

Documents and news from and for local authorities and their partners



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Children's centres

Targeting Children's Centre Services on the Most Needy Families

NFER, December 2011

While continuing to acknowledge the value of 'universal' services, the Government has asked children's centres and local authorities to target services on the 'most needy' families. This research, commissioned by the Local Government Association, aimed to provide local authority early years' and children's services' leaders, and managers of children's centres with evidence of how services are targeted to the most disadvantaged families. It involved a rapid review of research and policy, together with case studies in six English local authorities.



Reorganisation

Driving Change: Leadership, Trust and Money - Lessons from the First Year of the Tri-borough Project

Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster, November 2011

A new analysis of the potential for shared services has been published, focusing on seven lessons learnt during the first year of tri-borough working. The report identifies the following seven ingredients that have been essential for the three councils' shared services success:

- strong political relationships – tri-borough is ultimately a test of political leadership and has required the individual councils to pool resources and power to better achieve outcomes
- quality of advice – the tri-borough programme has benefited from strong management and the three council leaders meet every few weeks with their chief executives to assess strategy and progress
- accountability – from the outset, all three councils have expected their officers to deliver on the tri-borough programme and members to fully scrutinise proposals, with clear deadlines being put in place
- strong business case – the need for real savings has underpinned this project, and the target level of savings to be achieved by 2015 currently stands at £33.4m
- trust – while early meetings were understandably characterised by a level of suspicion, the chief executive group led the way by insisting colleagues find a way of working effectively together
- ability to communicate the vision and plan – consistent and proactive communication has reassured residents and staff and shown leadership in tough times
- momentum – this is necessary to drive the project forward by breaking new ground and trying new approaches.

Further information.

Children and Young People's Commissioning Plan 2011-14

Harrow, November 2011

In a period of considerable change, including substantial legislation affecting schools and all aspects of children's services, Harrow Council and its partners took the opportunity to review and redesign services in a team around the child/family approach.

Following an information-gathering phase, there was a consultation on a New Operating Model (NOM) for children's services. The NOM will create a fully integrated children's service offering a seamless multi-agency service to vulnerable children, young people and their families. The model makes a clear distinction between commissioning and provider roles. Implementation of the NOM began in September 2011 with the creation of the new Quality Assurance, Commissioning and Schools Division.



[The BOLD Story So Far...](#)

Worcestershire, October 2011

BOLD stands for Better Outcomes, Lean Delivery and is Worcestershire County Council's proactive approach to meeting the challenge of budget cuts.

BOLD is a comprehensive programme of reform that will result in better outcomes for residents for less money. It takes a planned approach to the challenge, to minimise service reductions and lessen the impact on service users and staff.

This report looks at some of the initiatives under the programme, including back office savings and flexible and mobile working environments.

[Further information.](#)

[Work in Progress: Meeting Local Needs with Lower Workforce Costs](#)

Local Government Association/Audit Commission, December 2011

Aimed at councils as employers, this joint report shows how local authorities across England are reducing their workforce costs, with some finding creative solutions.

As government funding for councils shrinks by over a quarter between 2011/12 and 2014/15, councils need to reduce their workforce costs substantially, while still providing much needed services. Not all councils face the same financial challenges, but the message is that all must reassess what they do, how they do it, and what their priorities are. Those opting for major restructuring will take more time to realise savings.

Workforce

[Children's Workforce Strategy 2011-14](#)

North East Lincolnshire, September 2011

In a consultation seeking the views of the workforce on how the Children's Trust was doing in relation to integrated working, the response was mainly positive, but three main barriers were identified:

- agencies/organisations have signed up to the integrated working agenda in principle but commitment to this, in terms of attendance at Common Assessment Framework team around the child meetings, is variable;
- information sharing is not as effective as it could be across all agencies;
- there is a reluctance among professionals to take on the Lead Professional role, partly due to lack of understanding about the role, and partly due to pressures of time and other own-agency priorities being seen as more important.

This workforce development strategy sets out the priorities and outlines the actions that will take forward the changes required to prepare the workforce for the challenges ahead.



Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy 2011-14

Lancashire, January 2012

Consultation with all sectors of the workforce has highlighted six priority areas for workforce reform and development over the next three years and partners have agreed particular areas to focus upon under each priority:

- safeguarding children and young people and their families, and the workforce
- early support initiatives (formerly prevention and early intervention)
- strong and effective leadership at all levels
- Total Family approaches
- maximising opportunities through health reforms
- an engaged, high-performing, resilient workforce.

Child poverty

Pathways Out of Poverty

North Somerset, November 2011

The life chances and outcomes for the majority of North Somerset's children are good, but there is still a significant gap between the outcomes for those who are poor and those who are not.

This strategy outlines the life chances for the 14 per cent of the area's children and young people who live in relative poverty and sets out ways to prevent poor children becoming poor adults.

Recommendations are grouped around four key themes or 'pathways out of poverty':

- improving life chances through services working directly with children
- increasing opportunities for parents and young people to work and train locally
- promoting financial inclusion
- improving the physical and community environment.

City of York Child Poverty Strategy 2011-20

York, December 2011

This strategy is based on the following principles:

- child poverty is everybody's business
- children are brought up within families, so the strategy will have a 'whole family' approach and will support family relationships and family life
- employment is a main route out of poverty but in order to combat the growing issue of in-work poverty, it should provide fair wages and support for parents to continue and progress in work
- early intervention and prevention are crucial



- all children will be supported, but there will be a focus on protecting vulnerable children and promoting equality
- excellence in delivery will be promoted, working with all partners to ensure that the ending of child poverty is a priority
- the sustainability, cost-effectiveness and affordability of the strategy are essential.

Youth services

Kent Youth Service: Transformation Model

Kent, December 2011

A consultation on the future delivery of youth services took place in Kent from 1 August to 29 October 2011. Kent County Council (KCC) has published the end-of-consultation report which sets out the responses to the consultation and makes recommendations for decision by the Cabinet Member for Customer and Communities.

It has now been decided to pursue the plan to have robust, directly delivered youth work provided by KCC in each district, which will be supplemented and supported by additional youth work offered by other organisations. No decisions have been made about any specific youth centres. The decisions will only be made following discussions with each district as to their recommendations on how best to meet their local young people's needs. The new structure would take effect from January 2013.

Further information on the [consultation](#), including the full consultation document is available.

