

Division(s):

CABINET – 19 APRIL 2011

Children, Young People & Families Service Redesign

Report by Meera Spillett, Director for Children, Young People & Families

Introduction

1. This report sets out a proposed service redesign for our Children, Education and Families directorate. Our directorate Business Strategy set out the broad proposals for our service redesign and a public consultation on service redesign commenced on 15th February 2011 and closed on 4th April 2011. The service redesign includes the creation of a new, single integrated Early Intervention Service and changes to the provision of Education Services and Children's Social Care Services.
2. The proposals included in this report set out :
 - how services can be redesigned and reshaped to effectively meet the Councils statutory responsibilities.
 - how our services can meet the needs of children, young people and families with a particular focus on multi-professional prevention and early intervention provision.
 - address the financial challenges in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (2011-2014) and ensure the effective use of resources
 - incorporate new national policy and legislative change building in capacity to respond to further changes in the next four years.

We have also been conducting a staff consultation on a proposed structure to support our redesigned service. This consultation ran from 1st February 2011 and closed on the 4th April 2011. This report sets out the key messages of the staff consultation. Following decision by Cabinet on the service redesign our Directorate will take into account any comments from Cabinet and will then finalise the structure for the Directorate.

This report seeks Cabinet approval of our service redesign and approval to proceed with the implementation of service redesign taking into account the outcomes of our public consultation.

We have used feedback from our public consultation to revise our equality impact assessment.

Context and Background

3. The Children, Young People & Families Directorate Business Strategy set out the way in which the directorate plans to meet the council's statutory responsibilities and is designed to ensure that we:
 - Deliver good outcomes for all children and young people.
 - Secure for the poorest and most vulnerable in society the ability to improve their outcomes by effectively targeting resources to those most in need.
 - Engage non-state providers, communities and partnerships in the delivering those outcomes locally.
 - Improve the economic efficiency and effectiveness of our activities.
4. The Directorate Business Strategy links closely to the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Plan reflecting the council's aspirations to provide high quality services shared with private, public and voluntary sector partners.
5. As part of the council's Medium Term Financial Plan 2011/12 – 2014/15, the Children, Young People & Families Directorate must reduce its expenditure by £16.9 million. In order to meet these financial challenges, the directorate is proposing to fundamentally change the way services are delivered. This includes how they are structured, whilst at the same time shaping them in a more coordinated way based on the research evidence of what services best meet the needs of children, young people and their families.
6. There are a significant number of national policy and legislative changes which we are incorporating into these proposals including the *Education Bill 2011*; the Green Paper *Support and aspiration: a new approach to special educational needs and disability*; the *Munro Review of Child Protection*, the findings of the Early Intervention Commission. 'The Early Years: Foundations for life, health and learning' review. *The Foundation Years: preventing poor children becoming poor adults report on child poverty* and the recent 'Social Mobility Strategy'. Our proposal responds to national changes in policy and the underpinning national and local research base about when and how to best support children, young people and their families.

The Proposal

7. The proposed service redesign is detailed in the consultation document (see Annex 1). It has three key strands covering universal, targeted and specialist services in Education, Early Intervention and Children's Social Care. In addition it is proposed that our locality organisation is increased to match the 13 corporately agreed localities rather than its current organisation on 12.
8. In developing the proposals, the directorate has focused on the following guiding principles to significantly improve the outcomes for children, young people and families:
 - Keeping children and young people safe.

- Ensuring that children, young people and their families get the right service, in the right place at the right time.
 - Providing better life chances – getting a balance of proactive and reactive services to best meet need.
 - ‘Working with’ not ‘doing to’ children and their families.
 - Working at a local level in communities with our ‘Team Around the Child’ and ‘Team Around the Family’ approaches.
9. **Strand 1: To create a new Integrated Early Intervention Service.** To join up and redesign several existing services to create a single integrated service focused on prevention and early intervention. The new multi-disciplinary integrated service would work locally across the county with children, young people and families facing multiple difficulties; ensuring that they receive timely and appropriate professional support. The service would work across the county utilising our existing network of Children’s Centres and introducing seven service delivery hubs across the county, each with a designated locality catchment working closely with our partners, providing outreach services to all communities and facilities for extended use of our buildings. The service will deploy across the county.
10. Currently the council fully funds 26 young people’s centres and supports a further eight in minor ways. Included in the Early Intervention proposal are plans to make resources work more effectively by using young people’s centres as hub sites so that we can continue to fund youth services across the county from those hubs and satellite provision. In addition we will work with local community groups, schools, the voluntary sector and other partners to develop innovative ways to deliver other youth activities in other parts of the county. A Big Society Fund has been created to support the establishment of community led initiatives.
11. The Early Intervention Service has been designed using research and reviews of what interventions are most effectively used to support children and their families. The Centre for Excellence in Outcomes (C4EO) published a summary of research and evidence on Early Intervention ‘Early Intervention – Grasping the Nettle’, the Government published the independent review of ‘Early Intervention – the next steps’ by Graham Allen MP, the Marmot Review ‘Fair Society, Healthy Lives’ strategic health in equalities review and most recently the social mobility and child poverty strategy. Our proposals would ensure and enable evidence based service delivery and support the delivery of the wider aims of tackling deprivation and poverty to improve the life chances of children, young people and their families.
12. **Strand 2: To redesign our Education Services in response to national policy changes.** Education policy and legislation has and will be changing significantly in the coming years, the Government outlined the plan for ‘whole system reform’ in the White Paper entitled ‘The importance of teaching’ and the Education Act is on its passage through parliament. The role of our Council will change with a strong emphasis on schools being responsible for

their own improvement and Councils being the strategic champions for children and young people, promoting educational excellence by ensuring a good supply of high quality school places, coordinating fair admissions and developing our own school improvement strategies to support local schools who are not meeting the new floor standards. The Education Bill makes proposals to change the governance arrangements for Schools and increase the diversity of school provision through academies and free schools.

13. The proposal is to reshape education services to support these reforms now and as they progress. There will be an increasing range and diversity of schools and other settings, Schools rather than the Council will have the responsibility to improve and support others schools to improve. The financial resources available from Government grants have decreased, the previous Government had sought to end the School Standards grants and in our local Government settlement the total quantum of those grants was continued and placed into school budgets, the element for Councils was curtailed inline with the education reform agenda. Our proposals seek to consolidate and concentrate our remaining resources to meet our revised statutory requirements and provide capacity for targeted support and challenge to schools and settings where children are not making sufficient progress. Working with schools and settings, the new services will build capacity to meet the changing education landscape through leadership, professional development and sustainable business planning. In areas such as Special Educational Need (SEN), we have proposed little change recognising this area is likely to require future review as a result of the outcomes of any changes to national policy following the SEN and Disability Green Paper *Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability*.
14. Business skills services will make efficiencies by bringing together 14-19 and 16-19 services, the Education Business Partnership and wider adult skills to work across Children, Young People & Families Directorate and the Environment & Economy Directorate. These changes support the requirement to raise the age of participation and to link more effectively education and skills.
15. Schools Organisation and Planning will remain relatively unchanged, we will continue to have statutory responsibilities to plan sufficient school places and manage admissions to schools. New responsibilities to meet the presumption that any new school will be an academy (as proposed in the Education Bill), have been planned for within the revised service design.
16. **Strand 3: To redesign our Children's Social Care Services in response to national policy changes.** There will be no reduction in funding for frontline social care services; including child protection. However, pressures on these services are acknowledged as increasing, like other Councils in recent years. Nationally the final report from Professor Eileen Munro will set a clear direction for children's social care and child protection. The proposed management restructure will maintain the current area structure, where the core functions of children's social care – assessment, care management of

children in need of protection, and those looked after are being delivered through the three geographical areas. The aim of the proposal is to enable the service to concentrate on the core business of protecting children from abuse and neglect and supporting the most vulnerable children. We have and will continue to work on the crucial interface between preventative and early intervention services and children's social care to make this process seamless but at the same time best use of specialist resources of children's social care.

Consultation – Service and Structure Redesign

17. In shaping these proposals, the directorate has been keen to ensure the involvement of service users, staff, and stakeholders. This included a phase of pre-consultation before the Directorate Business Strategy was drafted to get the views of staff on the redesign pathway for the Directorate (Appendix 2). When the Directorate Business Strategy was produced further avenues for informal consultation were set up, including a specific consultation on the creation of hubs as part of the Early Intervention Service in November 2010. Early engagement activities to refine the details of the final proposals for consultation included workshops with staff, discussions at the Big Debates, Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Trust Board, Area Trust Boards and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board. Dialogue took place with stakeholders and other partners and feedback was submitted to an open email address published on the county council website. The Directorate Leadership Team has undertaken consultation events across the County for staff and members of DLT have undertaken discussions with school associations and governors.
18. Formal consultation on the service redesign proposal began on 14 February and closed on 4 April 2011. This comprised a consultation document (Annex 1) with a feedback form available online and by hard copy on request. Stakeholders and partners who were involved in the production of the Children and Young People's Plan were specifically invited to take part.
19. A special version of the consultation document was prepared for children and young people and this was made available in a range of different places including on Facebook and at discussion forums and small meetings. Arrangements were also put in place to engage with parents and carers. In total, 93 consultation responses were received from residents and stakeholders, 296 from children and young people and 53 from parents and carers.
20. In parallel with the service consultation, the directorate has also undertaken a formal staff consultation focusing mainly on the staffing structure required to deliver the proposed service redesign. The consultation included Trade Unions and all staff employed within the directorate. It began on 1 February and concluded on 4 April 2011 and included a consultation document. A series of meetings were held with staff and managers at various locations across the county. In total, 400 written responses were received. The structure was benchmarked against other local authorities, external agencies, universities and teacher training organisations.

21. The main issues arising from both the formal service redesign consultation and the formal staffing consultation, together with the directorate's response are set out in Annex 3 to this report.

Analysis and Response of Service Consultation

22. **Strand 1: To create a new Integrated Early Intervention Service for Oxfordshire.** The outcomes of the consultation demonstrates that service users, stakeholders and staff support the establishment of the Early Intervention Service based in the seven hubs which will significantly improve the experience of children, young people and families. The value of local teams responding to local families and communities was recognised and seen as 'forward thinking'. Where concern was expressed it was about the geographical location of the hubs, staffing levels and retention of specialist expertise.
23. At present, services currently delivering prevention and early intervention work are based in one of three centres; Banbury, Oxford City and Abingdon and they cover the needs of children young people and families across the whole county on an outreach basis. The new service would see staff based in seven centres (hubs), which would mean a more local and responsive approach resulting in improved local knowledge and coverage. It is not intended that service users will all have to go to the hubs to receive a service. The staff would largely travel to them either at home or at a local children's centre or school or young people's centre etc, as appropriate and as is current practice. The directorate is not proposing to make any reductions to services currently dedicated to providing for children with special educational needs and disabilities, nor reduce the provision for children excluded from schools.
24. Youth work and in particular the relationship between young people and youth workers was seen by young people and parents as a valuable resource. Concerns were raised that the changes would reduce the service and that individual groups would be disproportionately disadvantaged.
25. As part of our proposals, youth work would continue from the hubs and via satellite services and some open access to youth services would continue from those centres. We are in positive discussions with schools, where youth centres are based on their premises, together with a wide range of community based organisations who have expressed an interest in providing youth services supported by the Big Society Fund which we believe will add to coverage across other countywide locations.
26. **Strand 2: To redesign our Education Services in response to national policy changes.** The response to the consultation and ongoing dialogue with schools show that Education Services in Oxfordshire are valued and have been making substantial progress over recent years. The proposals set out in this report would build on best practices and evidence of what works well, would provide improved support targeted to raise attainment for all and to narrow gaps in outcomes for vulnerable children and young people.

27. The consultation outcomes recognise the value of increased flexibility for schools, which allows them to take ownership of the changes. Feedback from schools confirms that they value the input from support services such as SEN and the integration of the Early Years Team into the Education Service is considered a positive change.
28. However, schools have expressed concern with regard to how support would work in practice. In response, three well attended and valued area briefings for headteachers and chairs of governors have taken place over the last two weeks, where developing detail has been shared. This has been welcomed alongside recognition that circumstances continue to change nationally. A common question and answer support document was shared and is available on the county council website and will continue to be updated as further details and questions arise.
29. **Strand 3: To redesign our Children's Social Care Services in response to national policy changes.** The consultation outcomes recognise and appreciate the council's commitment to the protection of front line services. The Early Intervention Teams based in the hubs and the work of the Children's Centres is seen as strengths, as is the cross-directorate approach to improving access to services. Improved joined up working based nearer to schools is also considered to be helpful.
30. The proposals continue the delivery of children's social care services within three geographical areas. The proposals are a reconfiguration of the senior management arrangements of the service. The proposed changes will maintain clear accountability, improve spans of control and ensure effective prioritisation of workloads. Staff concerns raised about the delivery of service to children in need and children in care have been responded to through revision of the structure to deliver these services.

Staffing and Financial Implications

31. Staff and trade unions have been informed and consulted on the proposed redesign of services. Trade Unions were given a special briefing and further Q&A session by the Director, Deputy Director and Human Resources. The volume of consultation responses from staff reflects a high level of engagement, with comments being put forward from all areas of the directorate.
32. The implementation of the proposed staffing structure would align with the service redesign and would start with management appointments and cascade down. Partners are broadly in support of the redesign and the directorate would continue to work with partners to improve services across Oxfordshire.
33. The proposals in the staff consultation were to reduce Tier 3 managers from 51 (fte) to 20, Tier 4 reductions proposed from 138 (fte) to 92, Tier 5 1,326 (fte) to 1,167. These figures do not include as yet the proposals for Quality

and Compliance functions, this work is being conducted with SCS currently. As a result of the consultation feedback we are currently considering the final structure and numbers of staff within the Directorate in order to meet the financial and business requirements for the Directorate.

34. The county council's Medium Term Financial Plan 2011/12–2014/15 identifies the need for reductions in spending at Oxfordshire County Council following reductions in grants from central government that are being experienced at all local authorities. The proposed service redesign set out in this report will meet or contribute to making £10.73m of these savings as shown below. These figures are included in the Children, Young People & Families Business Strategy, which was approved by Council on February 15, 2011.

Business Strategy Ref	Description	2010/11 Gross Budget	2011/12 £'000	2012/13 £'000	2013/14 £'000	2014/15 £'000
7.0	New Early Intervention Service replaces a number of previous services	16,042	-2,200	-4,200	-4,200	-4,200
7.7	Early Years & Children's Centres	37,575	-1,500	-3,000	-3,500	-4,000
8.0	Children's Social Care	36,349	-500	-500	-500	-500
6.0	School Improvement	7,939	-318	-680	-798	-1,150
6.2	Equality and Diversity Achievement Service reduced	2,531	-240	-330	-380	-380
6.2	Restructure 16-19 Teams	564	-250	-500	-500	-500
Total Savings		101,000	-5,008	-9,210	-9,878	-10,730

Equality and Inclusion Implications

35. Relevant Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA) had already been completed and as a result of the consultation we have updated them. These examine the areas where the proposed service redesign could have significant impact on equality groups in Oxfordshire and includes mitigation strategies and actions to address any adverse impact.
36. The SCIA set out in Annex 4 takes into account feedback from parents and carers and children with disabilities as well as a broad number of community groups representing different aspects of the community, including dialogue with the county council Social Inclusion Reference Group.
37. The assessment found that the main equality issues related to:
- Access to youth provision for children and families from rural areas and children that have disabilities.
 - Loss of peer support in rural areas for children at risk of being marginalised, children with disabilities, as well as young people developing an understanding of their sexual orientation.

- Managing the impact of reduced specialist services in terms of anticipating the needs of young people and having the capacity to respond to these needs. This relates to children with disability and special educational needs, as well as children from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds. We need to say how these are mitigated.
38. Overall, it is our judgement that the plans aim to promote equality, are a proportionate response to the budget reductions and an action plan is in place to mitigate the above concerns. We will monitor this action plan and review this assessment as part of the implementation project.

Summary

39. The outcomes of the consultation process shows that overall there is a positive response to the proposals. Where concerns have been expressed about their detail, for example how changes will happen and how high quality services will continue; the directorate will respond to these. Transitional arrangements based on the project plan will establish Children's Social Care Services by May 2011 and deliver the Early Intervention Service based on the hubs and the changes to Education Services by September 2011. The directorate plans to implement the changes and monitor and evaluate that through engagement with staff, partners and universities. A staff development strategy is in place and feedback to staff on the consultation took place in early April 2011.

RECOMMENDATION

40. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**
- (a) approve the proposed service redesign and implementation of services for children, young people and families as detailed in this report: and**
 - (b) approve the proposed service redesign for implementation**

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Background Papers:
Directorate Business Strategy (approved by Cabinet and Full Council February 2011)

Annexes:

Annex 1 Service Consultation documents

Annex 2: Service Redesign Pathway & Windscreen

Annex 3: Staff consultation document

Annex 4: Service and Staff Consultation analysis

Annex 5: Service & Community Impact Assessment

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