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To: Kent County Council, 25 June 2009

Subject: Senior Management Structure of Children, Families and Education Directorate

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This paper reports the outcome of the review of the senior management structure for the Children, Families and Education Directorate outlined in the previous document "Preparing the County Council for future challenges" approved by Council on 11th December 2008. It seeks formal approval for a streamlined senior team structure, which sees a reduction of two Director posts, and is the essential first step in delivering a better integrated, more efficient organisational structure to support the aims of the Directorate. Two of the new Director posts will be subject to a recruitment and selection process

Introduction

1. (1) The Children, Families and Education Directorate was formed in 2006 by combining the early years, childcare and education functions of Kent County Council with children and families social care services, in line with the recommendations of the Children Act 2004. In addition, agreement was gained with the two Primary Care Trusts in Kent to include a Senior Commissioner for Children and Young People's Health within the management structure.

(2) The Children Act 2004 requires each local authority to have a single Director and single Cabinet member to hold overall accountability for all children's services, although the responsibilities must necessarily be carried out in partnership across the local authority, particularly with Communities Directorate, Kent Adult Social Services and in relation to regeneration, economic development and public health.

(3) CFE has core statutory responsibilities to ensure that every child has access to high quality education from ages 3 -19 years. CFE provide essential support and challenge for Leadership and Governance for schools and colleges, and have a key role in developing excellent teaching and learning.

(4) CFE also has statutory responsibilities for Safeguarding and Child Protection and ensuring those children with special needs or disabilities have equal access to learning and other opportunities.

(5) The CFE Directorate works through, and supports the coordination of, the Kent Children's Trust Partnership, with the aim of providing a coherent service for children, young people, families and carers across all agencies. The Children's Trust Partnership is supported by statutory and voluntary organisations across the county and has set out its aims and objectives with the Kent Children and Young People's

Plan. The plan for 2008-2011 sets out 8 strategic priorities, based on extensive needs assessment.

(6) The Children's Trust combines the efforts of all agencies in order to provide focused, integrated service delivery at local level, as envisaged in the Every Child Matters framework with its five outcome themes:

- Be Healthy
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy and Achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve Economic Well-being

(7) The strategy and delivery for integrated children's services is currently focused around 23 Local Children's Services Partnerships (LCSP), based on clusters of schools. The local partnerships coordinate and support the 100 local Children's Centres for under-5s and their families, work alongside Kent's 600 schools and provide educational support services, and are working towards an integrated approach for young people, delivered in partnership with the Communities Directorate, Connexions and other key providers such as Further Education Colleges and community groups.

(8) The CFE Directorate also coordinates and supports the Kent Safeguarding Board, which works closely with the Children's Trust to ensure that child protection and broader safeguarding concerns have a high priority within the new combined arrangements.

(9) The CFE Directorate and its partners across Kent County Council and Kent Children's Trust received a very good report from the Joint Area Review inspection conducted in June 2008, with an overall good grade for outcomes, and excellent capacity to improve.

Review of CFE and the Children's Trust Partnership

2. (1) At the time of forming Children, Families and Education, several different services were brought together with a primary focus on getting the Children's Trust Partnership and Safeguarding Board established, along with the 23 Local Children's Services Partnerships (LCSPs) and setting up new processes such as the Common Assessment Framework. Core service and statutory functions were stabilised and good performance maintained during a period of great change, along with a high degree of scrutiny through the Joint Area review. The school transformation, reorganisation and capital programmes have been sustained, a continued focus on post-16 education and progression, and many new services established, particularly through extended schools and children's centres.

(2) Following a period of development and consolidation and the departure of several senior members of the CFE Directorate team, a review of the senior management structure was proposed as described in the paper "Preparing the County Council for future challenges" approved by Council on 11th December 2008. Following arrival in post on 11 May 2009, the new Managing Director has quickly completed this part of the review and will extend it to look at the operations of the Children's Trust and Local Children's Services Partnerships (LCSPs), to ensure that

the service can maximise the benefits of integration and can meet the challenges ahead.

(3) It is vital to maintain a focus on improved outcomes for children and young people, and to ensure that the service supports the overall ambitions and challenges for Kent as a whole, particularly the economic regeneration strategy. We need to look ahead at forthcoming opportunities and challenges. For example, the transfer of functions from the Learning and Skills Council to Kent County Council in relation to 16-19 education, alongside Kent's ambitions in relation to apprenticeships, employment and skills gives us a real opportunity to combine efforts across the County Council, with partners in schools, further education, across the public sector and with businesses.

(4) It is also important to ensure that the process of change and supporting partnership working does not outweigh the effectiveness of the service, and that the service is sustainable in the face of national and local economic challenges. Referrals to children's social services, for example, have increased by 45% over the past year, which may be a combination of increased awareness of risk following Haringey and other national cases, increased pressure on families due to the economic downturn, and also possibly due to increased need being uncovered through closer local working.

(5) Although there has been additional investment in front line social workers, a significant proportion of the increased referrals do not meet thresholds for children in need or at risk. Therefore they must be responded to by the combined efforts of local services and new investment such as children's centres, extended school services, child and adolescent mental health services in improving life chances. This requires a serious focus on a prevention strategy which makes clear what resources are available and how to access them. CFE and the Children's Trust Partnership must set out a clear framework for service users, underpinned by agreed responsibilities for all agencies including GPs, health providers, the police, social care, schools, youth services and the voluntary sector. Prevention must also harness the energy and enthusiasm of local people and connect closely with the aspirations of local communities. This work to develop this preventative strategy has already started.

(6) In the light of the above, a proposed review of the Children's Trust and LSCEs was discussed at the Children's Trust Board meeting on 12 June. In addition, a review of CFE services and structure will be conducted in line with the overall County Council financial and business planning for 2010/11 onwards.

Proposed Senior Management Structure for CFE

3. (1) In order to drive the improvements and to meet the challenges and opportunities set out above, a new management structure is proposed for Children, Families and Education. This will be a much slimmer structure, which will ensure a continued focus on the three main pillars of a combined service for children and families:

- primary health care (in conjunction with, and funded by, the Primary Care Trusts)
- educational provision and attainment (including operational support for schools),

- Safeguarding and child protection, health and child development.

(2) It is important that the services work laterally as part of a combined senior management team, as well as providing linear accountability chain for these key statutory functions. This will complement the efforts of local partnerships and maximise the benefits of bringing the service together.

(3) Therefore it is proposed to combine some functions, for example bringing together services for children with special educational needs and disabilities under one Service Director for Vulnerable Children, who will also have the responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.

(4) It is also proposed to bring together educational advisory and support services for 3-19 year olds, (and up to 24 for care leavers and those with disabilities), under a Service Director for Learning, along with operational support for early years, childcare, schools and further education providers. This function will support the corporate drive around apprenticeships, skills and employment.

(5) Given the scale of the Directorate, CFE also needs to ensure continued support for resourcing and infrastructure, capital programmes, commissioning, quality assurance, partnership working and change management. These posts can be reviewed over time once the capital programmes are well underway. Also, the proposed commissioning and Quality Assurance function could possibly be combined with primary health care at a future date, but given the high degree of change and focus required currently across both the local authority and health in establishing commissioning and service improvement, this is not yet feasible.

(6) The proposed structure is set out in diagrammatic form at Appendix 1. Most of the proposed posts in the new structure will be filled as shown by existing members of the senior management team. As a result of the decision of the current Director of Children's Social Care to retire from KCC at the end of this year, the post of Director for Vulnerable Children will be subject to an external and internal recruitment process as will the new post of the Director for Learning.

(7) Until the two new Director posts are recruited, the existing interim structure will remain, but moves will start to develop the new streamlined structure with the aspiration of it being fully operational by December at the latest.

Implications

4. (1) Financial implications:

As Members will be aware the 2009-10 CFE budget agreed by County Council on 19 February 2009 included a saving of £400k within Strategic Management (Page 50, Medium Term Plan 2009-12). This saving assumed that any future restructuring of senior management would include the removal of two posts at Director level together with associated support staff and on-costs. The proposals in this report delete two Director level posts and this ensures that the planned saving will be delivered. As we have been running with three vacancies at Director level for some time the full £400k saving will be achieved in 2009-10.

(2) HR implications:

The proposals will mean changes to the responsibilities of the Director of Commissioning, Specialist Services, who has agreed to take on new responsibilities as Service Director for Commissioning, Quality Assurance and Partnerships. The new structure will mean changes in line management for several managers and this will be fully communicated once Council have agreed the proposals. Any subsequent changes to alignment of services, organisation structures, and/or individual posts at other tiers in CFE Directorate will be the subject of full consultation under the usual personnel procedures.

Consultations

5. (1) This report has been discussed with the CFE Cabinet Member, the Leader of the County Council, the Chief Executive, Chief Officer colleagues, CFE SMT, East Kent PCT Chief Executives, the Chair of Kent Children's Trust and the Chair of Kent Safeguarding Board.

(2) Trade Unions will receive a copy of this report before the County Council and any views can be relayed to Members at that point.

Conclusion

6. (1) The CFE Directorate was established three years ago, and the senior management structure was put together by bringing together existing services and teams. This has served the County well in order to maintain stability and continuity in service delivery, and while the Children's Trust Partnership became established.

(2) It is now timely to revise the CFE senior management structure to ensure it is efficient, effective and can meet the challenges and opportunities ahead for children, families and education.

(3) There will be a root and branch review of the CFE Directorate, in line with Kent County Council financial and business planning for 2010/11 onwards.

(4) There will also be a review of the Children's Trust and Local Children's Services Partnerships to maximise effectiveness, improved outcomes for children and young people, and to ensure sustainability.

Recommendations

7. Council is asked to approve the proposed senior management structure for CFE set out in Appendix 1.

Background Documents:

Previous Council and cabinet reports establishing, and reporting on, CFE and the Children's Trust, including "Preparing the County Council for Future Challenges", December 2008.

The JAR and APA reports

Safeguarding Reports

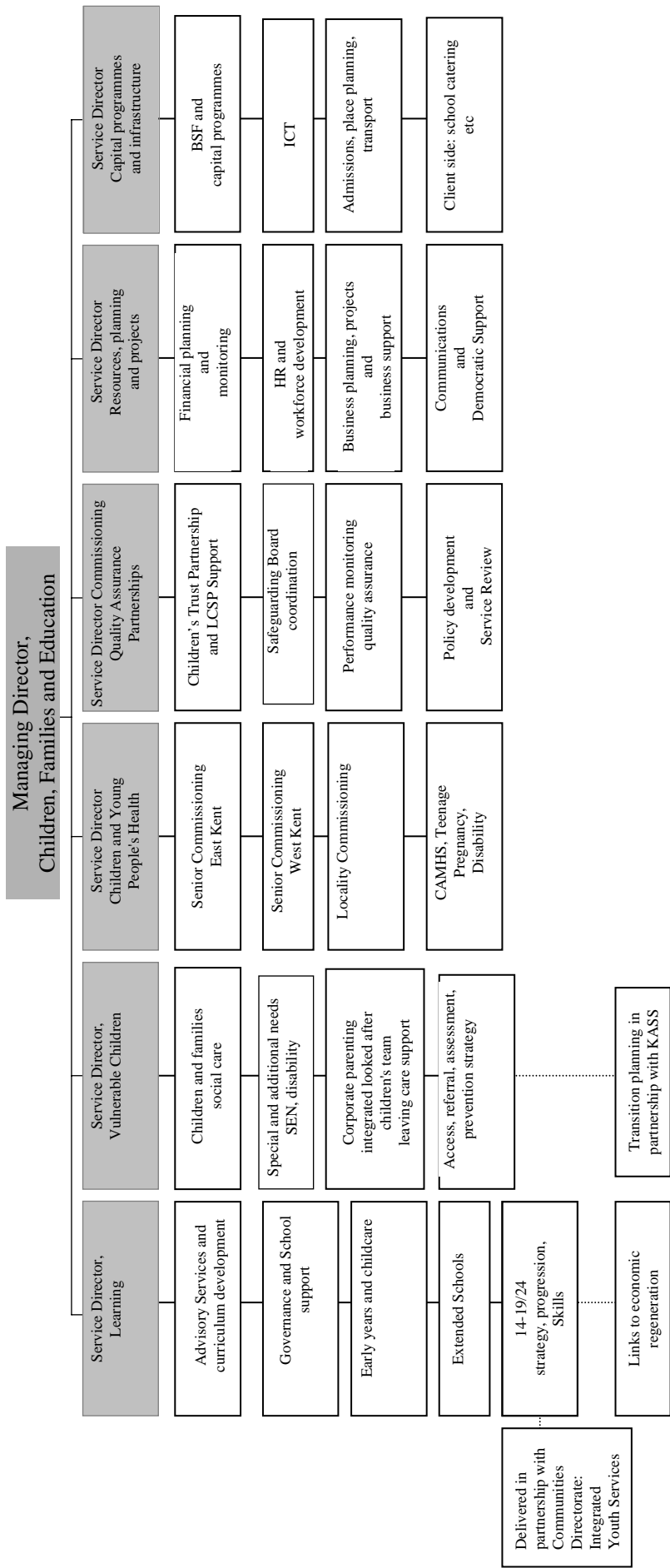
Children Act 2004 and other recent legislation for education, childcare, skills etc

Kent Children and Young People's Plan

Kent Children and Young People's needs assessment

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Proposed Senior Management Structure for Children, Families and Education Directorate



NB Structure below Senior Directors show functional responsibilities not actual posts. These will be developed during the second stage of the review