

Monitoring Report for the Improvement Plan for the August 2010 Improvement Board

This report is provided in line with the framework for reporting agreed in April by the Improvement Board.

This paper is in five parts:

Part A: Summary of current strategic position.

Part B: Reminder of top six areas of focus.

Part C: Updated position on top six areas of focus.

Part D: Updated risks and mitigating actions.

Part E: Monitoring update.

Part A

Summary of the current strategic position

Improvement Update Report produced for the Council's Executive board on 23 August 2010, to provide a brief summary on – improvement activity (including the Notice, Plan, Board and reporting arrangements); process for developing the CYPP; and transformation. Copy attached at Annex A.

The work of the Transformation Programme continues to progress, with a front-line service design team now in place. The individual design team members are driving forward activity in their designated strand, working with key stakeholders to gather information to inform and develop service redesign proposals. To support the design work activity is underway to develop and use a data/intelligence based tool to model locality arrangements. Nigel Richardson, the newly-appointed Director and the current interim Director continue to work closely together to guarantee a smooth handover. Specifically they are working to ensure continuity on the service redesign activity.

The Lead Out Plan for the termination of Education Leeds Limited and the transfer of services, staff, property and assets to Leeds City Council has been signed by the chair of the Education Leeds Board and the Director of Children's Services. The initial project plan to support delivery of the Lead Out Plan has also been developed. Interim arrangements for Business Support are being implemented and phase 2 items being scoped.

The national policy context continues to develop, with White Papers and the Comprehensive Spending Review due in the Autumn. We will ensure we take account of national changes, while progressing local developments based on our needs analysis.

The effects of national budget changes continue to have a significant impact and service delivery and design is being considered within this changing context. The budget is now being reviewed on a line by line basis to identify opportunities for savings and efficiencies to work through how to cope with additional demand and new statutory requirements, and to inform the model of future service delivery. Furthermore, the impact of current policy change and budget cuts on our partners, including NHS Leeds, is also a key consideration. Period 3 update and report detailing the impact of Area Based Grant reductions are being reported to the Council's Executive Board on 23 August 2010. This is covered separately on the agenda.

The refresh of the Improvement Plan is now almost complete. This has seen the closure of some actions and the inclusion of the activity for the Transformation Programme in the Improvement Plan. An overview of the format and content of the refreshed plan can be seen in Appendix B (to follow). The detailed version is being used as a working document.

As part of the refresh, all completed actions have been removed. The appropriateness of all actions have been considered, all obsolete actions have been replaced or updated and all deadlines have been reviewed. Additionally a new performance management system has been agreed between Leeds Community Healthcare (LCH) and the Council ensuring LCH are able to demonstrate their contribution to the overarching Improvement Plan.

The monitoring of the Improvement Plan has also been strengthened. With cross service and agency challenge and support meetings now taking place monthly to review progress against the Improvement Plan. These meetings replace the meetings held with the individual accountable officers and will enable the development of joined up responses to any issues or difficulties faced.

Part B

Reminder of top six areas of focus

The Improvement Plan is detailed and complex. Previously the Board agreed the following 6 key priority areas. These were agreed as those areas where progress will have maximum impact and is critical to the overall improvement agenda. These are repeated in this section to remind the Board.

Note: The following sections denote activity for completion by the end of July. A refreshed list of activities will be identified for September's Board utilising the refreshed Improvement Plan.

1. System of governance and accountability:
 - *Stocktake of all multi-agency planning and project groups by May; groups reviewed and rationalised by July.*
2. Improved safeguarding:
 - *Police/ Health/ Education input into contact and duty teams, thresholds reviewed by May; Integrated Safeguarding Unit established, quality of assessments, core group activity, conference attendance and child protection plans improved by July.*
3. Performance management:
 - *Improvement in referral/ core group/ Child Protection conference intelligence, multi-agency quality assurance framework in place reporting to LSCB by May; real or virtual integrated performance unit established in Children's Services, performance and information framework agreed by Children's Trust by July.*
4. Looked after children:
 - *Interim Head of Service in place to take forward placement strategy, immediate action to ensure effective decision making, no unnecessary drift in care planning and optimum use of existing resources by May; developing in-house fostering and adoption capacity, improved commissioning of external placements, robust care plans and personal education and health plans in place for all looked after children by July.*
5. Supporting front-line social care services:

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- *Organisational development and training agreed in line with REIP funding, improvements to ESCR which will free up social work time identified and progressed by May; initial training packages in place, additional advanced practitioners and SWs in post, agree and deliver options to reduce paper filing by July.*
6. Delivering integrated child and family services
- *Set up a process to review effectiveness, referral processes and availability of services to meet need, identify task groups to work on service integration opportunities e.g. disability and SEN by May; clear pathways agreed and in place to ensure families in need receive an appropriate and timely family support / intervention service, proposal re actual or virtual services developed and agreed, considering opportunities for single line management and delivery by July.*

Part C

Updated position on top six areas of focus

System of governance and accountability

1. The interim Director of Children's Services is working closely to ensure a seamless handover to the newly appointed Director. A letter has been issued to stakeholders about a revised senior leadership structure (Attached at annex C).
2. Terms of reference have been developed for the commissioning, finance, performance management and planning and workforce reform subgroups of the Trust Board, with the first meeting of each of these taking place between July and early September.
3. The development of a Children's Trust Board commissioning subgroup offers the underpinning provision for joint commissioning across the Partnership.
4. The development of the Children and Young People's Plan continues to progress with a consultation pack and schedule being developed.
5. The Chair of the Education Leeds Board and The Director of Children's Services have signed The Lead Out Plan for the termination of Education Leeds Limited and the transfer of services, staff, property and assets to Leeds City Council.
6. There will be Area Committee Performance Reports produced for the September/October cycle of meetings to provide localised information for some important indicators e.g. NI 59/60 initial and core assessments, NEET, and CAF activity levels.

Improved safeguarding

1. The performance on Initial Assessments (NI 59) is showing significant improvements on last year with the cumulative performance nearing the targets set for October (80%) and on-going. The Improvement Notice target for June was 72%. There has been a slight dip in July and August which needs to be addressed (more detail is available on volumes in the separate report on NI59 and 60).
2. At previous Boards we have reported a continuing reduction in the overall volumes of outstanding core assessment (NI 60) however this trend has reversed recently and numbers have risen again from 386 due or overdue assessments on 10th June to 509 on 12th August. Late recording has been identified as an issue here, but there is some cause for concern as we need to address (eradicate) the levels of overdue assessments.
3. The Integrated Processes Group has drafted new thresholds documentation through consultation across the Council and Leeds Community Healthcare. A governance process has been agreed for the approval of this documentation through the LSCB.
4. Early indications are that the impact of having the multidisciplinary screening team, including Integrated Processes Coordinators and Integrated Service Leaders, at the Contact Centre is strengthening the team's ability to respond to requests for service which do not meet the Social Care threshold.
5. Work is on going to provide agencies with useful information on the number of requests for service and referrals they make into the Contact Centre. To support this activity audit work is also underway in Leeds Community Healthcare
6. Audit activity is underway to examine the quality of the process applied to Requests for Service made via the Contact Centre. This process examines three stages of the referral process, the activity undertaken by the Customer Services Officer, the work of the screening team (where the decision is made whether to progress the request for service to the Area Duty Team) and at the Area Duty Team Manager Stage (when the Duty manager decides the outcome of the referral). This audit activity will culminate in the findings of 200 cases being reported to Social Care's Senior Leadership Team Quarterly.
7. The Interim Head of Safeguarding is working closely with the Police and Paediatrics to implement arrangements which will improve the speed and security of data and information sharing.
8. The LSCB held a workshop to consider and develop the initial draft of their Annual Report on safeguarding arrangements in the city.
9. A report detailing phase one of the development of the Integrated Safeguarding Unit is under development and will be completed by early September.

10. A new collaborative safeguarding incident reporting process has been established with Leeds Community Healthcare Safeguarding Child Committee, which will improve partnership wide working relationships and thereby reduce risk to the child or family.
11. All activity to ensure that a suitably trained and experienced paediatrician is available across the city 24 hours a day is now complete and the required provision is in place.
12. Emerging information about performance of Child Protection conferencing shows the importance of progressing the improvement work in this area asap. This performance challenge is compounded by increased demand, which importantly is judged to be appropriate increased demand.

Performance management

1. Children and Young People's Social Care are developing systems to ensure the electronic recording of Initial Child Protection Conference and Core Group attendance moving forward. This will significantly strengthen our performance management arrangements in this field.
2. The Interim Head of Safeguarding is also overseeing the ongoing collection of intelligence on: timeliness of, and attendance at, core groups and initial child protection conferences. Initial indications are that changes will be required to systems and capacity in order to meet timeliness targets. The ongoing collection and analysis of this data will inform the continued improvement activity until the required level of performance has been met.
3. Children and Young People's Social Care going to holding performance workshops from August with frontline staff to help understand the performance issues faced and to problem solve where possible.
4. Children and Young People's Social Care continue to implement the Practice Improvement Programme. As part of this a programme of audit is being developed that will see over 1000 files examined in October and November this year. In addition an ongoing audit process will be developed. Additionally 30 files will be audited by an external auditor to ensure ongoing monitoring and assurance.
5. A process to standardise clinical records across Leeds Community Healthcare has been agreed to incorporate common themes, and share good practice with the trusts clinical records.
6. Arrangements are in motion to ensure the collocation of the Children's Services and Education Leeds Performance Teams by September; the remit of the performance management group has broadened ensure a cross service approach within the emerging business support structure; and a joint action plan is being developed.
7. The LSCB Performance Management subgroup is developing a Performance Management Framework for consideration by the LSCB in September.
8. Terms of reference for the Performance Management Subgroup of the Children's Trust Board have been written and the first meeting of the group is due to take place on 21/09/10

9. The Improvement Plan has been refreshed and the monitoring arrangements strengthened.
10. All of the above points contribute to the need to strengthen our quality assurance arrangements, which is what we committed to in the recent Executive Board paper. In particular, from September this will be done on a cross service basis, once a month, across a range of quality aspects.

Looked after children

1. A permanent Head of Service for looked after children is now in post and leading on key service developments.
2. Scoping work has been initiated to review the role of the placements desk and develop a single placements unit as part of the activity to improve the commissioning of external placements.
3. The development of Looked After Children's Teams is now being led by the new Head of Looked After Children's Services. Service design work has been initiated and the proposed model is currently being tested using looked after children and children in need population figures.
4. Arrangements for exploring all multi-agency intervention before a child is taken into care, through the Children Leeds Panels, is progressing, with the Panels now in their second phase of meetings since the release of the new pre-placement procedures. Furthermore the weekly placements panel will now be a multi-agency meeting once a month.
5. We have undertaken a needs analysis to inform the identification of placement requirements for the next 2-3 years.
6. Children and Young People's Social Care are currently assessing 62 potential new adopters, which should lead to a notable increase in our level of available resources.
7. At the request of the Executive Member, the role of the Corporate Carers Group is to be reviewed.
8. The Interim DCS has visited a series of Residential Homes.

Supporting front-line social care services

1. The ESCR development team are making improvements to the recording system to help improve the ease of recording arrangements for Section 47 enquiries, which will make recording and reporting easier for social workers.
2. Work is underway to standardise the main social work assessment forms across the city. This is being done through two activities: embedding key forms into ESCR and through the development of an electronic forms library that will sit alongside the practice standards manual, available on all social workers' desk tops.
3. The placement of the newly appointed social workers continues.
4. As part of the Practice Improvement Programme engagement has taken place with Advanced Practitioners and Lead Managers to establish a programme of 8 action learning sets. The action learning sets will support them in their role of

challenging and improving practice and overcoming perceived organisational barriers. The first of these sessions took place in June.

Delivering integrated child and family services

1. The work of the Transformation Programme continues to progress. The front-line service design team is now in place, with individual members driving forward design activity in their designated strands, well-being teams, disability service, looked after children's service, child protection teams and universal services. Strand leaders are working with key stakeholders during the design phase to gather information to inform and develop design proposals.
2. Work is underway to develop and use a data/intelligence based tool to model locality arrangements. It is intended that initial design work will be completed by early September for Children's Trust Board on 13 September ready for wide consultation and further development around for example the size of team, workload, leadership and management arrangements. This consultation will involve engagement with frontline staff, service managers from across the partnership, schools and elected members all of whom are key to the development and delivery of our new arrangements.
3. The Social Care Senior Leadership Team have undertaken design work with regard to the modelling of their social work teams. The model they are supporting is small single line-management teams.
4. Nigel Richardson, the newly-appointed Director and the current interim Director continue to work closely together to ensure a smooth handover. Specifically they are working to ensure continuity on the service design work which is being progressed.
5. It is intended that initial design work will be completed by early September and at this point we will be in a position to go out to consultation on these arrangements. This consultation will involve engagement with frontline staff, service managers from across the partnership, schools and Elected Members, all of whom are key to the development and delivery of our new arrangements.
6. An innovative approach to improve CAF engagement and performance is being piloted, early indications are positive.
7. A universal services (0-4 years) review is to be undertaken. This project will consider the modelling of integrated family support services for families with young children from pregnancy to their 5th birthday. It will focus on the universal programme and those targeted interventions accessed from within universal settings, inclusive of the Healthy Child Programme (HCP), Early Learning Outcomes and other statutory provision. The project will profile the needs and characteristics of the target population and will deliver service design /options supported by a population centric workforce strategy, service model and specifications. This work is at the early stages, but project documentation has been developed and the project group has met.

Part D

Key risks

Risk	Existing Controls/ Mitigating Action
<p>1. Failure to deliver the change and improvement laid out in the Children’s Services Improvement Plan</p>	<p>(New mitigating actions for August have been added in italics)</p> <p>A robust monitoring process is in place to enable the timely identification of any risk of non-delivery to enable action to be taken. The Interim DCS is using the resources available, including the additional council investment, partner contributions and the DCSF funding, to make progress on the areas of focus.</p> <p>The Improvement Plan will be refreshed now that the Interim Performance Report is in place, that the Transformation Programme is established and that some of the immediate actions are completed. This is to ensure that all actions continue to lead to improved outcomes and that coherence, consistency and ownership remain.</p> <p>The Children’s Services Improvement Pan and monitoring process have been reviewed and refreshed to ensure they continue to effectively support and monitor progress.</p>
<p>2. The new Children’s Trust arrangements are not effective in supporting high performing services, leading to poor outcomes for children and young people</p>	<p>Project Manager and plan in place to develop the new Trust Board, Subgroups and support arrangements. The Trust Board has now met. The Interim DCS is chairing the Trust Board. A short term piece of work has been done to take stock of existing ‘sub group’ arrangements and proposals are being written for the development of the Business Functions of the Trust Board. The required support arrangements are being scoped to ensure the effective operation of the Board and its subgroups in the longer term.</p> <p>The Trust Board has met for the second time and the Board has agreed that the Lead Member for Children’s Services will chair the Children Trust Board. The Board have also agreed the structure for its statutory and business functions.</p>

Risk	Existing Controls/ Mitigating Action
	<p>(New mitigating actions for August have been added in italics)</p>
<p>3. Risk that Children’s Services are insufficiently self aware and make inadequate use of performance management information and other key business intelligence to drive improvement at the required pace.</p>	<p>Improvement Plan and robust monitoring arrangements are in place and robust quarterly performance monitoring arrangements are embedded. CYPSC quality assurance framework provides good insight into the quality of social care practice in some of the key areas. Better information gathering on child protection and the development of a multi-agency quality assurance framework will enhance this.</p> <p>Recent internally led mock unannounced inspection provided key information and improvement activity has been initiated in response to the findings</p> <p>Proposals for the development of an Integrated Performance Management unit were considered by the Transformation Board on the 22 June 2010. Drawing the service together into a single unit will support consistency and quality as well as strengthening the performance management process.</p>
<p>4. Children’s Services budget is exceeded. This remains a key risk, due in particular to high numbers of looked after children.</p>	<p>Existing controls include a budget action plan being implemented and monitored with savings being vired in year to support the delivery of savings target. Additionally, many of the actions in the Improvement Plan will contribute to mitigating against this risk – service review programme and other commissioning actions, activity on external placements, and setting up the new integrated children’s service.</p> <p>Reports to CLT on budget impact of placement volumes has resulted in revised governance arrangements through the Placements Commissioning Programme <i>The national context regarding the in year budget cuts highlights the ongoing</i></p>

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Risk	Existing Controls/ Mitigating Action
	<p>(New mitigating actions for August have been added in italics)</p> <p><i>pertinence of this key risk.</i></p> <p>We are taking a two pronged approach to dealing with the changing financial position. Firstly we are undertaking a line by line analysis of the financial position and through CSLT developing a collective understanding of current spend and opportunities to save money. Secondly we are using the Transformation Programme to undertake a more fundamental approach to making savings.</p>
<p>5. Failure to meet statutory responsibilities in identifying risk of harm to vulnerable children and responding appropriately.</p>	<p>The implementation of many of the actions in the Improvement Plan to deliver improvement in children and young people’s social care (eg additional social work capacity and training existing staff to improve quality) and across key partners (eg key partners fulfilling their statutory responsibilities), thresholds being reviewed and implemented and improving the effectiveness of locality working so that needs are met by the right service at the right time).</p> <p>We are acting on our learning from the mock inspection and are developing QA procedures.</p>
<p>6. Failure to recruit and retain appropriate staff to meet the growing demand and to deliver the required service and improvements.</p>	<p>Organisational Development Strategy is under development, a recruitment drive has taken place and progress is considered through the Improvement Plan monitoring process.</p>
<p>7. The refinement of our locality governance arrangements is not currently progressing in accordance with the deadlines in the Improvement Plan.</p>	<p>The actions against this recommendation will be further developed and progressed as part of the Children’s Services Transformation Programme and as part of the development of the Children’s Trust Board.</p> <p>Arrangements locally, in line with the most recent (Dec 09) Executive Board paper, continue to be implemented and developed.</p>
<p>8. The role of the LSCB is not</p>	<p>A revised LSCB has been launched. Additional funding has been secured to support</p>

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Risk	Existing Controls/ Mitigating Action
effective.	<p>(New mitigating actions for August have been added in italics)</p> <p>the board and provide performance management capacity. The development of key Board functions and governance arrangements is progressing.</p> <p>Permanent Independent Chair for the LSCB has been appointed and the LSCB's Annual report has been drafted.</p>
9. Changing leadership arrangements impact on pace of improvement activity.	<p>Appointment of a new DCS is underway. Comprehensive and seamless handover arrangements will be developed for the permanent DCS.</p> <p>Detailed briefings and children's services induction arrangements are being developed for the new Chief Executive and new Lead Member.</p> <p>The Interim Director and newly appointed Director are working closely together to progress significant pieces of work (eg the new senior leadership structure and service redesign) to help ensure a seamless handover.</p>
<i>10. Partners and key stakeholders are not effectively communicated with or enabled to engage with the change agenda</i>	<p>Engagement and participation of key stakeholders will be a key aspect of the Transformation Programme moving forward.</p> <p><i>Sessions planned in August, during the design phase, with Headteachers, service managers, across partners and practitioners.</i></p>

Part E

Monitoring Update - Reporting from 24th June - 28th July 2010

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1. Out of the 50 recommendations in total, 7 were rated as green, 40 were rated as amber and 3 were rated as red. There has been a significant reduction in the number of Green RAG rated actions (from 13 to 7) this month due to the closure of a number of completed actions as part of the refresh. Due to the inclusion of the Transformation Programme activity there has also been an increase in the number of Amber rated actions. It should be noted that all actions are rated with an upward direction of travel this month reflecting the fact that improvement continues to be made against key areas of activity
2. The areas rated as red in August's report are, 'ensure capacity for the delivery of child protection conferences matches the demand'; 'ensure the involvement of children, young people and their families in the child protection process is consolidated' and 'improve the response to child protection referrals to meet statutory guidelines'. It should be noted that the red RAG rating remains as significant work is needed to ensure that the requirements detailed in the improvement notice or by Ofsted are met. However significant activity is underway with good progress being made and current activity suggests that the requirements will be realised.

Further detail can be found in Annex D below.

Annexes

- A. Executive Board Paper - Children's Services Improvement Update Report
- B. Overview of the refreshed Improvement Plan – To follow
- C. Letter detailing our approach to Leadership and Management in Children's Services
- D. Detailed Monitoring Report
- E. Transformation Programme Key Messages and Newsletter from July 2010.

**Children's Services Improvement Update Report
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. In March 2010 Executive Board received reports that detailed:
 - Arrangements made to deliver, support and monitor improvements in children's services in view of recent inspection findings and a government Improvement Notice, and
 - The outcomes of a strategic review of children's services arrangements recommending services should be re-organised to a more integrated delivery model.
2. This report updates Executive Board on:
 - Implementation of Leeds' Improvement Plan for Children's Services and the work of the Improvement Board to oversee this.
 - The transformation programme to deliver an integrated delivery model for children's services.
 - The development of a new Children and Young People's Plan by spring 2011.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. It is recommended that Executive Board:
 - i) Note progress against the Improvement Plan for Children's Services in Leeds and the work of the Improvement Board to support this.
 - ii) Note the intention to consult on and then develop a new Children and Young People's Plan for Leeds, ready by spring 2011,
 - iii) Note and endorse the progress of the transformation programme so far and the next steps to develop and propose a revised leadership structure and a model for integrated service delivery and integrated business support functions, which will be brought back to Executive Board in Autumn 2010.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

- 1.1 This report updates Executive Board on:
- Implementation of Leeds’ Improvement Plan for Children’s Services and the work of the Improvement Board to oversee this.
 - The transformation programme to deliver an integrated delivery model for children’s services.
 - The development of a new Children and Young People’s Plan for the city by spring 2011.
- It sets this work within the context of the shifting national policy direction around children’s services and emerging financial context. It seeks endorsement for the next stage of developments in relation to the transformation programme.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 In March 2010 Executive Board received two significant children’s services reports. The first of these detailed the arrangements in place to deliver, support and monitor improvements in the service in view of recent inspection findings and an Improvement Notice served by the government. It focused on the Improvement Plan that had been developed and the independently chaired Improvement Board established to monitor this.
- 2.2 The second report detailed the outcomes of a strategic review of children’s services arrangements in Leeds and recommended that services be reorganised to a more integrated delivery model in the future. This included bringing education services currently provided by Education Leeds back within the local authority by April 2011.
- 2.3 The recommendations from both reports were approved. They included a commitment to bring regular updates back to Executive Board.
- 2.4 Since March there has been a lot of activity to take forward the necessary improvement work and the wider transformational programme that stemmed from the strategic review report. The national context for children’s services and particularly for schools has also changed considerably during this period, primarily as a consequence of the change of government and therefore a shift in policy direction nationally.
- 2.5 At its April meeting the Executive Board approved proposals for new Children’s Trust Arrangements. This led to a new Children’s Trust Board and revised Leeds Safeguarding Children Board being established. The Children’s Trust Board has started to consider how to take forward the Children and Young People’s Plan for Leeds. Although the current plan runs from 2009 – 2014, a full review for 2011 was always intended given the changing context, changing

priorities and the importance of linking in with the 2011 review of the Leeds Strategic Plan and Leeds Vision.

2.6 The Council has also recently appointed a new Director of Children's Services, Nigel Richardson, who will join Leeds in the autumn and a new independent Chair of the Safeguarding Children Board, Jane Held, who started working with Leeds in July.

2.7 It is a timely opportunity therefore to update Executive Board on progress in children's services and seek both endorsement for the next stage of the transformation programme and indications as to how members wish to be kept informed and involved as the implementation of the programme gathers momentum in the coming months.

3.0 Main Issues

3.1 National Policy Context

3.1.1 Under the coalition government there are some significant policy changes, and policy reviews taking place, whilst these are not the main focus of this report it may help Members to have a brief overview of them when considering the information that follows. The Department for Education (DfE) (which replaces the Department for Children Schools and Families) has indicated its intention to give more freedoms to different services working on the children and young people's agenda. This has been progressed most rapidly so far around the work of schools, with the introduction of the Academies Bill, giving more schools the opportunity and encouragement to become academies and as such have much greater independence from the involvement of the local authority. It is also likely to be a theme of the Munro Review of Child Protection and the Tickell Review of the Early Years Foundation Stage, both of which were announced recently. An independent commission into early intervention has also been established.

3.1.2 The coalition government has made a number of significant funding decisions relating to existing children's services projects. Some of the implications for Leeds are considered in a separate paper to the Executive Board. A consultation on the introduction of a Pupil Premium has been launched. This consultation closes in mid-October. Whilst emphasizing its commitment to partnership working, the coalition has indicated its intention to remove the statutory requirement for local areas to have a Children's Trust Board and a Children and Young People's Plan. The implications of the latter in terms of a plan for Leeds are discussed in more detail further below.

3.1.3 Policy changes impacting on children, young people and families are not isolated to the Department for Education. Announcements from, for example, the Department of Health, the Home Office and as part

of the emergency budget relating to future benefit entitlements, will all change the current context in which children's services partners operate.

3.1.4 Leeds Children's Trust Board has responded to an invitation from the Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, to submit initial written views and feedback to help shape an ongoing dialogue between local areas and the Department.

3.2 Improvement Activity and Performance

3.2.1 During 2010, Children's Services has been using a single, coordinated Improvement Plan as the primary tool for monitoring specific progress and actions highlighted by Ofsted inspections and ratings and the government's improvement notice. The Plan has been valuable in bringing together, in one document, the wide variety of activity needed to deliver better services and enabling a reference point to check progress.

3.2.2 Given its length and scope the Plan has not been considered in full at every Improvement Board meeting, instead the Board agreed a process whereby they would focus on specific themes from within the Plan at each of their meetings, whilst also continuing to receive a more detailed monitoring report each month providing an overview across all areas. The monitoring report covers:

- Summary of current strategic position.
- The top six areas of focus.
- Updated position on top six areas of focus.
- Updated risks and mitigating actions.
- Detailed monitoring update.

3.2.3 It uses a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating system to judge progress against each of the actions in the Plan. As at the July report to the Improvement Board, out of 53 actions in total, 13 were rated as green, 36 were rated as amber and 4 were rated as red. Of the 13 rated as green, 5 are regarded as complete. There have been particularly positive improvements on issues including the timeliness of initial and core assessments, the recruitment of new social workers and reducing custodial sentences.

3.2.4 The areas rated as red in July relate to issues around: information gathering on looked after children data; capacity effectiveness and monitoring of child protection conferences; practice and recording issues around the involvement of children, young people, and families in child protection processes; and response rates to child protection referrals, ensuring appropriate multi-agency discussions taking place around these. Against each of these areas, actions to deliver improvement are clearly defined and will be monitored by the Improvement Board. On these specific issues the recent

appointment of a new, highly experienced Head of Service for Looked After Children and Interim Head of Safeguarding has given fresh impetus, ideas and capacity around these and several other critical issues within Children and Young People's Social Care. Our quality assurance arrangements need strengthening further and work is underway to do this.

3.2.5 The Improvement Board itself has met monthly throughout 2010. At it's May meeting, in line with the requirements set out in the government's improvement notice, the Improvement Board received an interim stocktake on the 2009/10 end of year (quarter four) performance data. This helped to identify the areas where targets set by central government were on track and those where faster improvement is needed. This in turn informed the Board's work plan for future meetings. The next stocktake will be done in November 2010 on performance up to the end of September 2010.

3.2.6 Each month the Board also requests information on specific areas or themes considered high priorities. To date these themes have included:

- Effective leadership and governance
- A skilled and motivated workforce
- Safeguarding
- Looked After Children

3.2.7 As a suite of documents the Improvement Plan monitoring report, the stock take specifically against the improvement notice and the themed, more detailed reports on key areas of work have given the Improvement Board a comprehensive range of information. They aim to combine a broad overview, with attention to detail where it is needed and most importantly, an accurate appraisal of areas that continue to present concerns in terms of performance and ultimately therefore, outcomes for children and young people.

3.2.8 The Board's work is complemented by a number of mechanisms for reporting performance to appropriate groups. A report to the July meeting of the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee provided details and assurances around the meeting programme that links to the Improvement Board. For example: periodic meetings between Members, Senior Officers and Department for Education (DFE) representatives to review key information being submitted to the Improvement Board and in doing so contribute to the support and monitoring process; an elected member reference group; and an internal group chaired by the Council's Chief Executive.

3.2.9 Various performance information is also submitted to the Children's Services Scrutiny Board and to Area Committees. As well as being updated on the Improvement Board's work (with regular attendance from the Improvement Board's Chair), the Scrutiny Board receives a

quarterly update on national and local performance indicators. During this year a process has also been established to regularly take a selection of localized performance information to Area Committees. Wherever possible this breaks down some key children's services indicators by committee and by ward. The first series of these reports were presented in February 2010. The next round of reports are scheduled for the September 2010 series of meetings. They will include information on: initial and core assessments; looked after children; Common Assessment Framework data; the number of young people not in education, employment or training and the number of young people whose status is 'not known'. This report will be followed up in January 2011 with another round of similar reports, but focusing primarily on educational outcomes.

- 3.2.10 The process for delivering and monitoring improvement at both a city-wide and local level is therefore becoming well established. There is evidence that against many important outcome areas continuing improvement is being made. The combination of interim leadership arrangements to focus on performance, the Improvement Plan, Improvement Board and the other monitoring arrangements in place have given better focus and co-ordination to the work being done across children's services. There is a stronger level of awareness and understanding of the performance issues and the solutions needed to improve them. Elected members are taking a close and active interest in monitoring and supporting this.

- 3.2.10 Following a recent monitoring meeting with the DfE, Tim Loughton, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families has written to the Chair of the Improvement Board, Bill McCarthy to comment on the current position in Leeds. This letter is attached at appendix 1. Its overall tone is positive, whilst recognising continuing challenges, including the implementation of the very complex and ambitious transformation programme. The Improvement Board will continue to meet monthly for the foreseeable future.

3.3 Transformation Programme

- 3.3.1 Following Executive Board's approval of the report on the Strategic Review of Children's Services, work began immediately on the process to plan for and then implement new arrangements. From the outset the focus of this work has been to involve partners from the range of children's services across the city, not just those of the local authority.

- 3.3.2 A Programme Board was established to ensure senior representatives from key organisations share ownership of the changes taking place. The Board is chaired by the interim Director of Children's Services and includes senior managers from children's services, Education Leeds, the Council's corporate leadership, NHS Leeds, the Police and a primary and secondary school headteacher.

The Board meets every two weeks to ensure momentum of the programme is maintained.

3.3.3 The Programme has 3 overarching strands:

1. Ending the contract with Education Leeds
2. Developing integrated business support, including commissioning
3. Developing integrated service delivery

3.3.4

Although the initial focus is on integrating the local authority and Education Leeds functions and services, opportunities for broader integration with health, the police and schools are also being explored. The three strands listed above are running simultaneously to ensure new arrangements are implemented in a coordinated way.

3.3.5

In terms of work to end the Education Leeds contract, good progress has been made to identify all the key issues involved. A lead out plan has been developed, agreed and signed-off by the Chair of the Education Leeds Board and the Interim Director of Children's Services.

3.3.6

Work on integrated business support is evolving in view of the need to make additional savings in light of recent budget cuts announced by the government and the need to link with wider corporate reviews of Council services. There is a strong desire to progress co-location and joint working opportunities as soon as possible. Initial proposals have been developed and are being implemented for interim changes to functions including performance, complaints, accommodation and buildings, finance, I.T. and HR.

3.3.7

The integrated service delivery strand may be of particular interest to members as it will have the greatest impact on frontline services. It has been organised into six key areas of work:

- a) leadership and governance
- b) Disability /SEN/ additional health needs
- c) Looked after children
- d) Safeguarding
- e) Universal services
- f) Well-being teams (locality based)

3.3.8

For the design of each strand, multi-agency project teams have been established and have been working over the summer to draw up detailed proposals for how these functions should be taken forward. This design work is linking closely with the Locality Pathfinder developments and the Think Family and Total Place agendas. Proposals will be considered by the Programme Board and the Children's Trust Board in September and then made available for extensive consultation, engagement and development until half-term. Further details will be brought back to Executive Board in the autumn.

- 3.3.9 The top tier leadership structure for children's services will be crucial to shaping the future direction of the service. In re-designing the leadership model we will ensure there is sufficient professional expertise and senior management capacity to undertake the required tasks. The leadership team will be responsible for leading the drive to achieve the vision and ambitions set out in the Children and Young People's Plan. To deliver this we are proposing that all Chief Officer posts reporting to the DCS will have common responsibilities in relation to:
- Achieving better outcomes for children and young people
 - Providing leadership as part of the team to deliver change and improvement
 - Promoting integrated working and effective partnership working
 - Contributing to the corporate priorities of the City Council
 - Making best use of our resources, including staff, buildings and other assets
 - Having a flexible attitude to changing role and responsibilities in the light of new developments and emerging needs
- Chief Officers will also have specific responsibilities to ensure clear leadership for the full range of functions within the service.
- 3.3.10 It will be essential that this team, together with the DCS, collectively deliver dynamic, proactive and resourceful leadership. It must drive improvement in:
- Direct service provision
 - Commissioning to meet needs
 - Effective strategic partnership working and
 - Strategic planning to achieve the best outcomes we can for children and young people in Leeds.
- 3.3.11 The Interim Director is working with the newly appointed permanent Director of Children's Services (prior to him taking up post) and with the current senior leadership team and senior leaders from partner services to develop these proposals. More detailed proposals will be put to Executive Board in the autumn.
- 3.3.12 The changes taking place will require ownership from all staff in order to be successful. At the same time, given the need for more efficiency they will inevitably raise questions and concerns. A process of regular staff communications is already in place and this will gather pace in the coming weeks through regular workshops and other activities. We will work closely with schools and other stakeholders as part of this. A HR Framework to guide issues likely to arise as we move from the design into the delivery phase has also been agreed. Unions are appropriately involved.
- 3.3.13 The Executive Lead Member for Children's Services is being kept regularly informed about the progress of the transformation

programme. We are particularly keen to secure more engagement with elected members in the coming months as proposals take shape, particularly around local well-being teams. Existing opportunities, such as Scrutiny, Area Committees and political group meetings will be used.

- 3.3.14 It is clear that the transformation programme is being progressed in the context of significant budget challenges and emerging national policy, both within the local authority and amongst those partners Leeds is working with. A review of providers in Leeds commissioned by children's services is currently underway and this will also inform how proposals for the future take shape. The transformation programme also presents a timely opportunity in that it enables Leeds to identify efficiencies in children's services as part of a full overview of the service, rather than in isolation within different parts of the service.

Children and Young People's Plan 2011

- 3.4 To help ensure the integrated model for children's services helps to deliver a more joined-up and consistent approach to service delivery it is important that services are working towards clear, shared priorities. Leeds' current Children and Young People's Plan runs from 2009 – 2014, but its focus is on priorities between 2009 and 2011. It was always the intention to review the Plan in full ready for 2011 to ensure its continuing relevance and link in to the development of the new Vision for Leeds for 2011 – 2030. Re-affirming a strong vision for outcomes for children and young people and linking this to families is particularly important in view of the changing national and local policy and financial context.

- 3.4.1 Currently Children and Young People's Plans are a statutory requirement for all local areas. However, the coalition government has clearly stated its intention to remove this statutory obligation by April 2011. This will mean Leeds is no longer required by government to produce a Children and Young People's Plan. In anticipation of this change, senior leaders from partners on the Children's Trust Board have considered the implications and options. The collective view is that Leeds will still benefit significantly from having a document that captures the shared vision and priorities for children's services in the city, however it is too early to determine how close such a document will remain to the format and level of detail within the current Plan. As such senior leaders have drawn up outline proposals for the priorities within a future Plan and over the coming months consultation will take place on these proposals, along with consideration of how a new Plan can best be structured to deliver the maximum benefit to services and the public in Leeds.

- 3.4.2 The proposals put forward make a distinction between developing how future improvement will be delivered - identifying the themes

emerging from the transformation programme around locality working, integrated services and early intervention – and determining what the priority areas of work should be. The proposal is to consult on simplifying to three broad priority areas:

- 1. *Improving the safeguarding of children and young people:*** Through well-embedded child protection systems and practice, tackling substance misuse by parents, and reducing the impact of domestic violence and anti social behaviour on children and families.
- 2. *Improving early years and primary stage outcomes:*** Through intervention and prevention in the early years and improving outcomes at key stage 2, targeting those most at risk of relatively poor early learning and primary outcomes, and known to be susceptible to poor outcomes in later stages of childhood. This will include tackling barriers to participation including irregular school attendance, obesity and low self esteem.
- 3. *Better outcomes at 16 and 19 through improved participation and engagement of children and young people:*** Reducing NEET, improving behaviour and attendance at school, reducing and preventing offending, reoffending and anti social behaviour, tackling key health issues such as teenage pregnancy and substance misuse.

- 3.4.3 The Plan will be developed in a way that complements and coordinates with the progress of the transformation programme. Members will be involved in the consultation process, for example through Area Committees and Scrutiny and the Plan will be presented to Executive Board once it is drafted.

4.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance

- 4.1 Making the improvements required in children's services is a key priority for the local authority and for the city. It is critical therefore that the Improvement Plan, Improvement Board and the transformation programme all make a significant contribution to achieving these improvement. It is also important that this work is monitored appropriately through other Council bodies, such as Corporate Governance and Audit Committee, Scrutiny and the Executive Board so there is clear understanding and ownership of this agenda.

- 4.2 As the strands of work within the transformation programme take shape, particularly the work around integrated service delivery (such as the focus on leadership and governance and on local well-being teams) it is essential that this links across to other relevant agendas within the Council and its partners. Clear understanding of accountability and decision-making will be key to underpinning a future structure and these will be issues addressed in more detail as

the proposals for new arrangements are considered from September onwards.

5.0 Legal And Resource Implications

5.1 The transformation programme is guided first and foremost by the desire to deliver improved, integrated services and as a result, better outcomes to children and young people in Leeds. However, in the current financial climate particularly, it also offers an opportunity to identify more efficient ways of working and clearer commissioning arrangements for the future. It is too early to be specific about the details of such efficiencies, but as the design phase of the programme is finalised this is expected to become clearer and can be built into budget savings for 2010-11 and more significantly, budget planning for 2011-12. More details will be shared with Members as they become clearer.

5.2 The legal aspects of the winding down of the Education Leeds contract are being handled appropriately by the Council's legal services. There are no specific issues to bring to the Executive Board's attention at this time.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 The various work taking place to secure improvements, coupled with the changing national and local policy and financial context, make this a critical and busy period for children's services in Leeds. Feedback indicates that work being done is moving services in the right direction, but we know there is still much to be done to implement long-term lasting improvement. During the remainder of 2010 the transformation programme will move from the design into the delivery stage, building on the direction set out in this report. More details will be shared with Members over the autumn. Shared vision and priorities will be an important part of taking this work forward in the longer term so the development of a revised Children and Young People's Plan for 2010 remains an important area of work.

7.0 Recommendations

7.1 It is recommended that Executive Board:

- iv) Note progress against the Improvement Plan for Children's services in Leeds and the work of the Improvement Board to support this.
- v) Note the intention to consult on and then develop a new Children and Young People's Plan for Leeds, ready by spring 2011.

- vi) Note and endorse the progress of the transformation programme so far and the next steps to develop and propose a revised leadership structure and a model for integrated service delivery and integrated business support functions, which will be brought back to Executive Board in autumn 2010.

Background Documents

'*Children's Services Improvement Arrangements*' Report to Executive Board 10.03.10

'*Update on the Process for Ensuring Improvement in Children's Services in Leeds*' Report to Corporate Governance and Audit Committee 29.07.2010

Annex B

Leeds’ Children’s Services Improvement Plan Refresh – August 2010 : Introduction

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this introduction is :
- to provide a narrative to help people to access the very detailed Improvement Plan, following it being refreshed and updated in August 2010
 - to set out the reasons for the Improvement Plan, the context for it, the areas it covers and what it is expected to deliver.

2. Background

- 2.1. Leeds was issued with an Improvement Notice on 2nd March 2010 on the basis of evidence provided by:
- 2.2. Ofsted’s July 2009 inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements
- 2.3. The Comprehensive Area Assessment annual result in 2009, which judged Leeds’ children’s services to be “performing poorly”
- 2.4. Ofsted’s January 2010 announced inspection of safeguarding and looked after children services which judged the overall effectiveness of Leeds’ safeguarding services to be inadequate.
- 2.5. The expected lifetime of the Improvement Notice is until October 2011. In response to this notice, an Improvement Plan was produced between January and March 2010 and its progress monitored and reported monthly. In July 2010, a refresh of the Improvement Plan was initiated with the aim of ensuring that it provides an appropriate framework for the next phase of activity.

3. Context

- 3.1. Leeds’ Children and Young People’s Plan 2009-2014 (CYPP) sets out a vision for all the children of Leeds to be happy, healthy, safe, successful and free from the effects of poverty. It had already set out two important cross cutting priorities, very relevant to Leeds’ current context, which are:
- improving safeguarding
 - enabling integrated working

- 3.2. Additionally, the CYPF set out 8 further short term priorities and 10 longer term ambitions. All of the short term priorities are relevant to the themes in the Improvement Plan and many of the targets feature in the Improvement Notice. The short term priorities are:
- Improving outcomes for looked after children
 - Improving attendance and reducing persistent absence from school
 - Improving early learning and primary outcomes in deprived areas
 - Providing places to do and things to do
 - Raising the proportion of young people in education or work
 - Reducing child poverty
 - Reducing teenage conception
 - Reducing the need for children and young people to be in care

3.3. Building on the annual review of the CYPF which was carried out in spring 2010, the Children's Trust Board has agreed that consultation should take place on key priorities and ways of working to be included in a new CYPF for 2011 (in line with current legislation). These are :

- **Improving the safeguarding of children and young people** through well embedded child protection systems and practice, tackling substance misuse by parents, and reducing the impact of domestic violence and anti social behaviour on children and families.
- **Improving early years and primary stage outcomes** through intervention and prevention in the early years and improving outcomes at key stage 2, targeting those most at risk of relatively poor early learning and primary outcomes, and known to be susceptible to poor outcomes in later stages of childhood. This will include tackling barriers to participation including irregular school attendance, obesity and low self esteem.
- **Better outcomes at 16 and 19 through improved participation and engagement of children and young people**, reducing NEET, improving behaviour and attendance at school, reducing and preventing offending, reoffending and anti social behaviour, tackling key health issues such as teenage pregnancy and substance misuse.

3.4. And in terms of ways of working:

- using 'think family' principles, develop approaches in localities approaches that target children, young people, families and neighbourhoods most at risk of relatively poor outcomes
- develop stronger multi-agency approaches to mitigating the impact of child poverty, with a focus on those families and communities most at risk

- work across partners and agencies, including the sharing or pooling of budgets and resources
- robust and effective systems of safeguarding
- raise the aspirations of children, young people and their families through approaches such as mentoring and coaching
- strengthen integrated early intervention and preventative work
- ensure that where appropriate action plans address the needs of priority groups: children and young people with special needs, children and young people with disabilities, looked after children, Black and minority ethnic groups, children and young people in receipt of free school meals
- develop the children and young people's workforce

3.5. Clearly it has been crucial, in developing these proposals as a basis for consultation, to take full account of the areas for development highlighted in the Improvement Notice.

4. Learning from the process so far

4.1. In refreshing the Improvement Plan we considered :

- Whether the outcomes we want to achieve are fully articulated
- Whether the actions are delivering the progress we need to achieve to ensure the recommendations are met and improved performance is secured
- Whether the connections and interdependencies of different aspects of the plan are sufficiently clear
- How to present the plan so that it is accessible, promotes engagement and can be monitored effectively

4.2. In learning from the Improvement process to date we have established that:

- 4.2.1. The use of five themes – effective leadership and governance of integrated children's services in Leeds; excellent safeguarding standards and practice; improved outcomes for looked after children; all young people participating fully socially and economically; a highly skilled, well supported, motivated and continually developing workforce - has provided a framework under which a broad range of actions can be captured.
- 4.2.2. The allocation of accountable and responsible officers for all outcomes and actions is important.
- 4.2.3. A clear monthly monitoring process and risk allocation is vital.
- 4.2.4. It is essential not to lose sight of the inspection findings and specific requirements that are included in the improvement plan during the course of the refresh.

4.3. Feedback identified that it was important to:

4.3.1. Revise the monitoring arrangements to facilitate greater challenge and support on a cross service basis.

4.3.2. Ensure that we have a planning framework that covers all the important areas of improvement activity we are engaged in. This means that we had to take account of the children's services transformation programme that has been established to deliver integrated children's services for Leeds as a response to the findings of the Children's Services Review.

5. What have we achieved to date

5.1. The 2009-10 year end performance position assisted in carrying out the first quarterly stocktake of progress against the Improvement Notice. This provided an ideal context in which to carry out a refresh of the Improvement Plan to ensure it is providing the appropriate framework to deliver the improvements needed.

5.2. This performance information and our own analysis, coupled with external scrutiny, has yielded a consistent picture of which actions are now complete, which are progressing well and where we need to focus our combined efforts to improve outcomes for children and young people.

5.3. The recommendations against which all actions have been closed include: Establish an Improvement Board, Prepare an Improvement Plan, Review the CYP, Achieving a downward trend in convictions for burglary, Reducing custodial sentences, ensure that there is a suitably trained and experienced paediatrician available across the city 24 hours a day 7 days a week and within three months ensure access to the children's right's service. All actions relating to the improvement of training delivered by the LSCB have been completed and the effectiveness of this will be assessed in December 2010.

5.4. There are also a number of areas where although all actions can not yet be closed, activity is progressing well. For example:

- the revised LSCB and new Children's Trust Board have been established;
- there has been a significant improvement in the timeliness of initial and core assessments;
- arrangements for monitoring the performance of social workers at individual and team level have been significantly strengthened;
- 45 social workers have been appointed and are being allocated to teams according to need;
- we have an interim head of safeguarding in place who is making significant inroads in improving the child protection process; and

- good progress is being made to strengthen arrangements to monitor the quality and outcomes of external placements and to ensure consistently effective decision making around taking children into care and eliminating drift in care.

5.5. However, it remains clear that, despite the progress made between March and July 2010 we need to increase the pace and impact of improvement in a number of areas. The refresh of the plan provides the focus for this.

5.6. To help ensure this progress is realised we have reviewed all of the actions in the plan ensuring that they reflect the activity now required to meet the recommendations made in the Announced Inspection report and Improvement Notice. This review has resulted in a large number of the actions being updated and deadlines revised. There are a small number of actions with deadlines that have now passed. These outdated deadlines remain where it was felt that the activity was nearing completion and that it was not therefore an effective use of the lead officer's time to refresh the actions and deadlines or where, for a particular reason, we will be better placed to update the actions or deadlines at a later date.

6. Content of the Improvement Plan

6.1. The refresh process was in two stages : stage 1 to review progress against the outcomes, recommendations and success criteria currently included in the plan, and determine whether new actions are needed to ensure delivery, and stage 2 to incorporate activity that will take place under the auspices of the transformation programme.

6.2. The result is a single plan and a single monitoring process to be governed by the Transformation Board and reported to the Improvement Board for scrutiny, challenge and support.

6.3. The detail of what will be done, when and by whom, and how we will measure success is all laid out in the next section of the Improvement Plan – a detailed implementation plan across all the themes. These can be summarised as:

6.3.1. Effective leadership and governance of integrated children's services in Leeds

- Design, develop and implement an integrated children's services delivery model
- Design, develop and implement an integrated business support and commissioning delivery model
- Manage the closure of the Education Leads contract

- Support the effective development and delivery of the children's services Transformation programme

6.3.2. Excellent safeguarding standards and practice

- Establishment of high quality operational procedures with strict compliance, good record keeping and clear risk assessed decision making backed up by excellent quality assurance processes
- Revise the operation of the Local Safeguarding Children Board to ensure it is able to carry out all its functions effectively
- Improve early intervention and prevention by : good information sharing, adherence to clear thresholds, use of the Common Assessment Framework and effective interagency working
- Ensure Children and Young People's Social Care staff have appropriate and manageable workloads, and are kept under regular supervision

6.3.3. Improved outcomes for looked after children

- Improve placements for looked after children
- Reduce the number in care and time spent in care
- Ensure effective planning for children and young people in care and leaving care

6.3.4. All young people participating fully, socially and economically

- Implement an action plan to reduce the numbers of NEET (including the number of not knowns)
- Improve attainment with particular focus on under achieving groups and settings (Eg. LAC, relevant BME pupils, SEN and Free School Meals, National Challenge)
- Improve school attendance with a particular focus on secondary and persistent absentees

6.3.5. A highly skilled, well motivated, motivated and continually developing workforce

- Produce workforce development plan for an integrated C&YP workforce to include recruitment, retention, training, skills development and provide improved clarity of roles and responsibilities
- Ensure staff are enabled to carry out their responsibilities efficiently by provision of effective IT systems and adequate administrative support

6.3.6. Progress against the actions and success criteria will continue to be monitored on a monthly basis and reported to the external

Improvement Board. It is also reviewed by the Children's Services Leadership Team, Corporate Leadership Team and reported into the Council's Executive Committee at regular intervals.

7. How will we know when we've got there?

7.1. We want to secure excellent services for children and young people in Leeds by 2014. This will mean no areas for priority action being found in our next unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment, and improved annual performance ratings to “adequate” in 2010 and “performing well” in 2011.

7.2. During the lifetime of the Improvement Notice we will embed revised Children's Trust arrangements city-wide and at local level. This will include effective Children's Trust and Local Safeguarding Children Boards, with the appropriate level of representation across all partners, and the necessary supporting and consultative groups, with robust linkages between the different elements, in order to drive our improvement through the Children and Young People's Plan. The locality-based arrangements currently in place – such as families of schools, clusters, neighbourhoods - will be reviewed to ensure they are appropriate and fit for purpose.

7.3. We will design and implement a seamless service that meets the needs of children, young people and families without gaps and duplications. This will include co-ordinated delivery of a multi-agency response at local level. Where more specialist services are required, for example for looked after children and for those with disabilities, we will develop integrated services bringing together staff from a range of disciplines to better respond to the range of needs presented by these children and young people and their parents and carers.

7.4. In order to support integrated service delivery and operate as efficiently and effectively as possible, we will bring together currently dis-aggregated key support functions including commissioning, performance management and quality assurance, human resources and finance into single cross-directorate functions.

7.5. Our leadership arrangements will be redefined to better lead, manage and support effective integrated frontline and support services. We have a new permanent director of children's services to lead our new arrangements and drive for improvement. In shaping an integrated children's services directorate we will review leadership arrangements in order to reinforce the leadership team's role as a key leadership body.

7.6. Through internal self- evaluation and external scrutiny we have increased our self-awareness and understanding of risk. We will build on this approach in a more systematic way, embedding it into our

routine performance management and strengthening quality assurance. Delivery of services for children and young people will be backed by integrated support functions including commissioning and performance management to achieve greater coherence across the whole system and enable robust prioritisation and alignment of resources to priority improvement areas and sustaining good quality services. Our longer term approach to financial planning will ensure that budget allocations are kept under review and aligned to the delivery of our plans and priorities. Any such planning will need to take place in the context of the national funding picture and the impact of the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review.

7.7. Strengthening the leadership and challenge role of the Local Safeguarding Children Board will help us to ensure that practice in Leeds is robust and agencies are working together effectively to safeguard vulnerable children and young people. An Integrated Safeguarding Unit will help to deliver a robust child protection system in which children, young people and families are properly engaged. Promotion of safeguarding, learning the lessons from Serious Case Reviews and delivering comprehensive training are all important elements that will be secured to improve our safeguarding arrangements.

7.8. We recognise that we cannot secure the improvements we need for our children and young people without a skilled, motivated and well supported workforce that continues to develop, and this will be reflected in our Integrated Workforce Strategy.

7.9. It is of critical importance that frontline staff have appropriate case loads and are well supported, trained and supervised. Staff will be deployed into multi-disciplinary and multi-agency teams as best fits the needs of the children, young people, families and communities we are here to assist. To achieve this we will require strong leadership and a clear agreed vision for the delivery of integrated children's services in Leeds.

7.10. Clear thresholds for intervention have been developed, trialled and revised and will be fully understood and utilised by staff across all agencies. Integrated front-line services targeting support for children and families with additional and multiple additional needs will deliver timely responses to problems using appropriate care pathways. As the whole system is strengthened to respond more effectively to meet families' needs, we expect to see a reduction in the numbers of children and young people becoming looked after.

7.11. Whilst outcomes for our looked after children are improving, they lag behind those for their peers and this is unacceptable. We will continue to narrow that gap through better assessment, planning and co-ordinated individualised support for looked after children and young people and their carers. We will make sure that we are listening to what

looked after children and young people are telling us about their experiences and use this to evaluate and improve our provision. A better range of local placements will not only improve choice and stability for children and young people, but will also have an impact on one of our major budget pressures, thus freeing resources for other priority areas of activity.

7.12. We want to see a greater proportion of our young people engaging fully in their community, thriving socially and economically. This means that we will focus our collective efforts more keenly on those groups of children and young people who are particularly vulnerable to under achievement. The gap between them and their peers must reduce progressively. We will tackle disengagement through ensuring we have the right range of opportunities for learning and training that will excite and motivate our young people, and providing them with good quality advice and support to access them. Our systems for information, advice and guidance will be strengthened to track young people more effectively and ensure that they stay within a supportive network that will help them to succeed. Partnership activity including a “Think Family” approach and integrated offender management will be used to reduce burglary and re-offending.

7.13. Leadership across all levels of our children’s trust partnership in Leeds needs to be active, visible and effective in sustaining high quality responses to improve outcomes for our children and young people, particularly the most vulnerable. As our refreshed Improvement Plan is embedded we expect it to provide further evidence of strong partnership activity to deliver on our priorities, and increased satisfaction of both service users and staff.

21 July 2010

Children Leeds

Dear colleagues,

This letter is intended to provide clarity on the next steps in establishing the leadership and management structure for the integrated children's service. Nigel's appointment to the post of DCS has been an essential first step.

We are all committed to ensuring a smooth handover of responsibility from Eleanor to Nigel. This letter outlines our shared thinking about how together we start to put in place the leadership team to support the DCS.

As you know, the transformation programme board is overseeing an ambitious, comprehensive and challenging plan. We are taking the opportunity to review what we do, both in terms of service delivery and business support, not only within the Council and Education Leeds, but also in relation to our work with schools and with the NHS and the Police. The detailed work underway will enable us to make decisions in the next few months on how our responsibilities and functions can be more effectively delivered in the future.

We recognise the importance of moving forward on the management structure that will report to the DCS. We want to reduce the uncertainty of managers and staff within children's services and Education Leeds about how their areas of responsibility will be delivered in the new structure as soon as we can.

The functions of a children's service and the challenges facing us are wide ranging and complex. This is particularly true at this time given the significant changes arising from the coalition government's early actions in relation to education, children's services and funding.

We intend putting in place a leadership team that will ensure sufficient professional expertise and senior management capacity to undertake the required tasks. It will be essential that this team, together with the DCS, collectively deliver dynamic, proactive and resourceful leadership. It must

drive improvement in direct service provision, in commissioning to meet needs, in effective strategic partnership working and in strategic planning to achieve the best outcomes we can for children and young people in Leeds.

The vision for children and young people in Leeds is to ensure all are happy, healthy, safe, successful and free from the effects of poverty. This team will be responsible for leading the drive to achieve this ambition. To deliver this we are proposing that all Chief Officer posts reporting to the DCS will have common responsibilities in relation to:

- Achieving better outcomes for children and young people
- Providing leadership as part of the team to deliver change and improvement
- Promoting integrated working and effective partnership working
- Contributing to the corporate priorities of the City Council
- Making best use of our resources, including staff, buildings and other assets
- Having a flexible attitude to changing role and responsibilities in the light of new developments and emerging needs

Chief Officers will also have specific responsibilities to ensure clear leadership for the full range of functions within the service. Over the coming weeks we will be discussing how best to take this forward and will want to include health, police and other partners in consideration of the options. This will ensure that once Nigel takes up his post sometime in September, he will be able to move swiftly on this.

As we said at the beginning of this letter we do believe it is important to move forward and establish the senior leadership team who will then be able to develop the next tier of management. At the same time the work on front line delivery of services and functions will have progressed and it will be the right time to bring this all together

So really exciting times ahead. We have a fantastic opportunity now in Leeds for all of us working for children and young people – let's together make the most of it.



Eleanor Brazil



Nigel Richardson



Judith Blake

Detailed monitoring update – Reporting update from 24th June - 28th July 2010

Key

RAG rating

The criteria for each traffic light is as follows:

- Green = Longer term work is on schedule for delivery and/or shorter term actions are nearing completion within expected timescales. Key performance indicators/success criteria are on track.
- Amber = Minor delays/issues are having an impact on delivery but remedial action is underway/planned and the key performance indicators/success criteria are likely to be on, or close to, target.
- Red = Significant delays or issues to address and unlikely to meet targets for key performance indicators/success criteria.

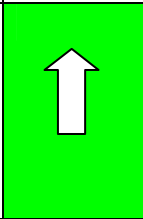
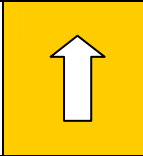
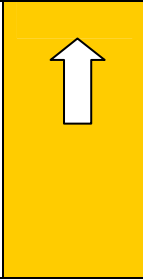
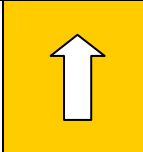
Direction of travel

- ↑ = overall the direction of travel is improving.
- ↓ = overall the performance is deteriorating.
- ↔ = overall the direction of travel is static.





Improvement Plan Monitoring Report – August 2010 Board – Final

Source	Recommendation	Deadline	Summary	RAG and Direction of Travel for action updates
Transformation Programme	1.1.1 Design , Develop and Implement an Integrated Children's Services Delivery Model	1/04/11	The first action against this recommendation is complete with all project scopes now drafted and agreed by the Transformation Board. Other actions are progressing as expected with the design team in place and meetings taking place on a weekly basis to ensure that the work of the individual strands is drawn together. Information gathering is underway which is informing initial service design work. The Interim DCS is working closely with the new DCS to ensure he can engage at an early stage (as appropriate) with the design of the new service. A communications strategy has been developed to support effective stakeholder engagement and a paper has been written for Executive Board and submitted to CLT.	↑
Transformation Programme	1.2.1 Develop and agree an implementation plan for a new and effective performance management arrangements for children's services.	28/1/11	Actions remain on track and are progressing well; the co-location of the Education Leeds and the Children's Services Performance Teams is expected to take place by the end of August. The work of the performance management group has broadened significantly to ensure that children's services performance issues are considered on a cross service basis monthly.	↑
Announced Inspection	1.2.2 Within six months ensure that there is a suitably trained, experienced paediatrician available across the city 24 hours every day of the week to support effective child protection medical examinations involving children.	1/08/10	The key actions against this recommendation have now been completed.	↑

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Source	Recommendation	Deadline	Summary	RAG and Direction of Travel for action updates
Children's services review	1.2.3 Create a single commissioning function made up of all relevant commissioning resources from across council provided children's services.	01/1/10	Actions have been updated as part of the refresh of the plan. Progress remains on track. Interim leadership arrangements for the commissioning service are in place. All commissioning budgets, contracts and initial savings targets have been identified. A draft commissioning prospectus is in place (to be reviewed by CSLT and CTB in September). The commissioning and finance subgroup of the trust board has been established which will offer opportunities for joint commissioning moving forward.	
	1.2.4 Within six months develop and begin implementation of a service review programme for commissioned services (as part of the performance management framework)		Actions are progressing. Actions A(develop and agree a service review methodology) and B (define and agree review capacity) are complete. The review programme has been initiated.	
	1.2.5 Immediately undertake a full evaluation of the allocation of children's service resources, to ensure that the capacity of the workforce is sufficient to meet the demand for service at the published threshold and redesign current children's services base budget to reflect new practices and model of integrated processes		The Director of Children's Services is leading work to undertake a full review of the Children's Services Budget on a line by line basis in order to identify opportunities for making savings and efficiencies. This will inform the service redesign work.	
	1.2.6 Create a new Children's Trust Board to strengthen partnership and co-operation arrangements and strategic oversight.	01/10/2011	Actions are progressing as expected with phase one now complete. Phase two has now been initiated with terms of reference developed for the commissioning and finance, performance management and planning and workforce reform subgroups of the Board. First meetings of these subgroups have been planned and will have met before September.	

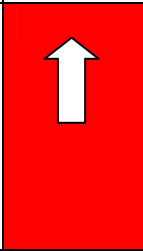
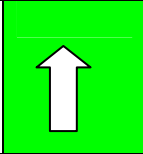
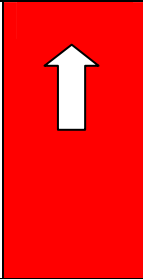
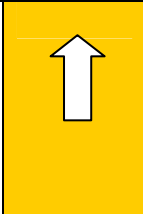
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Source	Recommendation	Deadline	Summary	RAG and Direction of Travel for action updates
Transformation Programme	1.2.7 Design, Develop and implement an integrated business support and commissioning delivery model	01/04/2011	<p>Actions are progressing as expected. The first stage of the actions is complete with all strand's scopes developed and agreed by the Transformation Board. Implementation of the agreed scopes is now underway. To oversee and ensure progress the Business Support and Integration group meet fortnightly and timely reports are made to the Transformation Board.</p> <p>The project scope for phase two of the project is under development, this will cover, topics including, operational management, income generation and traded services and development of an integrated policy function. During the second phase of work the progress of the first phase will continue to be tracked. The work of this strand will continue to be informed by the design work currently being undertaken by the frontline design team.</p>	
Transformation Programme	1.3.1 Ensure the effective closure of the Education Leeds Contract	01/04/2011	<p>The Lead Out Plan for the termination of Education Leeds Limited and the transfer of services, staff, property and assets to Leeds City Council has been signed by the chair of the Education Leeds Board and the Director of Children's Services. The initial project plan to support delivery has also been developed</p>	
Transformation Programme	1.4.1 Ensure the Transformation Programme is supported by effective integrated processes	01/04/2011	<p>Work is progressing as expected. Actions have been developed for this aspect of the plan and scoping work for the strand is underway.</p>	
Announced Inspection	2.1.1 Immediately improve the timeliness and quality of social work responses for assessments, case planning and recording, including the analysis of risk, to meet minimum standards.	3/3/11	<p>Details of our performance against NI 59 and 60 is provided under a different cover. Work to progress the cleansing of data on ESCR is nearing completion and the Programme of improvement activity for ESCR has been approved by Executive Board and is now progressing.</p> <p>The development and embedding of our audit arrangements continue.</p>	

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Source	Recommendation	Deadline	Summary	RAG and Direction of Travel for action updates
Improvement Notice	2.1.2 The council will ensure, through the establishment of a rigorous performance management and quality assurance system, that the quality of referrals and assessments are monitored (including quality assuring recording)	29/12/2010	A number of the actions against this recommendation have been completed. Additional activities have been added to the action plan to reflect the quality assurance activity which is to be progressed through Social Care's Practice Improvement Programme. Performance workshops are being held with Social Workers to help address identified performance issues.	↑
Announced Inspection	2.1.3 Within three months ensure children and young people and their parents receive information on how to make complaints and gain access to the advocacy service.	1/04/11	All complaints information has been refreshed and reprinted. Updated information is being reissued to area offices so that this can be shared with children, young people and their families as required. Distribution of the leaflets can now be recorded on ESCR. Baseline performance levels can now be established and targets set and monitored to ensure success criteria are realised.	↑
Improvement Notice	2.1.4 Improve the satisfaction of children and families	01/04/2011	Activity is progressing. All actions are in place for monitoring improved satisfaction.	↑
Announced Inspection	2.1.5 Immediately ensure that the capacity for the delivery of child protection conferences matches the demand for service and ensure that child protection core group meetings are effective and actions and outcomes for individual children are monitored against their child protection plan.	30/09/2010	<p>Actions against this recommendation have been reviewed as part of the refresh process.</p> <p>The Head of Safeguarding is also overseeing the ongoing collection of intelligence on timeliness of, and attendance at, core groups and initial child protection conferences. Initial indications are that changes will be required to systems and capacity in order to meet timeliness targets. The ongoing collection and analysis of this data will inform the continued improvement activity until the required level of performance has been met. However this remains a notable area of risk as we have a significant distance to travel before we meet Ofsted's recommendations. Current progress indicates that the recommendations will be met.</p>	↑

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Source	Recommendation	Deadline	Summary	RAG and Direction of Travel for action updates
Announced Inspection	2.1.6 Within three months ensure the involvement of children, young people and their families in the child protection process is consolidated and records demonstrate that practice is being implemented effectively and their views taken into account.	30/09/2010	<p>Actions against this recommendation have been reviewed as part of the refresh process. Progress is being made against the new actions as expected. The Head of Safeguarding is writing a brief to inform the development of our approach to ensuring that children and young people are involved in the Child Protection Process.</p> <p>The red RAG rating remains as significant work is required to ensure that Ofsted's recommendation is met, however current activity suggests that the requirements will be realised.</p>	
Announced Inspection	2.1.7 Within six months complete an analysis of why there is such a high proportion of children who are the subject of a child protection plan for two or more years.	01/09/10	<p>This analytical work is almost complete. All data has been gathered and analysed. A 'feedback' focus group is to be held 30/7/10 with relevant staff. The report will then be discussed with the Deputy Director of Children's Services and the Safeguarding co-ordinator before the final report is produced by 6/8/10.</p>	
Improvement Notice	2.1.8 Improve the response to child protection referrals to meet statutory guidelines, and ensure discussions with the police and other agencies take place in a timely manner in all relevant circumstances, as set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'	30/11/2010	<p>Actions have been updated as part of the refresh of the improvement plan. Activity is progressing as expected in accordance with these new actions. The speed of information sharing between paediatrics and social care have improved and work is underway to improve secure data transfer between the police and social care, with secure email accounts to be set up in each CYPSC team.</p> <p>The red RAG rating remains as significant work is needed to ensure that the requirements detailed in the improvement notice are met, however current activity suggests that the requirements will be realised.</p>	
Improvement notice	2.1.9 The Council needs to ensure that it has effective information management arrangements in place, ensuring that records for all children and young people are up-to-date	20/12/10	<p>These actions have been updated as part of the refresh with completed actions closed and some new actions added where required to ensure current activity is reflected and the success criteria met.</p> <p>Work is underway to standardise key social work assessment forms across the city. This is being done through two key activities: embedding key forms into ESCR and through the development of an electronic forms library that will sit alongside the practice standards manual, available on all social workers' desk tops.</p>	

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Source	Recommendation	Deadline	Summary	RAG and Direction of Travel for action updates
Announced Inspection	2.1.10 Ensure that assessment reports are routinely shared with parents as appropriate	20/12/2010	All actions against this recommendation are now complete. Audit activity is required to ensure improvement activity has resulted in reports being routinely shared with parents.	↑
Announced Inspection	2.2.1 Within three months improve access to multi-agency child protection training delivered by the Leeds Safeguarding Children Board in order to ensure all partner agency staff are well informed and they know and understand their child protection roles and responsibilities.	17/12/2010	All actions are now complete. To ensure the training provision is sufficient and effective in December a review will be undertaken of how effectively the course has met the needs identified in the initial training needs audit.	↑
Announced Inspection	2.2.2 Strengthen the Leeds Safeguarding Children Board arrangements in providing challenge and monitoring safeguarding across the partnership so that more rapid progress is made in delivering robust safeguarding services across Leeds for children and young people	31/09/10	<p>Actions have been reviewed as part of the refresh of the improvement plan. Activity continues. The new LSCB is in place and the development of the subgroups continues to progress with terms of reference being developed.</p> <p>The LSCB held a workshop to consider and develop the initial draft of the LSCB's Annual Report to ensure that it effectively reflects arrangements in Leeds.</p> <p>Learning from SCRs continues to be disseminated, with a further citywide workshop planned for November, learning disseminated to all trainers for inclusion in their training sessions and implementation being monitored.</p>	↑





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Source	Recommendation	Deadline	Summary	RAG and Direction of Travel for action updates
Improvement Activity	2.2.3 Develop an Integrated Safeguarding Unit	: 1/10/10	Report detailing proposals for phase one of the development of the unit is being written and will be completed by the end of September.	↑
Improvement Notice	2.2.4 The Council will establish clear and agreed processes with partners in the Children’s Trust and LSCB to ensure effective scrutiny and training takes place so that the quality of contacts, referrals and assessments improve	1/12/10	Actions related to training have been completed other actions have been updated and are progressing as expected. The performance management framework for the LSCB is underdevelopment and the appointment process for a performance manager and quality assurance officer is continuing.	↑
Includes Announced Inspection/Improvement activity	2.3.1 Improve early intervention and prevention.	17/12/2010	<p>Actions have been brought together under this recommendation that reflect the key improvement activity underway to improve early intervention and prevention, this includes activity in the contact centre and embedding the CAF. Actions are progressing well, particularly early indications are that the impact of having the multidisciplinary screening team, including Integrated Processes Coordinators and Integrated Service Leaders, at the Contact Centre is strengthening the team’s ability to respond to requests for service which do not meet the Social Care threshold.</p> <p>Furthermore information is being gathered to demonstrate the volumes of cases following each pathway out of the contact centre.</p> <p>Good progress is being made against this recommendation.</p>	↑





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Source	Recommendation	Deadline	Summary	RAG and Direction of Travel for action updates
Improvement Notice	2.3.2 The Council will have clear multi-agency thresholds in place, shared with and understood by partners, in order for children and young people to access appropriate services and to ensure consistent and high quality referrals.	17/12/2010	Activity has been reviewed and actions updated against this recommendation. Progress is being made against the actions. The Integrated Processes Group has drafted new thresholds documentation through consultation across the Council and Leeds Community Healthcare. A process has been agreed for the approval of this documentation through the LSCB.	↑
Announced Inspection	2.4.1 Immediately tackle the unacceptably high level of social worker caseloads, ensure that newly qualified social workers are protected from carrying high and complex caseloads and increase capacity within children's social care, in particular at team manager and social worker level, by ensuring there is an effective senior management team responsible for social care.	1/4/2011	All initial activity against this recommendation has been completed. Continued improvement activity will be progressed through the Children's Services Transformation Programme	↑
Improvement Notice	2.4.2 Review social workers' responsibilities and workloads to ensure that responsibilities are clearly and tightly defined, and that no staff carry too wide a range of work. This will need to involve consideration of whether a restructure of children's social care services is necessary to deliver high quality services.	1/4/2011	All initial activity against this recommendation has been completed. Continued improvement activity will be progressed through the Children's Services Transformation Programme, specifically the Children and Young People's Social Care service redesign.	↑

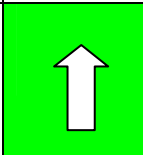
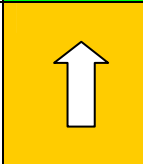
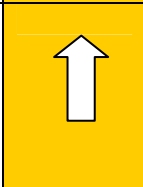
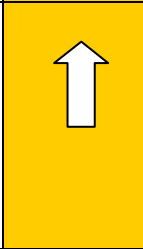
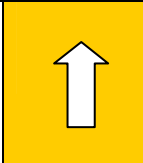
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Source	Recommendation	Deadline	Summary	RAG and Direction of Travel for action updates
Improvement Notice	2.4.3 Develop a comprehensive programme of training, mentoring and continuous professional development for all social care staff so that they have the skills to complete high quality and timely assessment.	30/01/11	Children and Young People’s Social Care continue to implement the Practice Improvement Programme. As part of this a programme of audit is being developed that will see over 1000 files examined in October and November this year. In addition an ongoing audit process will be developed. 30 files will be externally audited to help ensure ongoing monitoring and assurance Engagement has taken place with Advanced Practitioners and Lead Managers to establish a programme of 8 action learning sets. The action learning sets will support Advanced Practitioners in their role of challenging and improving practice and overcoming perceived organisational barriers. The first of these sessions took place in June.	
Improvement Notice	2.4.4 Ensure there is a robust supervision policy in place so that there is effective supervision of social workers and case management arrangements.	24/09/10	Activity continues to progress. The policy is currently being considered by HR prior to publication.	
Announced Inspection	3.1.1 Within three months strengthen the arrangements for monitoring the quality and outcomes of external placements, particularly in residential special schools and for those children and young people who are in schools out of the city.	01/04/10	This activity has been reviewed and actions updated as part of the refresh, this includes new actions to reflect activity to strengthen the monitoring of outcomes for children and young people in residential special schools. All activity is progressing in line with the revised actions.	
Announced Inspection	3.1.2 Improve the range of placement choice available, particularly those from minority ethnic communities or for those children and young people with complex needs	31/10/10	Actions have been reviewed and updated with the new Head of Service for Looked After Children. Activity is progressing for example Children and Young People’s Social Care are currently assessing 62 potential new adopters, which should lead to a notable increase in our level of available resources.	

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Source	Recommendation	Deadline	Summary	RAG and Direction of Travel for action updates
Key Improvement requirement	3.2.1 Reduce the numbers in care and time spent in care	1/4/11	<p>Actions have been reviewed and updated. Actions are progressing well for example :</p> <p>9. Scoping work has been initiated to review the role of the placements desk and develop a single placements unit as part of the activity to improve the commissioning of external placements.</p> <p>10. Arrangements for exploring all multi-agency intervention before a child is taken into care, through the Children Leeds Panels, is progressing, with the Panels now in their second phase of meetings since the release of the new pre-placement procedures. Furthermore the weekly placements panel will now be a multi-agency meeting once a month.</p> <p>11. We have undertaken a needs analysis to inform the identification of placement requirements for the next 2-3 years.</p>	
Announced Inspection	3.3.1 Within three months improve the quality of core assessments and case records.	30/1/11	Activity is progressing for example a programme of audit is being developed that will see over 1000 files examined in October and November this year. In addition an ongoing audit process will be developed. 30 files will be externally audited to help ensure ongoing monitoring and assurance	
Announced Inspection	3.3.2 Within three months ensure all looked after children and young people are made aware of how to make a complaint	30/09/10	All information has been refreshed and reprinted. Updated information is being reissued to area offices so that this can be shared with children, young people and their families as required. Distribution of the leaflets can now be recorded on ESCR. All newly looked after children and young people have been provided with details of how to make a complaint.	
Announced Inspection	3.3.3 Within three months ensure that clear systems exist so lessons learned from complaints can help shape services and strengthen access to the children's rights services, particularly for those in out of city placements.	02/11/10	<p>An action Plan is now in place to ensure outcomes from complaints are acted upon, however further work is required to ensure that actions are implemented.</p> <p>Systems are also being developed to ensure that allegations made against staff are recorded on a single electronic database.</p> <p>The new head of complaints will progress this now she is in post.</p>	

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Source	Recommendation	Deadline	Summary	RAG and Direction of Travel for action updates
Announced Inspection	3.3.4 Within three months ensure access to the Children’s Rights Service, particularly for those in out of city placements is strengthened	02/04/10	Actions complete - recommendation to be closed	
Announced Inspection	3.3.5 Within three months develop a clear and understandable set of measures and targets for the achievement of the Care Promise	30/09/10	Actions continue to progress with the bi-annual review of progress against the Promise using quantitative measures and qualitative view of the Children in Care Council having been put to the Corporate Carers. Approval will be sought as part of the annual work plan for the group in September.	
Announced Inspection	3.3.6 Within three months, review the level of resource available to support the children in Care Council and increase awareness of its role and membership so that it is more representative of the looked after children population	30/09/10	Actions are progressing. Barnardo’s are currently facilitating the work of the Children in Care Council	
Announced Inspection	3.3.7 Within six months improve the regularity and timeliness of information-gathering on the progress of looked after children at a strategic level, to enable regular tracking of pupils’ progress and more timely evaluation of the impact of actions and interventions on progress and learning of looked after children	02/9/10	Actions continue to progress. Arrangements for the gathering of information will be confirmed in a letter to Headteachers that will accompany the request for year 11 outcomes data in August.	
Announced Inspection	3.3.8 Within three months ensure the views of looked after children and young people are sought and taken into account in the reshaping of services for looked after children.	Ongoing	Arrangements for ensuring the ongoing involvement of children and young people in service redesign are in place.	


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Source	Recommendation	Deadline	Summary	RAG and Direction of Travel for action updates
Announced Inspection	3.3.9 Within six months improve the effectiveness and relevance of personal education plans	02/09/10	Communications will take place to help embed the new process for Personal Education Plan in time for September.	↑
Improvement Notice	4.1.1 Reduce the number of 16-19 year olds who are not in education, employment or training	31/03/11	Progress is reflected in a further reduction in NEET to 8.8% in June 2010 which is a 0.3% reduction on the same period last year; and, the lowest level of not knowns ever - 5% - compared to 9.9%. Identified actions are appropriate and on track but the 24% reduction in the area based grant funding for targeting vulnerable groups threatens sustainable progress. To address this it is important to continue to promote effective working between Connexions, schools and Further education colleges. This issue potentially impacts on all areas of this improvement theme.	↑
Improvement Notice	4.2.1 Working with the National Challenge Board and any other government agencies as appropriate, effectively deliver the National Challenge Programme, implement the Council's agreed plan for Schools Vulnerable to the National Challenge and ensure agreed targets are met.	2010/2011 Ac yr	Activity is appropriate and progressing to deadline. On 21/07/10 Leeds City council's Executive Board approved proposals to close two high schools and replace them with academies, and to introduce alternative methods of leadership and governance in a third high school vulnerable to floor targets. The deadline for the new arrangements to be finally in place is September 2011. Two additional schools are receiving close support from regional advisers to get them up to the floor target.	↑
Improvement Notice	4.2.2 Achieve a sustained upward trend in the achievement of black and mixed heritage pupils and other priority minority ethnic group	2010/11 Ac yr	Identified actions are appropriate and on track. Headteachers and School improvement partners have had a further round of detailed target setting and strategy meetings. Evaluation of previous initiatives and refinement of proposals for the 2010/11 academic year will take place when the 2009/10 results are available.	↑

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Source	Recommendation	Deadline	Summary	RAG and Direction of Travel for action updates
Improvement Notice	4.2.3 Increase achievement of Level 2 qualifications by the age of 19	2010/2011 Ac yr	Current activity is appropriate and on track. Progress on the NEET recommendation makes a major contribution to 4.2.3. It is particularly important to deliver the September guarantee for appropriate and accessible provision responsive to the needs of all learners, in the context of possible reductions to funding for activity targeted at vulnerable groups.	↑
Improvement Notice	4.2.4 Narrow the achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers	2010/2011 Ac yr	Current activity is appropriate and on track but it is critical to respond to the new government's emerging proposals for pupil premiums to support relatively disadvantaged pupils. It is anticipated that this will be part of a new approach to school improvement which focuses support on relatively poor performing schools rather than on all schools. Proposals to reshape the Leeds service are in hand.	↑
Key Improvement Activity	4.3.1 Embed Children's Services Attendance Strategy and secure engagement of key partners	2010/2011 Ac yr	Actions are currently being refreshed. Key issues are devolving greater responsibility to schools; identifying what makes the biggest difference; providing enhanced data, including pupil and family level data; and, developing working relationships between Area inclusion partnerships, schools improvement partners and extended services clusters.	↑
Key improvement	5.1.1 Produce and agree an integrated workforce strategy. Further develop and agree an implementation plan.	01/02/11	These actions are progressing with the first meeting of the workforce development task and finish group of the Children's Trust Board having now met.	↑

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Source	Recommendation	Deadline	Summary	RAG and Direction of Travel for action updates
Announced Inspection	5.2.1 Immediately ensure that the combined resources and expertise of the council, partners, the Government Office and specialist contractors prioritise and tackle the difficulties associated with the electronic recording system.	Phased from Feb 10	Actions are on track. Developments have been approved by Executive Board and actions are progressing with, for example, E-forms being embedded in to ESCR.	

Children’s services transformation programme

Briefing note for managers – issue 4

This is the fourth briefing note for managers working across children’s services in Leeds. This briefing note includes information about progress on the children’s services transformation programme and discussions and commitments made by the children’s services transformation programme board at their meeting on Tuesday 13 July. It also includes other key messages about children’s services in Leeds. Please use this note to keep colleagues in your teams informed, through team meetings and briefing sessions.

Summary of main discussion items from 13 July

1. Communication and engagement

There is now good engagement from a range of key partners happening at both the programme board and in the various work streams. However, the board recognises that greater efforts need to be made to engage some groups, in particular headteachers and governors.

What was agreed?

Some meetings for headteachers and governors are already scheduled during July but the board agreed that a further series of meetings will be arranged for September. By then we will have outline proposals on what an integrated children’s service might look like for Leeds and this will be a good opportunity to get feedback and input from headteachers and governors to shape the final arrangements. We will send an update to governors in the next issue of the Governors’ Bulletin.

We will also be arranging more staff engagement events in September once the major holiday period is over. More information will be available as soon as plans are finalised.

2. Business support integration

The board discussed the importance of establishing clear HR frameworks for everyone affected during this period of change and of having a clear lead out plan for the termination of the agreement with Education Leeds. Work is progressing well on the detail of both these strands of business support and further detail will be available soon.

What was agreed?

Representatives on the board agreed to finalise agreements before the next board meeting.

3. Front-line integration

Following feedback from the last meeting, the board received an updated paper on an approach to integrated disability / SEN / additional health needs and universal setting service provision. The programme board appreciated the amount of work that had been undertaken to bring these

two separate strands together to provide a very comprehensive scoping paper.

What was agreed?

All the strands involved in front-line integration now have agreed scoping documents. To ensure the options being developed are consistent and do not duplicate a task and finish team is being established. Team members are:

- Ken Morton Programme manager Locality
- Paul Brennan Education Universal
- Alun Rees Looked after children CYPSC
- Barbara Newton Disability/SEN/Additional health needs DCS
- Jane Maxwell Well being function Locality
- Andrea Richardson Challenge and development – all areas Early Years & Youth
- Rob Kenyon Challenge and development – all areas Health perspective
- John Kearsley Link to integrated processes and Previous multi-agency duty team work Corporate perspective Enabling business support functions
- Ursula McGouran Challenge and development – leadership Health perspective TBC
- TBC GP representative

Links to primary and secondary headteachers will be made via the newly established groups set up to discuss business support integration.

In particular, four sub-groups will develop more detail on the disability / SEN / additional health needs and universal provision and this will be brought back to the board in September. Proposals for how these services could be provided will be available for consideration in early September. The model will ensure that it considers the child, the family, the service setting and the locality aspect of provision to ensure children, families and staff will be able to understand what the proposals mean for them.

The remaining strands will also continue using the teams and groups already established during the scoping phase to further develop their proposals.

4. Leadership and management

Eleanor Brazil is working with Nigel Richardson, the newly appointed director of children’s services, on developing a senior leadership structure. Nigel is being kept informed of the progress of the transformation programme and will want it to continue with the same direction and pace.

Update from the Department for Education

The current chief executive Paul Rogerson and future chief executive Tom Riordan, with Eleanor Brazil and James Rogers, met with Graham Archer, head of intervention at the Department for Education, on 12 July for the formal review of progress against the improvement notice. The conclusion reached at the end of the meeting by Graham was positive, recognising that the work on the

improvement plan is on track, good progress has already been made and there are real signs of improvement. There remains much to do but there is confidence that we will continue to improve.

This is very positive recognition of all the hard work that is going on across all children's services across the city and the board wants to thank everyone for their continued efforts.

How can colleagues find out more about the programme?

- Keep up to date by reading the transformation programme pages on the council's intranet or the Children Leeds website.
- Mariana Pexton and Jackie Green would like to talk with colleagues at management teams or team meetings about the transformation programme. Please ring Ed Batty on 0113 395 0218 to arrange this.
- Questions about the programme can be emailed to cstreview@leeds.gov.uk.

Children's services transformation programme Briefing note for managers – issue 5

This is the fifth briefing note for managers working across children's services in Leeds. This briefing note includes information about progress on the children's services transformation programme and discussions and commitments made by the children's services transformation programme board at their meeting on Tuesday 10 August. It also includes other key messages about children's services in Leeds. Please use this note to keep colleagues in your teams informed, through team meetings and briefing sessions.

Summary of main discussion items from 10 August

5. Communication and engagement

As work progresses on the design of front line services and other key strands of the programme, the board agreed a plan to widen engagement opportunities to share this progress. These will take place after the Children's Trust Board meeting on 13 September.

Discussions highlighted the need for board members and children's services leaders to attend existing meetings and events to gather feedback from colleagues. A schedule of meetings and attendees will be put in place.

The board has also committed to the development of a number of new groups and regular events to embed engagement, and promote integration and networking. These include leadership and partnership forums, and 'tea with Nigel' – a monthly, informal session for staff to engage directly with the new DCS. More details will follow soon.

It was also noted that strong communications within teams were a crucial foundation for all these new engagement opportunities.

What was agreed?

To link engagement on the transformation programme with consultation on the 2011 - 2014 Children and Young People's Plan; and to develop strong guidance for managers across children's services to ensure that all teams receive regular briefing and updates, and have the chance to feedback their views and questions.

6. Business support integration

There was a brief update on some aspects of the first phase of business support. In particular it was agreed that the performance management task and finish group will lead a discrete piece of work around quality assurance, to include an options appraisal.

What was agreed?

The next board meeting on 24 August will consider phase two of the business support strand, more details to follow soon.

7. Front-line integration

Work is progressing rapidly on the design stages, with a key milestone on 13 September when the Children's Trust Board will consider the proposals. Work will continue right up to this point, with the next two programme board meetings looking at the latest iterations of these work strands.

On 10 August, colleagues working on the universal, wellbeing, and SEN / disability / complex needs strands shared updates with the transformation board. The service design team will continue their work to bring these strands together, and further meetings with headteacher colleagues and other service leaders are scheduled before the end of August.

The board want to give credit to the many colleagues who have contributed their time and energy to this very valuable work.

What was agreed?

The latest proposals around service design will come to the next programme board meetings on 24 August and 7 September, with work continuing throughout this period. Any developments and decisions will be incorporated into the final report for the Children's Trust Board.

8. Leadership and management

Board members considered some draft responses to the 'big ideas' generated at the children's services leadership forum in May. These will be finalised and shared at the end of August

Other news from children's services

Children's Trust Board

Following consultation earlier in the year, the new Leeds Children's Trust Board is now in place as the overarching partnership to steer the direction and activity of children's services across the city. The Board will be meeting approximately every two months. After each meeting key messages are produced and these, along with papers and minutes of the meeting, are available on the Children Leeds website (www.leedsinitiative.org/children). Matters considered at the June meeting included: governance arrangements for the children's trust, development of a new Children and Young People's Plan and the new South Leeds Youth Hub.

Key priorities for children and young people

Consultation is now underway for the new Children and Young People's Plan for 2011-14. The Children's Trust Board have identified three key areas of priority for Leeds:

Improving the safeguarding of children and young people
Improving early years and primary stage outcomes
Better outcomes at 16 and 19 through improved participation and engagement of children and young people

The Board also agreed that we should also consult about how we can work together better to achieve improved outcomes for children and young people and their families.

We want your views on these priorities. To have your say visit the Children Leeds website, www.leedsinitiative.org/children

How can colleagues find out more about the transformation programme?

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