pilot+\(Thanet\).&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=uk](http://66.102.9.132/search?q=cache:xTlqwggYiocJ:www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/UserFiles/CW/File/Policy/Unit_Briefing_Summaries/Poverty.doc+Poverty+pilot+(Thanet).&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=uk)



We have been recognised in the CAA for having quality child care and extended services provision.

The Looked After Children Pledge offers a clear service promise to young people in care and we have an active Black and Minority Ethnic and Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual foster care networks.

The Kent Gateway “One Stop Shop” brings key service providers together in one place has been highlighted by the Audit Commission as a leading edge and innovative approach to improving access to services.

There are good examples of “turn around” teams and targeted services making a real impact on outcomes for disadvantaged groups (e.g. Portage).

Priority Actions

Year 1

- Maximise the “task and finish” model to address areas of persistent inequality.
- Ensure a more rigorous relationship between engagement processes and service design to improve the likelihood of delivering services that communities experience as meeting their needs.
- Ensure Equality Impact Assessments are used to support the design, delivery and evaluation of projects.
- Implement the new CFE wide complaints process.

Year 2

- Develop and expand equality and diversity standards as part of the procurement process.
- Increase performance monitoring and accountability for equality and diversity outcomes from those delivering service on behalf of CFE (e.g. Connexions).
- Continue to expand the range of satisfaction measures used to assess service value.
- Ensure that Equality and Diversity is embedded within all directly delivered, contracted and commissioned services. Ensure client satisfaction, reported by strand, is embedded into contract requirements.



We will achieve excellent when:

- ✓ CFE service delivery teams are confident and competent to make quality service delivery decisions.
- ✓ We are able to demonstrate service improvement and development through our complaints system.
- ✓ We are able to ensure that services delivered through our contactors fulfil equality requirements and demonstrate good practice.
- ✓ When all service delivery is informed by Equality/Customer Impact Assessment.

9. Modern and diverse workforce

What we know we're already doing well:

There is a clear commitment to equality and diversity throughout the recruitment process for all roles, with all panels requiring at least one person who has completed Positive Action in Recruitment Training.

Kent County Council has a strong portfolio of people management policies including flexible working, maternity and paternity leave, carers leave and the Learning and Development framework.

CFE has embraced the use of new technologies in order to deliver services and enable to enable staff to work effectively and flexibly.

Buddying and mentoring programmes designed to support all employees are embedded within CFE.

Priority Actions

Year 1

Secure and publish people management data across all equality strands with an action plan to address any identified gaps in:

- recruitment
- progression
- overall profile of workforce
- absence management, grievance and disciplinaries
- learning and development
- turnover
- reward (pay gap)
- profile of workforce across pay grading and structure.



Data is actively managed at group and directorate management team level.

Managers and staff are clear about the responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity.

All officers engaged in designing or delivering a community consultation or engagement strategy have advanced skills in the community capacity building agenda.

Lead officers engaged in planning and policy development have a high level of equality impact analysis skills and capability.

Increase participation in staff engagement survey and respond to outcomes through a robust plan.

Year 2

Managers will ensure that equality and diversity principles are embedded in all learning and development programmes both with internal and external providers at individual and team level.

Equality and diversity is embedded as a core competence area in leadership, development, recruitment and performance management.

We will achieve excellent when:

- ✓ CFE employees report that they feel well equipped to respond to the equality challenges for Kent children, families and young people.
- ✓ Building organisational diversity is seen as strength in performance improvement at all levels of CFE.
- ✓ The KCC policy framework consistently supports a commitment to building a vibrant and diverse workforce.
- ✓ We achieve consistent levels of staff engagement regardless of social identity.
- ✓ Effectiveness of the implementation of staff policies is measure through the staff engagement survey and through performance monitoring.
- ✓ We have effective and strong relationships with staff groups and are actively engaged and respond to issues and concerns.
- ✓ Managers and staff are clear about personal accountability in relation to ensuring equality and diversity considerations are part of their people management and service delivery responsibilities.

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By: Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager

To: Vulnerable Children and Partnerships Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee
30 March 2011

Subject: **SELECT COMMITTEE - UPDATE**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: To update the Committee on the current topic review programme and to invite suggestions for future Select Committee topic reviews.

Select Committee Topic Review Work Programme

1. (1) There are currently no Select Committee topic reviews in the work programme which fall under the remit of this Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

(2) Action plans are due to be submitted to the relevant POSC's setting out how the recommendations are to be progressed (or if there are issues with progressing any of the recommendations these will be drawn to the attention of the POSC's).

- Renewable Energy
- Extended Services

(3) The Select Committee work programme consists of the following:-

- Dementia – carrying out visits and hearing sessions.
- Educational Attainment of Pupils and Schools in Areas of High Deprivation – held its inaugural meeting in 3 February 2011 and Mr Wells was elected Chairman.
- The Student Journey – due to start its work in Spring 2011.

Suggestions for Select Committee topic reviews

2. At the Scrutiny Board It was agreed that Members would be asked to consider whether there are any topics that they would like to put forward for consideration for inclusion in the future topic review programme. If Members do have any suggestions could they contact the Democratic Services Officer for this POSC.

3. **Recommendation** Members are asked to note the Select Committee topic review update and to advise the Democratic Services officer of any items that they would like to suggest for inclusion in the Select Committee topic review programme

Denise Fitch
Tel No: 01622 694269
e-mail: denise.fitch@kent.gov.uk

Background Information: *Nil*

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