



Blueprint for Children's Services

V0.6

City of York Council

April 2010

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Blueprint for Children's Services

Blueprinting defines the structure and composition of the changed organisation that, once delivered, demonstrates the capabilities expressed in the vision statement for the organisation. It is a description of what the new organisation looks like in terms of people, processes, performance, platforms and outcomes for customers.

Background and Context

The focus of the blueprint is on Children's Services within CYC. This covers a range of services, the most distinctive of which is Children's Social Care (CSC) which provides specialist services to the most vulnerable children with a high level of need or who are at risk of harm.

Alongside this function are a range of services provided by both CYC and partners (under the umbrella of the Children's Trust) which complement the social care & safeguarding provision of CSC. The focus of Children's Trust services is to provide support at the level below social care and they have key focus of preventing children moving up to a higher tier of need. Linked with these services are other areas such as the Youth Offending Team, which supports those in the young offender system, and the Family Information Service which provides information for all children and families on the full range of services available within York, including general information not just social care and related.

Children's Services and CSC in particular is a highly regulated service with much of what is provided being set down in legislation with an increasingly rigorous inspection and monitoring regime. The service has reached and maintained an excellent standard over the last few years and is been highly regarded by external scrutinising bodies, however, in the last 18 months there have been significant changes to the environment in which children's services operate, specifically following Lord Laming's review into the tragic death of Baby Peter.

This means that the services now face a significant amount of legislative change and increased scrutiny in the next 12-18 months but set against the higher level of demand for service already being experienced. Across the UK, councils have experienced a significant increase in referrals to children's social care whilst also being subject to greater scrutiny of their provision of these services. As a consequence of increased pressures on services, the numbers of looked after children (LAC) in local authorities has been steadily increasing in the last two years. Specifically:

- **Nationally** - LAC increased by 2.5% in 2008/09.
- **Statistical Near Neighbours** - LAC increased by 3.5% in 2008/09, above the national trend.
- **A networking group of authorities nationally** – LAC increased by 7.8% in 2008/09 on average and by 10% if London boroughs are excluded from the group.
- **York** - LAC are currently increasing at 14% which is higher than the trends. A significant contributor to this is that more children are staying in care (as opposed to a significant increase in new LAC in the last two years). The current number of LAC in York is 227.

This all presents some significant challenges for the current services and there is a recognition now that CSC is a high performing service which is using an increasingly outdated model, given the environment in which it now finds itself.

In order for the service to succeed in this changed environment, a new approach is needed for the delivery of Children's Services in York. The blueprint for Children's Services describes the programme of work required to bring this new model into being.

Some immediate changes have been put in place to address some of the symptoms of the increase in workload and the process of preparing the blueprint has also given additional focus to this work, but these measures need to be consolidated into a new approach and service culture if significant and sustained improvements are to be achieved.

Vision

The vision for Children's Services in York:

“Children's services in York are provided to the right children by the right people at the right time, within an integrated support and safeguarding system”

This vision is supported by the following values:

- **clear purpose** which is shared and owned by all involved
- **quality service** that provides the right support to the right people at the right time
- **customer-centred** approach that takes account of what customers want and need
- values and **respects staff** and is committed to their continuing development
- works effectively and innovatively **with partners** to get the best possible outcomes
- **efficient** working models and processes that make the most of available resources

This delivery of this vision will be underpinned by:

- The creation of a **flexible** and **sustainable service**
- An appropriate **balance** between **safety and cost**
- Clear lines of **accountability** to management, CYC as a whole, partners and legislative bodies

High Level Objectives for the Project

- Create a more unified and efficient customer contact function for children's services.
- Secure current performance levels and create capacity to seek continuing improvement
- Enable the service to respond to the changing social care agenda and be flexible enough to deal with un-predicted changes and demands.
- Support the delivery of a prevention culture which will assist children's needs to be identified earlier to reduce the number of more serious interventions at later stages. Ensure preventative services are suitably supported and influenced by experienced social care professionals.
- Stabilise then contribute to the work to manage the budgetary overspend on children's social care.
- Ensure the design of the services supports and complements the wider strategies of both CYC and its partners.
- Create a service that can balance workloads between managers and teams and so support consistency and quality in service to customers.

The project will deliver a service that will be improved in the short term but which will also have the right foundations for continually improving itself in the medium and long term. The changes set out in the blueprint will enable those within the service to develop it themselves the demands on and priorities of the service change in the future.

Principles

The vision and objectives lead to a number of practical principles around which the service will be designed.

Effective team structure and transitions between teams

- Teams are arranged in such a way that focuses on the core purpose of the service, not arbitrary divisions
- There is a clearly defined purpose for each team and the roles within it
- Transitions between services (internal and external) are well managed and justified so children on the edge of care or at risk of harm receive continuity of service
- When the involvement of CSC in a case comes to an end, facilities should be in place to ensure the case can be pro-actively handed over to another team or partner to continue support if necessary.
- The service is flexible and has a shared ownership of its purpose

Consolidated view of the customer

- Staff will have a single reference point to obtain a complete picture of a customer & their history
- Staff and partners will have the right information made available to them and actively shared and promoted to them where possible

Simple and efficient access for customers

- A single point of contact for customers, which covers all access channels.
- Processes and service levels which are clearly defined and manage the expectations of customers, whilst being consistent across the customer base.
- Processes for customer contact are consistent and in keeping with the corporate customer strategy.

Partnership working

- The structures, processes and protocols of the organisation will take account of all parties involved, both internal and external to CYC, and will be designed to achieve the best possible outcomes for customers with the resources available.
- The needs and expectations of partners are considered and managed

Best use of data

- Data is routinely analysed pro-actively to identify trends or indications of possible areas for early intervention.
- Capture the required customer data as early in the process as possible. The same data should not need to be captured again.
- Ensure that processes for capturing and recording data are efficient but justified by the end purpose for the data
- Service design, improvement and day-to-day management is based on the available data which is accurate and up to date.

Quality assurance mechanisms

- Appropriate quality assurance mechanisms should be in place across all services.
- Mechanisms to measure and assure quality should also take account of the whole experience of a child or family whilst receiving support or care, not just the individual team or service elements.

Business Case 1 – Children’s Social Care restructure

Strategic Fit

The restructure of children’s social care services will enable the service to meet the changing demands for care whilst maintaining its cost base at an acceptable level. The changing environment in which children’s social care operates will result in more scrutiny and a higher expectation of quality than before. The proposed work will ensure that the service can meet and exceed these requirements and expectations without a continuing need to increase its resources.

Objectives

A transformed service that can accept and service current and future demands for support from customers. It will achieve this by:

- Influencing prevention work to improve its targeting of support towards those who would benefit from it.
- Facilitating increased prevention work of partners, to give CSC a sharper focus on those cases where specialist social care services are provided. Doing the work CSC should be doing; supporting partners effectively so they can do their part.
- Working better with partners to provide a more joined up approach to achieving the right outcomes.
- Delivering the win-win situation of achieving earlier and better outcomes for customers, which are more cost effective for the council to deliver.
- Maximise the effectiveness of the unique services provided by those working in tier 3 and 4 (social care and safeguarding) services.
- Ensure the workloads of individuals, teams and managers are balanced and appropriate, to support a better working culture for staff and improve the quality of services offered by CSC.
- Prepare the service to meet the recommendations of the Social Work Task Force, particularly around raising the profile of social care (tier 3) services.

Specific changes required to achieve the above objectives:

- Create operational teams whose cases are not restricted by location or age.
- Create generic roles across the service to increase the mobility & flexibility of staff.
- Move control and responsibility for managing the day to day work closer to front line staff to remove the need for Grade 11 & 12 managers to be constantly involved in case details
- Empower staff through training, coaching and a shift in the working practices or the service. This will be driven and underpinned by a change to the culture of the service and to the behaviours exhibited by managers and staff.
- Develop and promote a culture where staff & managers work more with their peers in other teams to deliver the service overall.
- Create capacity for the service managers and heads of service to spend the required time on longer term planning, actively dealing with service development activities and promoting stronger links with partners and other CYC teams.

More details of the proposed changes to achieve these objectives are detailed in Appendix 8.

Financial Benefits

The headline financial benefit is that the project will mean the council will incur at least £2m less in costs over 3 years than if nothing is done. £435k of this is in savings against budget and the remaining £1.57m is in additional costs avoided by having fewer children need to be taken into care i.e. avoiding the projected overspend if the

service continues with its current model. This includes a modest budget saving for 2010/11 of £21k, but with project costs avoided in 2010/11 at approx. £500k.

There is also a proposed 'stretch target' which would see the budget savings over the same 3 years at £1.1m with additional avoidance of overspend of £1.7m, totalling £2.8m in costs avoided.

A full benefits analysis is included in Appendix 2.

Risks

The following risks are associated with the project:

- Quality of care or other performance indicators fall during the transition.
- Key elements in the objectives are dependent upon the successful and timely delivery of the outcomes from the front door workstream (business case 2) – if that workstream is delayed it will impact the delivery of these changes.
- Dependencies on the other workstream are such that if not managed it could result in safeguarding concerns being missed.
- Media interest in the work could be high, resulting in increased resource required to manage communications.

The following are risks of not carrying out the project:

- Financial costs of delivering children's social care continue to rise, specifically the disproportionate costs of more severe interventions and high cost placements
- Quality and performance of CSC services fall; service loses its "outstanding" rating with consequential negative impacts on the overall CAA score and council reputation.
- Poor outcomes for children potentially resulting in reduced life chances and a widening of the equality gap
- Pressures on staff cannot be addressed resulting in higher turnover or increased sickness absence rates
- Service becomes unfit to deal with future demand levels or legislative requirements
- Service is unable to deliver its commitments made in the 2009-12 Children & Young People's Plan, corporate strategy and sustainable communities strategy.

Recommendation

A transformational restructure of children's social care is carried out in order to re-align resources and skills with the demands on the service. This will remove the current split of teams based on age & customer location and move to a team structure designed around working with partners to support the customer.

Business Case 2 – Consolidate customer access for children's services and improve coordinated prevention services

Strategic Fit

Children's Services currently have numerous customer access points located around the city, both in the city centre and outlying locations. Whilst this is right for many of the services offered for Children, certain services, in particular those provided for children with higher levels of need would benefit from better cohesion between teams and partners.

Consolidation of these services to a single unit and more importantly, a single mode of operation will increase the efficiency of the services and provide a more consistent

experience for the customer. This is in line with both the council's customer strategy and the separate customer services workstream within More for York.

The creation of a consolidated customer access function will also facilitate the expansion of the front door arrangements to incorporate external partners, provide joined up services that are focussed around the customer not the provider and enable better tracking and management of customers through the process. This will allow development of stronger preventative and early intervention services, making the right help & support available to customers earlier and in a targeted way.

This project will build on the work already started as part of the recently completed More for York (previously Easy@york) Advice & Information project in HASS, which saw the creation of a dedicated customer contact team for children's social care referrals. The benefits of this team are already being seen by the staff and management in that area but it is crucial to build upon these foundations in order to maximise the benefits of that arrangement.

Objectives

Many of the issues within CSC that have recently arisen relating to performance and cost stem from the change in demand that has been experienced over the last 12 months.

The current customer access arrangements do not facilitate a joined up working approach and hence it is time consuming for staff to pro-actively identify and pursue cases where early intervention and prevention activity would enable the customer to avoid more severe (and costly) interventions at a later date. It is necessary to manage customer contact in a way that gets people to the right place and involves the correct staff as quickly as possible.

Therefore, the objectives of the workstream are to:

- Consolidate the key customer contact functions for children's services into a single structure. This will provide a single point of contact for children's services but also form a central hub to manage and track customers through the system.
- Enable a greater level of information and data sharing will be possible, as will increased levels of close working between related teams and partner agencies.
- Manage the transitions of customers between teams and agencies so that it is smooth and seamless to the customer.
- Enable expertise and knowledge to be shared more easily between staff and teams through co-location and closer working practices for related staff.
- Allow emerging cases to be identified earlier and hence preventative measures be taken to support customers in helping themselves before extreme intervention is required. Achieving earlier and better outcomes for customers, which are more cost effective for the council to deliver.
- Embed key corporate principles on the management of customers within the new design for these services.
- Support Children's Services in moving to the single corporate headquarters in 2012 as part of the Admin Accommodation project by creating services which align with this model.

Risks

The following risks are associated with the project

- Quality of care or support fall during the transition. Other performance indicators are affected.
- The design of the consolidated service may be hampered or delayed by non-agreement on the purpose or methods of working for the new service as the key stakeholders do not all share the same operational purpose of principles.

- Dependencies on this service and the social care restructure work mean that safeguarding concerns may be missed during the transition work.

The following are risks of not carrying out the project:

- Financial costs of delivering children's social care continue to rise, specifically the disproportionate costs of more severe interventions and high cost placements
- Quality and performance of services fall; service loses its "outstanding" rating with consequential negative impacts on the overall CAA score and council reputation.
- The proposed improvements in the levels of prevention carried out by CYC and partners are not realised meaning that the proposed changes to CSC will yield lower or no benefits.
- Service becomes unfit to deal with future demand levels or legislative requirements
- Service cannot meet the needs for greater partnership working or deliver the integrated working proposals set out in the 2009-12 Children & Young People's Plan.

Recommendation

a single function is created to deal with all customer contact and tracking for children's services. This will bring together the relevant staff from CSC, Children's Trust Unit, Youth Offending Team and Family Information Service into a single, co-located unit to provide a focus for both customer contact and the management of transitions between teams and partners.

Dependencies between Business Cases 1 and 2

Although the social care and customer access work is being presented as two separate work streams, the dependencies between them cannot be overstated. Whilst they have different pressures, remits and stakeholders, the delivery of one is highly dependent on the other. For example, the delivery of a transformed customer access function is a critical enabler for a new social care structure to operate effectively. The benefits outlined in this document are based on successful delivery of both workstreams.

These dependencies are why the projects are being presented within the same blueprint and it is important that they are considered in the context of one another.

Business Case 3 – Recruit and develop additional local foster carers

Strategic Fit

Increased demand for children's services and a greater number of children being placed into care means that more care placements are required and local placements are more cost effective for the authority.

Objectives

- Provide increased capacity with the Family Placement Team within CSC to increase activity in foster carer recruitment.
- Increase the number of foster placements available locally to reduce the need to use more expensive out of area placements with Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs).

Risks

The following risks are associated with the project:

- There are no major risks associated with carrying out the project.

The following are risks of not carrying out the project:

- Higher costs of using IFA placements in more cases.

Recommendation

A project be initiated to bring in specialist staff to support the recruitment of local foster carers. The costs for such resource are included in the investment amount identified in Appendix 2.

Business Case 4 – make a placement in Wenlock Terrace children’s home available to other authorities

Strategic Fit

Due to the changing demand for the service offered by the Wenlock Terrace children’s home, spare capacity often exists if there are not a large number of young people who require the type of care it offers. Other authorities may have a need to provide this type of service and making a place available to these authorities would generate a revenue stream into the authority.

It should be noted however that this would not be a guaranteed income, as it is dependent on other authorities having the need to source this type of placement. Such a need is likely to be variable and a testing of authorities in the region has suggested that there would likely not be interest in some committing to a block booking.

Objectives

- Review possible approaches to making a place available.
- Create an operating model that can be used to accommodate young people in Wenlock Terrace from outside the CYC area.

Risks

The following risks are associated with the project:

- Development of the approach may not yield significant income if demand does not exist or the charges are unaffordable to other authorities.

The following are risks of not carrying out the project:

- Revenue could be lower than if the project was implemented.

Recommendation

Review possible approaches to making a place in Wenlock Terrace available to other local authorities. Carry out further investigations into the likely interest from other authorities and then select an appropriate model and define what is to be offered.

More for York involvement in the work

Children’s Services have developed a clear vision of the key changes that are needed to meet the challenges described in the blueprint but notable change management and project management expertise is required to successfully deliver these ambitious (but necessary) changes in the required time. Children’s Services recognise that capacity in these areas is limited within the directorate but that the involvement and support of More for York in this work will give it the skills and structure needed to enable the service to transform itself and meet the challenges it faces on cost and capacity.

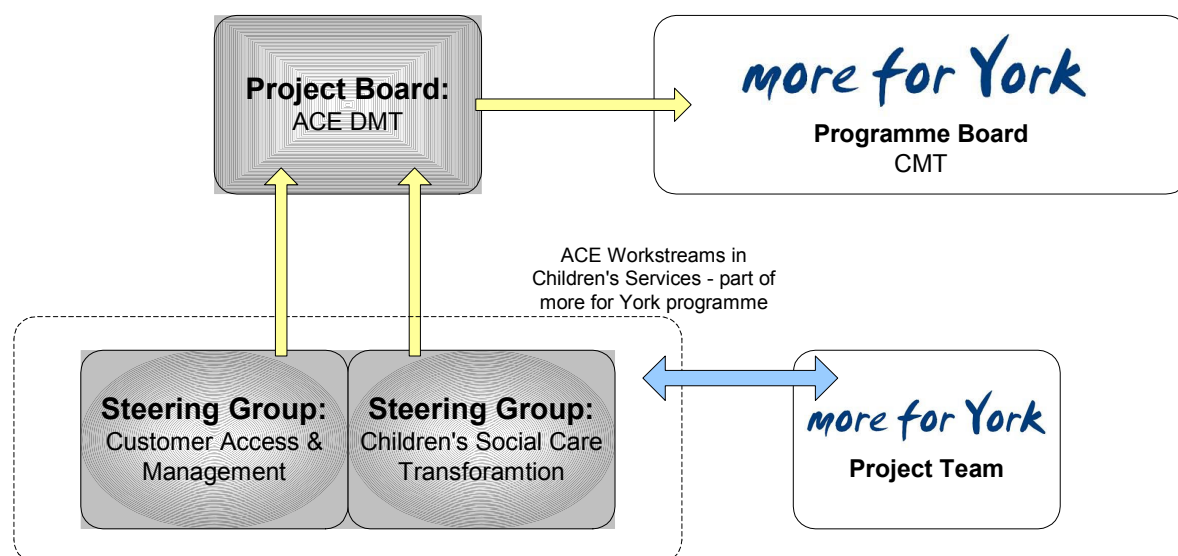
The More for York team will facilitate the work and bring additional staff resource to supplement those already available from within ACE and thus provide the project with

the correct mix of skills to deliver the vision. Importantly, More for York will also give the project the drive to deliver the work in a timeframe that would be unachievable by ACE alone.

The service remains the main sponsor for the work and their requirements, set out in this document, are what provides the business case but More for York will help to set these in the context of the wider organisational change within CYC.

Project governance

ACE DMT will act as the directorate project board for the work, chaired by the Director of ACE who will act as the Project Executive. There will also be two steering groups to direct and inform the design and development of the two main areas of work and to provide a forum at which for the key stakeholders can be represented. Each steering group will report into the project board, which will in turn report to CMT as the More for York Programme Board, as shown below.



ACE DMT have welcomed the support of the More for York programme and the governance structure that it brings.

Achievability

The timescales for the work are ambitious but reflect the need to act quickly to ensure the standards and sustainability of the service can be maintained.

The project will be delivered in three phases as summarised below. An initial milestone plan is also included in Appendix 1.

Phase 1 – to July 2010

The critical changes set out in the blueprint are proposed for completion by July 2010. This will represent the first phase of the work. It will involve the restructure of CSC and the creation of the single function for customer access.

Phase 2 – June to Nov 2010

This phase will include the consolidation of roles within the single customer team for children's services and embedding/developing the work processes within CSC. By the end of this phase all the significant change work will be complete

Work in this phase will build on the foundations from phase 1 and embed the new processes and principles, develop the services more fully and secure the long-term robustness of the service. This phase will provide the changes that will start to yield the benefits.

Work to increase the number of foster carers will start in phase 2 but is ongoing into phase 3. The investigation and set up of the potential revenue stream will also be carried out in phase 2.

Phase 2 overlaps with phase 1 as the work on plans for the single customer team for children's services need to begin before the phase 1 activities are complete.

Phase 3 – Nov 2010 to mid 2011

A third phase of work is proposed to follow on from November 2010 into 2011 to build upon the new services and develop them to include further partners and enable the services using improved ICT systems. This phase will also use the initial performance data gathered during the first two phases to optimise the new services and ensure they are operating as effectively as possible and that benefits are maximised.

Benefits Realisation Plan

The Benefits Realisation Plan is detailed in Appendix 2

Decision Log

See Appendix 3

Commercial Aspects

The blueprinting has identified investment requirements of £126k for staff to deliver the work. This is required for 2010/11 only and is comprised of:

- Business analyst/Project Manager/Change manager resource: £81k
- Specialist staff to support foster carer development: £45k

No investment requirements beyond 2010/11 have been identified.

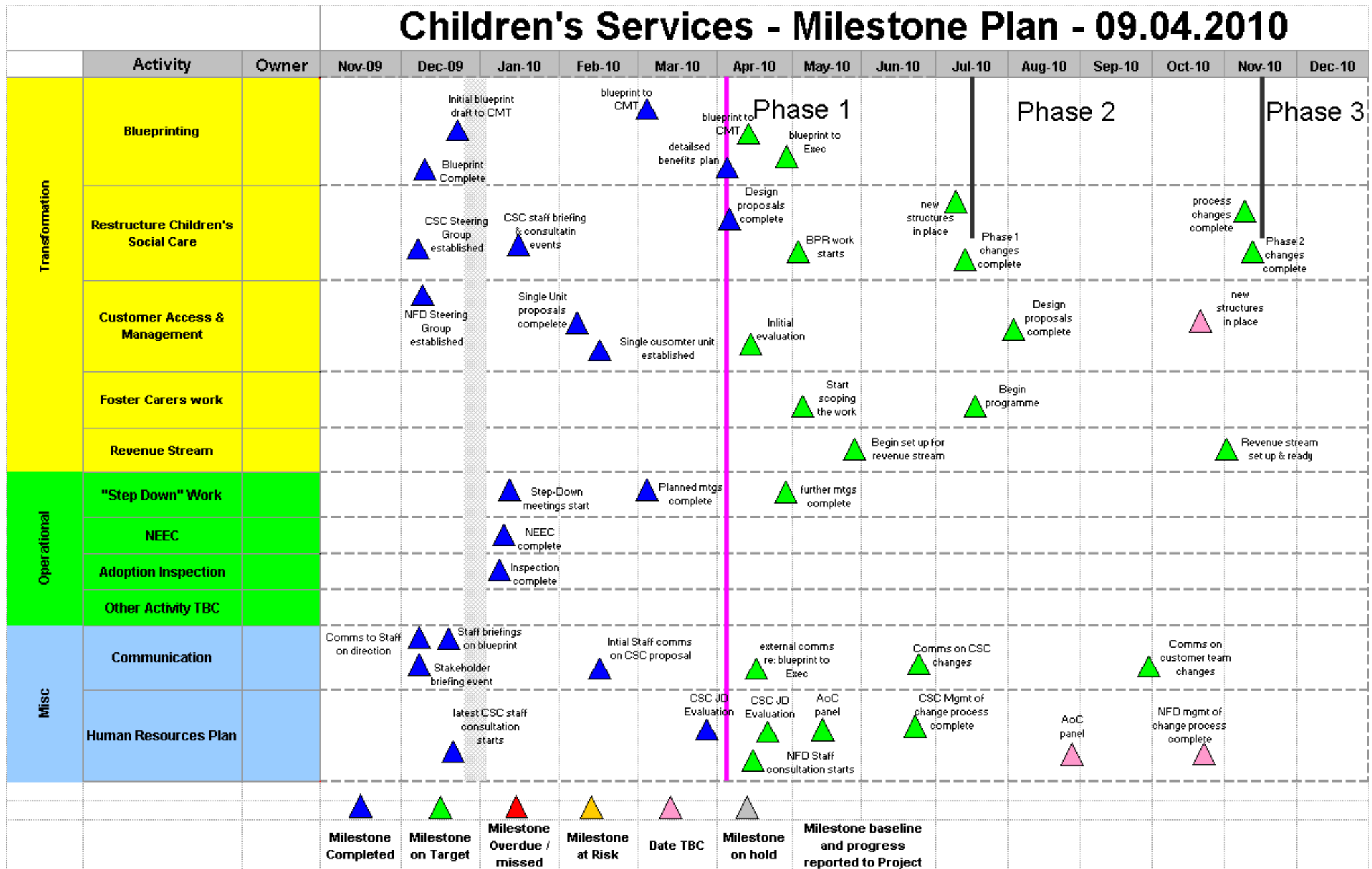
Source Information

Information leading to the completion of this blueprint has been obtained from:

- Consultation with relevant DMT members
- Consultation with Children's Social Care management team
- Consultation with Early Interventions & Partnerships teams
- Consultation with YOT
- Service & Business Plan 2009/10 and 2010/11
- Children & Young People's Plan 2009-12

A full list of those involved is given in Appendix 4.

Appendix 1 – milestone plan



Appendix 2 – financial benefits realisation plan

The work will reduce the cost pressures on the council by reducing both the number of LAC and the unit cost of doing so through a lower use of IFAs which are significantly more expensive than local foster placements. Although there are not significant budget savings in years 1 and 2, there is a significant reduction projected in the in costs incurred by the council in those years when compared with projected costs incurred without the making the proposed changes. There are also moderate staff savings identified.

The financial benefits for the project have been expressed in terms of:

- Principle Targets – budget savings and avoidance of cost for which there is a high confidence of realisation
- Stretch Targets – budget savings, cost avoidance and revenue streams which could be achieved given the right conditions, but which CYC have much lower control over at present (but may have more control after the initial changes) and hence have less confidence in predictions. However, they represent the ambition for Children’s Services to achieve and every effort will be made to reach the stretch targets.

It is expected that the achieved benefits will fall somewhere in the range between the Principle Targets and the Stretch Targets.

Financial Benefits – Principle Targets

The Principle Target financial benefits are outlined in Table 1 below:

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	3 yr Total
Reduction in LAC budget	£0	£0	£228,644	£228,644
Corresponding reduction in LAC	0	0	12	12
Further reduce IFA no’s	£0	£24,000	£105,000	£129,000
Staff budget savings	£21,283	£79,555	£102,480	£203,318
Investment required	-£126,000	£0	£0	-£126,000
Net Budget Saving	-£104,717	£103,555	£436,124	£434,962
Additional costs avoided (when compared with the 'no change' scenario)	£557,000	£576,000	£439,000	£1,572,000

Table 1 – Projected savings and cost avoidance (principle targets)

For context, each LAC costs approx £20k p.a. on average to the council and this is used in calculating the figures in the table above.

Fig. 1 below shows the projected LAC costs for the service continuing as it is now (upper, red line) and compared with the projected LAC costs after the proposed changes are implemented (lower, green line).

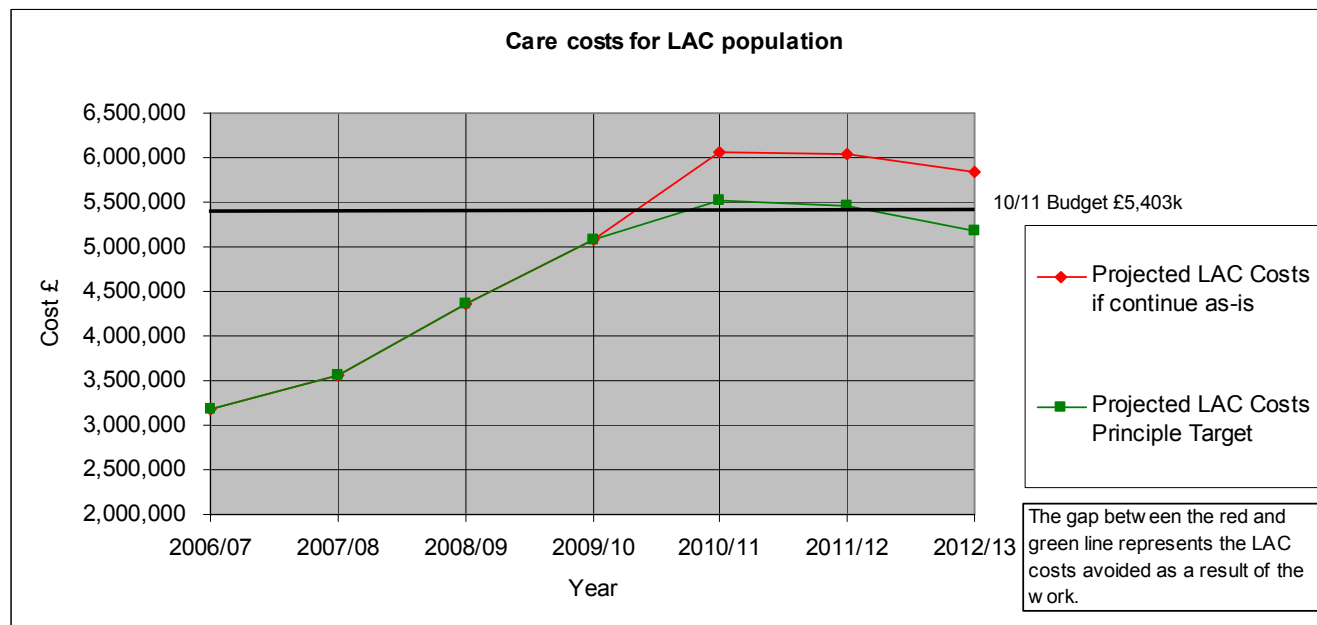


Fig. 1 - Projected LAC costs over time

Financial Benefits - Stretch Targets

In addition to the principle projections above, the blueprint includes a stretch target for savings which includes a more rapid reduction in LAC costs and an additional revenue stream from making a place in the Wenlock Terrace children's home available to other councils.

The stretch target represents the levels of savings which could be achieved given certain conditions but over which CYC has less control and a lower confidence in projecting. These are set out in Table 2.

The LAC reduction figures in Table 2 below represent 21 fewer children in care by end of 2012/13 than the budgeted levels for 2010/11.

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	3 yr Total
Reduction in LAC budget	£0	£165,864	£481,375	£647,239
Corresponding reduction in LAC	0	7	14	21
Further reduce IFA no's	£0	£70,000	£175,000	£245,000
Staff budget savings	£36,610	£79,555	£102,480	£218,645
Investment required	-£126,000	£0	£0	-£126,000
Revenue stream	£20,000	£40,000	£40,000	£100,000
Net Budget Saving	-£69,390	£355,419	£798,855	£1,084,884
Additional costs avoided (when compared with the 'no change' scenario)	£653,000	£630,136	£438,625	£1,721,761

Table 2 – Projected savings and cost avoidance (stretch targets)

Fig. 2 below shows the projected LAC costs as in Fig. 1 above but with the addition of the (lower blue) line showing the stretch target for comparison.

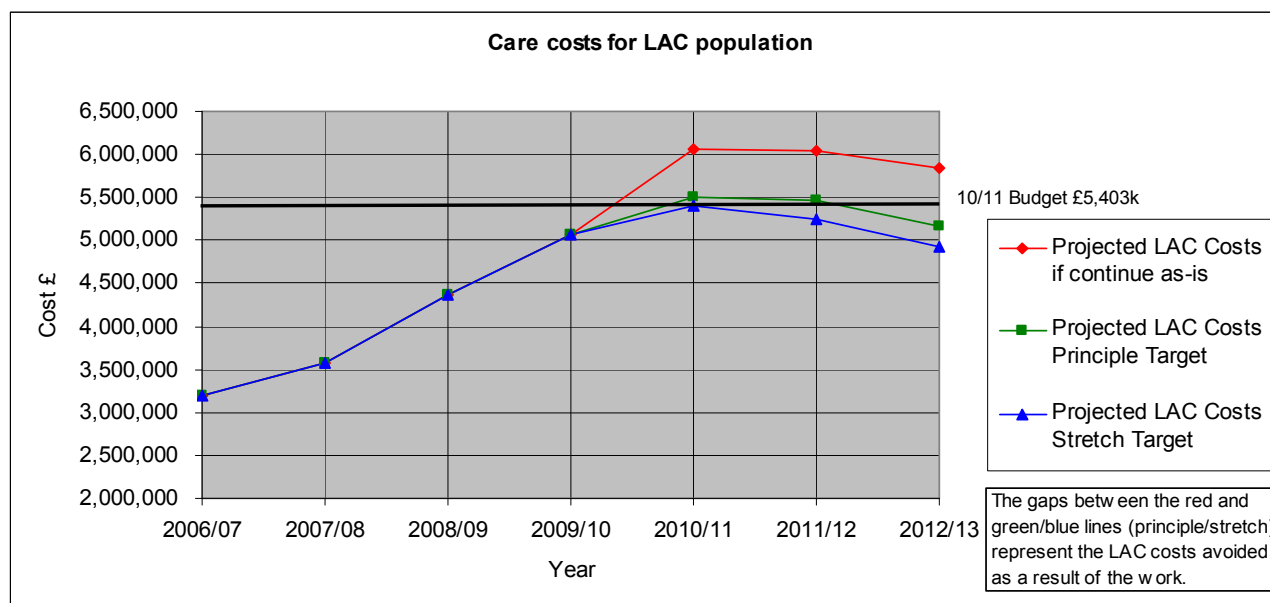


Fig 2 - Projected LAC costs over time including stretch target

The work will allow the cost of providing social care for children to remain in budget for future years, assuming current national and regional trends continue as projected.

Non-Financial Benefits of the Work

In addition to the financial benefits outlined above, the work will generate significant benefits in the ability of the service to operate more effectively and to provide a better quality service to customers. Overall, the work will deliver the following headline benefits:

- More **flexible and adaptable service structure** which is better able to respond to fluctuation in demand and emerging legislation.
- **Improved** ability to manage risk and to deliver **outcomes for vulnerable children** through earlier and less severe interventions.
- Improved capacity and focus on developing **better links with key partners** to provide an more integrated multi-agency approach to supporting children in York.
- **Consolidated view of the customer**, bringing together appropriate information from all relevant teams and partners
- **Better experience for customers** when contacting children's services; service designed more around the needs of customers.

Although the full realisation of the above benefits will take longer, progress in all of the above areas will be seen by the end of 2010. Specific details of the proposed changes and how they will contribute to the above benefits are given in Appendix 8.

Appendix 3 – Decision Log

Ref No.	Decision – Details	By Who
1	Approve the restructure of Children’s Social Care service	CMT/Exec
2	Approve the creation of new customer access arrangements for children’s services	CMT/Exec
3	Agree to bring staff from CSC, CTU, YOT, Education Welfare and FIS into single organisational structure	CMT/Exec
4	Approve a programme of work to recruit and develop additional local foster carers	CMT/Exec
5	Approve the set-up of a mechanism for making a place in Wenlock Terrace children’s home available to other authorities	CMT/Exec

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Appendix 4 – Source of Information

The following were specifically involved in the compilation of this blueprint

Pete Dwyer – Director Adults, Children & Education
Eoin Rush – Assistant Director Children’s & Families
Paul Murphy – Assistant Director Partnership & Early Intervention
John Roughton – Group Manager, Children’s Social Care
Howard Lovelady – Group Manager, Children’s Social Care
Sarah Olorenshaw – Service Manager QA, Children’s Social Care
Ann Gladwin – Interim Service Development Manager, Children’s Social Care
Judy Kent – Group Manager, Children’s Trust Unit
Jen Haines – Integrated Working Strategy Manager, Children’s Trust Unit
Simon Page – Head of Youth Offending Service
Niall McVicar – Family Information Service Manager
Adele Peacock – Children & Families Planning Manager
Derren Castle – ICS Project Manager
Mark Smith – Education Welfare Officer
Children’s Social Care Staff – over 100 social workers, support workers and managers from children’s social care.

Appendix 5 – Initial Communications Plan

Strategy for Communications:

Communications to staff throughout the process should provide clarity and transparency to the transformation process for children’s services. The primary aim is to ensure that staff have ready access to information, including:

- the direction of travel for the services involved
- key principles and detail of relevant proposals
- timescales for any changes or project activity
- details of specific processes, such as design activity or HR processes
- the expected impact on staff

The above list is not exhaustive but serves to illustrate the general scope for the project communications.

Communication will not be limited to specific media or channels. Instead a broad range of communication approaches will be used to ensure that staff have a variety of options for receiving information. The above principles will also apply to key partners involved in and affected by the project as well as to customers.

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High Level Communications Plan

TIMESCALE	ACTIVITY	TO WHOM	HOW	WHAT MESSAGE	Complete
April 2010					
Key Milestone – CMT & Exec Approval					
Regular updates	Fortnightly updates on design work and project progress	All CSC staff TU Reps	Email, team meetings	Updated FAQ pack, design decisions, next steps, what to expect and opportunities to get involved.	
Mid April	Communication & consultation with partners	All relevant partners	Standard method for each partner agency	Principles of the work, timescales, specifics that affect them, requests for input & discussion.	
End April	CMT & Exec approval	All Staff	Part of MfY programme communications	Broad principles of the work.	
		All affected ACE staff	Email and managerial cascade via team meetings & 1:1s	As above plus specific next steps re: what the approval means	
May 2010					
Key Milestone – Assessment of Change Panel					

TIMESCALE	ACTIVITY	TO WHOM	HOW	WHAT MESSAGE	Complete
Early May	Final consultation on the design, prior to AoC panel	All CSC staff and relevant partners. TU Reps	Agreed comms channels	Present final design proposal in detail. End date for comment & changes. Detailed timescales for next steps	
Early May	Starting the detailed design for customer contact & management	All CSC staff Other CYC staff directly affected Relevant partners	Standard comms channels for those groups	Plan for design, timetable, key principles, how to get involved.	
Late May	Outcomes from the AoC panel and HR processes	All CSC staff and relevant partners. TU Reps	Agreed comms channels	Final populated organisation. Next steps and timeline to implementation of new structure.	
June 2010					
Key Milestone – Service Prepared for transition to new structure					
Early June	Communicate timetable for changes	All CSC staff and relevant partners. TU Reps Customers where relevant	Agreed comms channels	What will happen and when, who will be involved & affected	
Late June	Update on the design for customer contact & management	All CSC staff Other CYC staff directly affected Relevant partners	Standard comms channels for those groups	Plan for design, timetable, key principles, how to get involved.	
July 2010					
Key Milestone – Service structure change					
Early June	Communicate changes	All CSC staff and relevant partners. TU Reps Customers	Agreed comms channels	What will happen and when, who will be involved & affected	

Appendix 8 – Design Overview

Specific outcomes of the redesign

The proposed design for the children's social care is being developed to achieve the following outcomes, which will in turn support the delivery of the objectives within the blueprint. The design:

- Removes arbitrary barriers within the services, for example, teams being restricted on the cases they take on based on age of children or location, where there is no other overriding reason to do so apart from process.
- Creates a more flexible and responsive organisation and staff base to allow people to move to the work more easily as needed.
- Creates better management systems for new work coming into the service and for existing work being handled by teams. This complements point 2 by allowing the work to be prioritised and moved to the right people more easily.
- Creates more capacity for proactive operational management of the day-to-day work and empower employees at the front line to make more decisions without the need for intervention from management.
- Creates more strategic capacity within the service to allow more proactive tackling of service-wide issues and for greater scope for service development and partnership working.

Main Practical Changes and Activities

This section covers the practical changes that are currently proposed in the re-design, which will achieve the objectives set out within the blueprint and embody the principles listed above. This is not an exclusive list but serves to highlight the headline areas.

Create city-wide teams who cover 0-16yrs

The way teams for under 16's are structured will be changed to create teams which focus on children and young people from ages 0-16 across the city. This removes the current under 10 / 11+ split and the current East / West split within the organisation. This means that whole caseload can be more easily balanced across the available staff and will also enable the team as a whole to respond better to unexpected fluctuations in workload. It will also reduce the workload associated with the transition of cases between teams and initial allocation of cases.

Move resources to provide more support to front-line staff

Reducing the establishment number of Group Managers (grade 12) from three to two and the establishment number of Service Managers (grade 11) across the service from eight to seven. This represents a reduction of 33% of the grade 11 & 12 roles in the social work operations side of the organisation and this will allow the consolidation of the required number of operational roles across the service.

Create new Team-focussed Management role

Consolidate the variety of differing roles that currently sit between Service Managers and Social Workers by replacing these with a new Practice Manager role. This will focus on the operational management of the social work teams, providing the critical direct support to front line staff and managing the day-to-day operation, but without being directly case-holding. This role will sit between the Service Manager and Social Workers and will enable the grade 11 and 12 managers to take a more strategic approach to managing and developing the service and leading continuous improvement activities, whilst maintaining the level of support and direction available to front line staff by the Practice Managers dealing with the majority of the operational issues.

Enable the strategic focus of the Group and Service Managers

Through the creation of the Practice Manager roles, the Service and Group Managers will have less of a requirement to be directly involved in cases except where particularly complex circumstances exist. This will allow them more time to focus on the strategic aspects of the role that are currently

marginalised by nearly all of their time being focussed on operational issues. This will include activities like (but by no means limited to) being more proactive in areas such as liaison with partners e.g. NHS & Police; managing quality; enhancing partnership arrangements; interpreting and planning for national initiatives.

Implement generic job descriptions

Children's Social Care will move to having generic job descriptions wherever possible across the service areas for Support Workers, Social Workers, Practice Managers, Service Managers and Group Managers. This will support the flexibility and mobility of the teams and also aid the cultural changes of the organisation taking a "whole-service" view of the needs of customers rather than a "team-only" view. Some specific/specialist roles will still exist which will need to retain a bespoke description of the role.

Training and Development

Staff development activities will include support for the social and support workers to operate in the broader teams but the main area will be to support the managerial roles in adopting a new set of behaviours and in leading a cultural change within the service.

Customer Contact & Management - Quick-wins and Pilot

The customer contact & management stream of the project (often referred to as the "New Front Door" work) is at an earlier stage of development, with the main focus of this work being in Phase 2. Some early quick-wins for this are being explored in Phase 1 and some have already been successfully implemented, including a pilot of placing staff who run the Child Index service in the Children's Trust Unit with the Referral and Assessment Team and its Customer Contact workers.

The detailed design work will begin in late March and will be informed heavily by the outcomes of the above pilot work and any other quick wins. The pilot will also start to make contribution to the project benefits from the outset, particularly in terms of incorrect tier 3 cases.

Key Risks and Dependencies in the Design

Dependencies

- The teams all have different cultures and practices currently. Moving towards more consistent processes and culture across the service is required in order to realise the desired benefits.
- The success of the model relies on the management tiers, particularly Service and Group Managers, adopting a modified (or even new) set of behaviours in order to be effective at creating and maintaining the desired strategic capacity. Training and support will be needed to achieve this in the first instance but must then be followed by a sustained culture shift within the whole service to truly embed the new ways of working.
- The social care restructure and redesign in Phase 1 will lay the foundations for the new service. However, the changes to the customer contact ("front door") arrangements and ongoing service development in both areas are required to realise the benefits as set out in the blueprint. Neither children's social care nor children's customer contact stream can succeed without the other.

Risks

- As with any restructure of this kind, there is always an inherent risk of a dip in performance during the period of change. Careful planning and high levels of staff involvement are being used to mitigate against this as far as possible but it may be difficult to eliminate all short-term issues.
- The prospect of change can (and inevitably will) have a negative impact upon some staff and their engagement with the service and the change process. Again, every effort is being made to involve staff heavily in the process to minimise the negative impact on the people involved. So far these efforts seem to have been positively received in general but the approach needs to be maintained and developed.