



**NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING AND  
LOOKED AFTER SERVICE  
IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME  
PROGRAMME INITIATION DOCUMENT**

**16TH NOVEMBER 2009**

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## 1. CONTEXT

- 1.1 Nottinghamshire County Council Children's Social Care and Health (CSCH) Safeguarding services are facing unprecedented challenge. 16th September 2009 the County Council's Cabinet agreed an additional £500,000 budget allocation in 2009/10 to increase staffing to support safeguarding. This acknowledged a lack of capacity in CSCH following the County Council's restructure in 2006 and recognised additional pressures placed on safeguarding services following the baby P case in Haringey and Lord Laming's subsequent report. An additional permanent budget increase to CSCH of £1.7 million per annum has been agreed as part of the County Council's budget for 2010/11. In addition, a further permanent £3.1 million has been agreed for specialist placements for looked after children.
- 1.2 Against this backdrop, the Council had its first annual OFSTED unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements on the 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> October 2009. Whilst this inspection identified one area where the contact, referral and assessment arrangements were delivered satisfactorily in accordance with national guidance, the inspection concluded that "The response to child protection referrals does not meet statutory guidance and does not ensure that children are adequately safeguarded...and is not consistent with guidance in *'Working Together to Safeguard Children'*.
- 1.3 The Cabinet, the Council's Corporate Leadership Team and Elected Members have identified that although some initiatives are already underway to improve our response to safeguarding in Nottinghamshire, a structured Children's Safeguarding and Looked After Service Improvement Programme is required to ensure that excellent safeguarding and looked after services are provided across Nottinghamshire.
- 1.4 This Programme Initiation Document (PID) acts as a baseline document for the Children's Safeguarding and Looked After Service Improvement Programme, outlining the approach to achieving change, the activities included within its scope and a high level plan which summarises identified priorities.
- 1.5 This document has been prepared on the basis of feedback from the Children's Social Care and Health Leadership Team, the Children and Young People Leadership Team, the Corporate Leadership

Team, Cabinet and Elected Members.

- 1.6 This version of the project initiation document takes into account the early work of the programme, the County Council's budget meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2010 and the extraordinary meeting of the Safeguarding Board on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2010.

## **2. CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**

- 2.1 Over a number of years CSCH in Nottinghamshire has consistently performed at 'good' and 'very good' against the majority of national performance indicators. This has been achieved because of the commitment of the workforce as well as some creative approaches developed in response to the increasing challenges and demands placed on children's social care services in recent years.
- 2.2 Prior to the County Council's restructuring in 2006 robust arrangements were in place to support the business needs of children's social care, including quality assurance, policy development, workforce development, and Frameworki support. Some of these arrangements were disrupted following restructuring either because experience and expertise was lost or capacity was reduced to meet savings targets. This has left a vacuum during the past two years which has adversely impacted on some areas of performance. There is no doubt that the national profile surrounding social care post-Haringey has also added to pressure on social care services.
- 2.3 The volume of referrals to CSCH in Nottinghamshire has increased significantly over the past 12 months, ranging from an increase of approximately 30% to as much as 80% in some parts of the county (the average increase across the County is 43%). On the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2010 there were approximately 50% more children subject to a protection plan than at the same date in 2009. There has also been a rise in the number of children looked after by the local authority over the past year. Both of these significant increases in activity have thus far been contained within existing resources placing significant strain on the system, in particular social worker case loads, placement capacity and placement costs. It is not only the volume of work that impacts on performance but the increasing complexity of case work which almost always includes domestic and other forms of violence, drug and/or alcohol abuse, mental health issues and poverty.

### **3 ANNUAL UNANNOUNCED INSPECTION OF CONTACT, REFERRAL AND ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS ON THE 8<sup>TH</sup> & 9<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2009.**

3.1 The functions carried out within CSCH are determined by a statutory and policy framework. Many of the services are regulated through national minimum standards and are therefore inspected on a regular basis. This has in the past applied mainly to the services directly provided to children in care. However, this approach to inspection now applies to child protection and assessment teams through the new Comprehensive Area Assessment inspection framework and in particular the annual unannounced inspections of contact, referral and assessment arrangements. Nottinghamshire's first annual unannounced inspection took place on the 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> October 2009.

3.2 The inspection focused on Reception and Assessment Teams in Ashfield & Mansfield, and Gedling & Rushcliffe districts of the county as well as the Notts Connect service. Notts Connect were inspected as there is a pilot which sees Notts Connect staff take initial contact calls for the Reception and Assessment team in Mansfield/Ashfield

#### **3.3 The inspection concluded that there were strengths as follows:**

"There has been a focused management response and appropriate funding has been approved to secure future recruitment of 12 consultant practitioner child protection posts within reception and assessment teams in the current financial year."

"Social workers and managers at both the sites visited were committed to sustaining and improving the service, despite the challenging circumstances caused by high volumes of work."

"A strategic plan prepared in June 2009, in response to the Laming Review, demonstrates that the council has already recognised a number of the concerns highlighted in the inspection, for instance the need for better performance information for managers and staff and more effective auditing and quality assurance systems."

#### **3.4 Areas identified for development were:**

"Information recorded and passed on to reception and assessment teams by the Notts Connect contact centre, which is being piloted in some areas of the county, is not always accurate or complete. This

results in essential information not being provided promptly and to delays in assessments.

“Some social workers are inappropriately expected to prioritise their workloads and the actions required without adequate management oversight.”

“Thresholds for referral of child protection concerns by other agencies to reception and assessment teams are not consistently applied. As a result, some child protection referrals are not made directly to children’s social care and some children potentially at risk are left without the services they need.”

“In the reception and assessment teams, most social workers, including recently qualified social workers, are carrying high caseloads that include a number of pieces of complex work that they are unable to complete within national guidance and to timescale.”

“Performance management information is not readily available to reception and assessment team managers and information is not used systematically to inform service review and planning.”

“There is no authority-wide system of regular monitoring and auditing of case files by managers.”

“Supervision of social workers is not consistent across all teams, although some good practice was seen.”

### **3.5 Priority areas for action were:**

“The response to child protection referrals does not meet statutory guidance and does not ensure that children are adequately safeguarded. Referrals are sometimes closed prematurely without children being seen.”

“Timescales for the completion of initial and core assessments are poor, with some not undertaken until some months after the referral has been received.”

“Some initial and core assessments seen by inspectors do not demonstrate a clear analysis or evaluation of risk to the welfare and safety of children and some records were incomplete.”

“Section 47 investigations are not always carried out by suitably experienced staff and child protection strategy discussions or assessments do not take place in all relevant circumstances or are

subject to delays. This practice is not consistent with guidance in *'Working Together to Safeguard Children'*.

3.6 Nottinghamshire's safeguarding services will be subject to a full inspection of safeguarding and looked after children's services starting on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2010

#### **4 EARLY WORK TO IMPROVE SAFEGUARDING**

4.1 Prior to the unannounced inspection, CSCH recognised that there was limited overall capacity within child protection services to meet the Council's statutory responsibilities and have the flexibility to respond to increased work loads. In a report to the Corporate Leadership Team in June 2009 the following safeguarding challenges and vulnerabilities were identified:

- A shortfall in skilled and suitably experienced social workers in child protection and children in care teams
- Limited capacity to develop front line staff and first line managers to ensure they are equipped to deliver their statutory responsibilities
- Lack of support for front line staff using Frameworki which is the County Council's electronic social care system
- Unavailability of regular and accurate performance information for social care staff and managers
- Insufficient capacity to carry out quality audits alongside other quality assurance activity and to ensure the learning is taken forward and embedded into practice and policy development in line with national requirements
- Limited availability of targeted and specialist family support services for the most vulnerable children and families particularly those on the edge of child protection and 'in care' services.

4.2 In response to these challenges and vulnerabilities, at its September 2009 meeting Cabinet identified additional resources of £500,000<sup>1</sup> in 2009/2010 to increase capacity within CSCH, and establish a

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<sup>1</sup> At the County Council meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2010 1.7 million pounds of additional investment in Children's Social care was approved along with 3.1 million for special placements (w.e.f. 01/04/2010)

Performance and Policy Development Section. This involves the establishment of a range of new posts as follows:

- 12 senior/consultant practitioner posts to be deployed across child protection services.
- 6 specialist administrative posts
- A Head of Service post for the new Performance and Policy section
- A new Service Manager post in the new Performance and Policy Section
- 4 Frameworki Support Worker Posts

4.3 Since the inspection urgent work has been undertaken to review the issues identified as a priority in the inspection. This has included audits of work in reception and assessment teams and within disability services. Additional support has been diverted to teams identified as having priority need.

4.4 As a result of the post inspection work, the following priority areas have emerged:

- To ensure that national performance indicators are met in respect of initial and core assessments
- To ensure that there is sufficient capacity in Reception and Assessment, Children's Services Teams and Disabled Children's Team to meet the increased demand in these areas
- To ensure appropriately resourced, fit for purpose quality assurance and performance management arrangements.

## **5 LEADERSHIP OF THE CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME**

5.1 The Senior Responsible Owner of the Children's Safeguarding and Looked After Service Improvement Programme is Anthony May, Corporate Director for Children and Young People's Services. Anthony is supported by Helen Ryan, Service Director for CSCH acting as Programme Director. Nick McMullen, Service Head – Service

Improvement Division will act as internal partner to external consultants that have been engaged to support the improvement programme. Project Leads will be identified from within the Children and Young Peoples Services Department to scope and deliver each project within agreed timescales. The Deputy Chief Executive, David Pearson will act as a “critical friend” to the programme.

- 5.2 External support is provided by Ann Goldsmith, children’s social care consultant. Programme management support will be provided by Clive Chambers, lead Officer for Strategic Planning and Commissioning and a Children’s Safeguarding and Looked After Service Improvement Programme Team who will ensure effective planning, delivery and reporting of constituent projects, establishing sound governance and reporting mechanisms.

## SECTION 2: PROGRAMME APPROACH AND SCOPE

### 6 PROGRAMME SCOPE

6.1 The programme will affect all divisions within the Council's Children and Young People's Services Department and have significant impact on the wider County Council and the Nottinghamshire Children's Trust. The programme is based on a model of limited external consultancy support to initiate and facilitate the change while utilising internal drive from service directors and senior managers, to help scope and deliver projects by staff at a range of levels within the organisation. This approach has the advantage of some focused external support while driving change from within and developing and using the talent across divisions to break down silo working.

### 7 PROGRAMME APPROACH

7.1 There are four principal phases to the programme, from the initial set up of projects to post-programme benefits measurement and realisation.



#### 7.2 Phase 1 - Programme Initiation.

The aim of the initiation phase is to launch the programme and establish a controlled approach to identifying, analysing, prioritising and delivering projects. Key activities of this phase will include:

- Developing and obtaining approval of the Programme Initiation Document (PID) from the Corporate Leadership Team, Cabinet and Elected Members
- Developing a stakeholder engagement plan to communicate the vision and impact of the change programme with all staff in Children and Young People's Services, the wider County Council, Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board and the Nottinghamshire Children and Young People's Trust, engaging them in seeing the Safeguarding Improvement Programme as an opportunity for themselves, their organisation and the wider partnerships
- Establishing a standard project approach and methodology to ensure consistent project planning, analysis and reporting style

- Identifying priority projects based on the outcomes of the unannounced inspection and intelligence from other sources such as management information that will have maximum benefit with a view to improving safeguarding services and practice.
- Establishing a communications plan to inform County Council staff of the Safeguarding Improvement Programme and managing potential negative media interest following the publication of the outcome of the unannounced inspection on the 6<sup>th</sup> November 2009.

### **7.3 Phase 2 – Project Development and Project Scoping**

Once a priority area for improvement has been established and a Project Lead identified, the Project Lead will be asked to work up a project plan to present to the Children’s Safeguarding and Looked After Service Improvement Programme Board. A summary project plan will be presented to the Programme Board by the Project Lead, accompanied by the Programme Director or Programme Manager.

- 7.4 Subject to the agreement of the Children’s Safeguarding and Looked After Service Improvement Programme Board, the project will then either go through to implementation, be amended according to the Board’s requirements or closed off at this stage.

### **7.5 Phase 3 – Project Implementation and Reporting**

Once the Safeguarding Improvement Programme Board has given approval, the Project Leads will be responsible for:

- The development of a detailed Project Implementation Plan to include a Communications Plan, Risk Management Plan and Quality Review Plan through work with colleagues, partners and other stakeholders, having regard to appropriate processes, regulations and consultations concerning human resources, finance, procurement, and ways of working.
- Delivery of the Project Implementation Plan with appropriate project reporting, controls and benefits measurement in line with the agreed approach and standards of the Safeguarding Improvement Programme.

### **7.6 Phase 4 – Improvement Priorities Realisation**

Improvement Plans will benchmark positions and identify measures to evaluate and evidence improvement and markers of success along the way.

## 8 PROJECT FOCUS AREAS

- 8.1 Project areas have been identified on the basis of work initiated in June 2009, an evaluation of the revised Ofsted inspection Framework and the findings of the unannounced inspection. Each individual improvement project will be managed by a Project Lead and have its own action plan with clear work streams & timescales; these will be included as appendices to this high level plan as the Safeguarding Improvement Programme develops.
- 8.2 Improvement priorities already identified are listed below with a summary showing project leads and suggested project teams provided as Appendix 1. The improvement priorities fall into one of three broad categories high level priorities, service developments and service reviews.

### High Priority Workstreams,

These are workstreams that focus on the priority areas set out in paragraph 4.3

- Appointment to new posts and the establishment of the new Social Care - Service Improvement section.
- Development & implementation of a performance management framework, to include audit process
- Improve timescales for initial and core assessments

### Service Development

- Safeguarding development activity
- Caseload management system
- Participation programme within CSCH
- Partnership development
- Equality & Diversity

### Service Review

- Social Care Capacity exercise
- Partnership thresholds & pathways, to include Social Care thresholds

- Frameworki, ICS and management information improvement programme
- Review of service provided by Customer Services Centre
- Services for Looked After Children
- Service responsiveness, including complaints
- Induction, workforce & management development
- Safer Recruitment
- Value for Money

## **9 WHAT IS OUT OF THE SCOPE OF THE CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME?**

9.1 Projects that do not deliver direct improvements to safeguarding or looked after services in Nottinghamshire will not be within scope unless a compelling business case can be given for them as an enabler for projects that do contribute to improving safeguarding.

## **10 DEPENDENCIES WITH OTHER PROGRAMMES**

10.1 There are dependencies with the County Council and Children and Young People's Services Improvement Programmes.

10.2 The Nottinghamshire Children and Young Peoples Plan 2009-2011 covers a number of priorities that will be managed through the Safeguarding Improvement Programme in terms of approval and monitoring to ensure consistency of approach.

## **SECTION 3: PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE**

### **11 GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

11.1 Appendix 3 shows the proposed governance structure to ensure that a viable programme of projects are developed, analysed, and approved in a controlled way that fits with the priorities identified for improving Children's Safeguarding Services. The Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board will act as the sponsoring group and will scrutinise the implementation and impact of the programme. To ensure political oversight and connectivity with the NSCB there will be a Children's Safeguarding and Looked After Service Improvement Programme Board consisting of elected members and the NSCB chair.

11.2 The Children's Safeguarding and Looked After Service Improvement Executive Group will be responsible for:

- Establishing a framework to provide direction, scope and oversight of the programme as a whole to ensure that it can meet its objectives
- Providing challenge, and approval of project initiatives, following options appraisal, cost/benefit analysis and an assessment of risk for each project
- Performance management at the delivery stage of projects, holding Project Leads and operational managers accountable for the accurate reporting of progress

### **12 REPORTING AND PROGRAMME CONTROLS**

12.1 The Children's Safeguarding and Looked After Service Improvement Programme Team will provide a planning, coordinating and reporting function to ensure that all projects are properly scoped; business cases are prepared with rigour and submitted in a consistent way to the Programme Board. Once in delivery phase the Programme Team will ensure the establishment of monitoring systems for measuring and reporting progress. This will include update reports to the NSCB.

### **13 KEY PROGRAMME ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

13.1 The table below summarises the key roles and responsibilities within the programme structure:

Role	Key responsibilities
<b>Programme Board</b>	The Children's Safeguarding and Looked After Service Improvement Programme Board will ensure appropriate governance and approval of the programme and constituent projects,:
<b>Executive Group</b>	<p>The Executive Group will provide senior officer engagement across the Trust to oversee the management and help steer the delivery of the individual project workstreams, This will include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing challenge to the projects submitted for approval to ensure that projects are achievable and will deliver expected benefits</li> <li>• Ensuring the programme is effectively resourced and managed</li> <li>• Providing updates to the sponsoring group</li> <li>• Ensuring the Programme remains within its budget</li> <li>• Addressing identified barriers to implementing the programme</li> </ul>
<b>Senior Responsible Owner</b>	The Senior Responsible Owner is Anthony May with overall internal sponsorship of the programme and reporting to the sponsoring group. Accountability to the Chief Executive of Nottinghamshire County Council will be delivered through the line management arrangements of the Senior Responsible Owner
<b>Programme Director</b>	The Programme Director Helen Ryan is responsible for overall delivery of the programme, analysing and recommending options for safeguarding improvements, presenting progress reports to the Programme Board and directing the internal and external resources towards achieving the objectives. Helen will be supported by the Service Head – Service Improvement, Nick McMullen
<b>Programme Manager</b>	<p>The Programme Manager, Clive Chambers, will manage the programme's planning, delivery and reporting, coordinating internal and external resources to manage individual projects and ensuring the Programme Board is appropriately informed to make decisions.</p> <p>The Programme Manager, through the Programme Team will initially vet all project plans prior to submission to the Programme Board. It will facilitate the consistent use of project methodology by the Project Leads, and ensure reporting up to Programme Board during the planning and</p>

Role	Key responsibilities
	delivery phases.
<b>Project Leads</b>	<p>The Project Leads will undertake the day to day work to ensure specific, agreed projects are effectively scoped, safeguarding improvements are identified against robust data and that a range of options are examined. They will work up Business Cases and project plans for initial vetting by the Programme Team and subsequent presentation to the Programme Board.</p> <p>Project Leads will report to the Programme Manager on a weekly basis.</p>
<b>Programme Team</b>	<p>The Programme Team will be comprised of The Programme Directors, the Programme Manager, a Programme Officer and a Programme Administrator. The Programme team are responsible for the administration and coordination of the programme</p>

## **SECTION 4: MEASUREMENT OF PROGRAMME BENEFITS**

### **14 BASELINE ASSESSMENT**

14.1 All Project Leads will work with a data analyst to identify the metrics that children's safeguarding improvements can be measured against, and the ongoing mechanism for checking progress.

### **15 MEASURING THE BENEFITS**

15.1 Each project will clearly identify children's safeguarding and looked after improvements in terms of outcomes for children and young people. Other measures of benefit will include improved performance, improved management information, clarity regarding roles and responsibilities, audit, caseload allocation, induction, recruitment, retention and improved morale and how these will be realised and over what timescale. These will take into account any costs in making these improvements.

### **16 MARKERS OF SUCCESS**

16.1 Interim measures will be established for each project to evaluate progress and ensure that key milestones can be assessed on a regular basis, so that projects can be adjusted during delivery stage according to success. Metrics that support this evaluation will be quantitative & qualitative. These will be linked to appropriate County Council and Children's Trust performance measurements and balanced scorecards to align project outcomes with the corporate vision and departmental objectives.

### **17 PROGRAMME COMPLETION**

17.1 It is anticipated that the programme will operate for a 12-month period although the final completion date may be subject to further consideration. The criteria for agreeing that the programme has been completed will be an assessment that the improvements engendered by the programme have become sufficiently embedded to ensure that they will be maintained in the absence of the programme management structure. The Sponsoring group, based on a recommendation from the programme board, will make this decision. The programme manager will produce a final report setting out progress, highlighting learning from projects and identifying further areas for activity to assist with evaluating this matter

## **SECTION 5: PROGRAMME PLAN**

### **18 HIGH LEVEL PROGRAMME PLAN**

18.1 A high level programme plan which sets out identified improvement priorities is shown in Appendix 1. This will be developed into a detailed Programme schedule with key deliverables and milestones as individual projects are scoped and approved.

### **19 PROGRAMME APPROVAL AND FUNDING**

19.1 There are two sources of funding for the programme:

- The additional £500,000 agreed by Cabinet in September 2009
- A Safeguarding Improvement Programme reserve of £750,000 which will be carried forward between the 2009/10 and 2010/11 financial years.

Although additional funding has been made available rigorous financial disciplines will be applied to ensure that improvements are delivered in a cost effective manner. The budget will be closely monitored by the Children's Safeguarding and Looked After Service Improvement Programme Team and will be reported to the programme board on a monthly basis. The programme will be completed within this financial year. This budget is required for the commencement of the programme.

### **20 RISK REGISTER AND ISSUES LOG**

20.1 A register and approach to managing risks associated with the programme will be developed with key risks and issues that will be reported to the Programme Board on a monthly basis.

## **SECTION 6: RELATED DOCUMENTS**

### **21 CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE**

21.1 Terms of reference will outline the remit and responsibilities and the membership of the Children's Safeguarding and Looked After Service Improvement Programme Board and are in the process of being drawn up in preparation for the first meeting of the Board.

### **22 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

22.1 A communications lead has been identified for the Children's Safeguarding and Looked After Service Improvement Programme and a communications plan has been developed.

### **23 JOINT AREA REVIEW IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

23.1 The JAR improvement plan sets out the actions that have been taken in response to improvements identified as being required during the course of the JAR inspection which took place in May 2008. A number of issues are pertinent to this programme.

### **24 Statistical Information**

24.1 The Children's trust is required to report on a range of performance measures. This programme sets out measures which will improve current performance in relation to these.

## Section 7 APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 – HIGH LEVEL PLAN OF IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

#### High Priority workstreams

##### **1. Appointment to new posts and the establishment of the new Social Care – Service Improvement section**

The need to establish a performance and policy development section within CSCH and the identification of several new posts within CSCH was identified in June 2009 when additional budget was released by cabinet. The establishment of this section, and recruitment to these posts, is a clear priority.

Project Lead: Nick McMullen

Project Team: Bev Cordon, Ty Yousaf, Carolann Cairns (Business Manager)

##### **2. Development & implementation of a performance management framework, to include audit processes**

Urgently establish and implement a performance management framework across all CSCH teams. Ensuring that Social Workers, Team Managers, Service Managers, Heads of Service, Service Director, Corporate Director, Chief Executive and Elected Members are aware of their individual and collective responsibilities. All fully understand their role in improving performance. A Manager Workshop programme on introduction to performance management and leadership will be delivered.

This will include the following actions:

Implement a system to ensure that Team Managers, Service Managers and Heads of Service all regularly quality audit an agreed number of case files. Develop an effective feedback loop to ensure that messages from case file audit are used to improve performance. The system should report at frequencies agreed with the NSCB be multi-agency.

Ensure that within the case file quality audit there are processes for Service Managers to monitor the quality of Team Manager audit, Heads of Service to monitor Service Manager audit & Service Director to monitor quality of Head of Service audit. The system should include a process for peer and cross-locality auditing to enable good practice to be more readily shared and to promote consistency of response across the division.

Ensure managers undertake minimum quarterly staff supervision audit.

All staff EPDRs to include reference to Children and Young People Plan,

improvement and divisional priorities.

Independent Reviewing Officers and Child Protection Conference Chairs to provide regular reports to managers regarding the quality and timeliness of reports, care plans and child protection plans.

Improved performance should be measured both in terms of work undertaken with individual children and young people and impact on wider service planning and evaluation. There should be an explicit mechanism for identifying and quality assuring:

- Thematic issues, either across the whole division or within specific teams
- Dissemination of good practice
- The link between practice and lessons from serious case reviews and complaints
- Service developments resulting from the learning from audit

Project Lead: Nick McMullen

Project Team: Rachel Coombs, Ty Yousaf (Service Manager – Social Care), Deborah Walters, (external consultant) Bev Cordon (Service Manager – human Resources) Ty Yousaf (service Manager – Service Improvement) Tracy Murty (Service Manager – Social Care),

### **3. Improve timescales for initial and core assessments**

This workstream will initially focus on the work of Social Care Reception and Assessment teams. It will ensure that the newly established Advanced Practitioner posts are deployed to maximise their impact on timescales. It will, ensure consistent use of weekly performance reports and identify other actions needed to support team managers and social workers to improve performance in this area.

Project Lead: Steve Edwards

Project Team: Ann Goldsmith, Mike Lee (Service Head – Performance Review), Devon Allen (Service Manager), Dianna Bentley (Team Manager)

### **Service Development**

#### **4. Safeguarding Developmental Work**

This Workstream is an abridged version of the Keeping Children Safe Workstream. It was amended to ensure that quality assurance measures are all captured in the same workstream. The activity which remains focuses on

developmental work in the following areas

- Arrangements in place to support children missing from home
- Response to domestic abuse
- Private fostering.

Project Lead: Julian Cunningham (Head of Service)

Project team; Rachel Coombs (Service Head – Social Care), Debora Walters (External Consultant), Nick McMullen (Service Head - Social Care), Dawn Godfrey (Service Manager – Social Care) Ann Goldsmith (External Consultant)

## **5. Caseload management system**

Need to ensure that managers actively manage and prioritise social workers' caseloads to ensure that they reflect priorities and levels of experience. Also need to ensure that there is a clear escalation process through to the Service Director where capacity issues impact on effective practice.

An urgent analysis of current social work caseloads is underway; a caseload management system is currently being piloted. Work is ongoing to address issues within the Frameworki system to improve accuracy of management information.

Project Lead: Nick McMullen

Project Team: Simon Hollis (Service Manager – Social Care), Rachel Coombs

## **6. Participation programme within CSCH**

Develop a participation strategy within CSCH, bringing together participation work currently happening, identifying gaps and areas for further development.

Consult young people participation team. Review the "Tell us" survey to identify what this indicates about the issues which lead children and young people to feel unsafe

Review effectiveness of the response to bullying.

Review & develop policy in residential care units on bullying.

Review the handbook for looked after children. What can they expect & how to complain

Project Lead: Rachel Coombs

Project Team: Lucy Peel (Children and Young People's Participation Development Officer), Sue Shaw (Co-ordinator – Youth Services)

## **7. Partnership development**

Undertake Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) self-review. Expand LSCB performance data, to include partner performance management information. Implement the Memorandum of Understanding between the NSCB and Children's Trust.

Review Serious Case Review action plans to check all actions taken check learning shared with staff. Identify any other action needed to illustrate impact.

Project Lead: Pam Rosseter (Head of Service – Social Care)

Suggested Project Team: Joe Foley (NSCB Manager), Chris Few

## **8. Equality & Diversity**

Ensure that the views of children and young people inform:

- Individual planning around the services received
- Evaluation of those services
- Future planning of services

Project Lead: Sarah Lee (Head of Ethnicity, Culture and Achievement Service)

Project Team: Angela Duffus Palmer (Commissioning Officer) Lucy Peel

## **Service Review**

## **9. Social Care Capacity exercise**

To ensure we have sufficient capacity and are providing an equitable service to all children in need in Nottinghamshire.

- Ensure resources within CSCH are distributed appropriately
- To explore our safeguarding resources as compared to resources in our nearest statistical neighbour Local Authorities

Project Lead: Mike Lee

Project team: Colin Shepherd (Principle Officer – Data Analysis), Bev Cameron, Geoff Hamilton (Strategic Manager of Partnership Intelligence), Nick McMullen

## **10. Partnership thresholds & pathways , to include social care thresholds**

Ensure that all staff working with children young people & families in Nottinghamshire are clear about when a referral to CSCH reception and

assessment teams is necessary and understand pathways for all services to support vulnerable children and young people including clear guidance on use of the Common Assessment Framework.

This will incorporate work that is linked to a review of social care thresholds

Lead: Chris Jones (Head of Service – Integrated Services) : Nick McMullen

Suggested Project Team, Ty Yousaf, Deborah Walters

### **11. Frameworki, ICS and management information improvement programme**

To ensure that the Frameworki IT system and the ICS system are fit for purpose, easy to use and able to deliver up-to date and accurate management information, distributed regularly to the right people on time.

Project Lead: Mike Lee (Head of Performance Review, Data and Communications – Children and young People’s Services)

Project Team: ICS Steering Group, Bev Cameron (Service Manager – Data Management)

### **12. Review of service provided by Notts Connect**

A full review of the service provided by Notts Connect in taking and initially processing new referrals for Children’s Social Care should be undertaken as a matter of urgency

Project Lead: Julian Cunningham

Suggested Project Team: Sarah Thurlby (Head of Employee Services Centre), Rebecca Hadju (Development Officer – Notts Connect)

### **13. Services for Looked After Children**

Review current practice to ensure that

- Regular unannounced visits to children in placement take place.
- Children looked after reviews are held within timescales.
- Care leavers have an up to date pathway plan that meets requirements.
- Care leavers are in suitable accommodation and in employment education or training.
- Kinship care is used appropriately as a permanence option
- Looked after children are know how to access advocacy services

- Personal Education Plans are in place
- Looked after children have regular health checks
- Care planning is robust and timely
- Review and update where necessary the policy framework for looked after children's services

Project lead: Rachel Coombs

Project Team: Ty Yousaf, Michele McIntosh (Communications Manager), Jayne Austin (Service Manager – Social Care), Meg Staples (Service Manager – Social Care), Carol Angharad

#### **14. Service responsiveness, including complaints**

Undertake review of actions taken in response to complaints learning shared through summary of complaint themes. Action recorded in response to issues raised.

Project Lead: Les Cowling (Service Head – Strategic Planning and Commissioning)

Project Team: Mary-lou Hemsley, Viv Veasey (Investigations Officer), Nick McMullen.

#### **14. Induction, workforce & management development**

Review of workforce development plan to ensure:

- Recruitment and retention of experienced and skilled staff in child protection teams
- A sufficiently flexible workforce to ensure that skill and experience is distributed more equitably across the whole division
- Development of newly qualified staff and those staff whose practice requires additional input in order to bring about improvements
- The induction of new social workers is strengthened to ensure they are provided with skills and knowledge and as such is focussed on required outcomes in terms of demonstrable standards of performance from new staff
- A first line manager development programme, with a similar focus to that for new social workers, is implemented.
- Training and development is commissioned, based on local intelligence and responsive to staff development needs as identified through the quality assurance processes including serious case reviews and individual

Employee Performance & Development Reviews (EPDRs) and can be delivered locally and flexibly.

Project lead: Nick McMullen

Project Team: Helen Richardson (Workforce Development Manager), Sue Winton (Workforce Development Manager – Schools), Ty Yousaf, Learning and Development representative, Deborah Waters ( external consultant)

## **16. Safer Recruitment**

Review current activity led by the Safer Working Practice group to ensure safer recruitment practice is maintained and developed.

Project Leads: Bev Cordon. Schools Lynn Parkes

Project Team: Jill Turner (Safer Working Practice Project Manager), Gill Elder (Service Head – HR), Clive Chambers

## **17. Value for Money**

Revisit and refine placement management strategy, with support from the Commissioning Support Programme, to ensure that external placements are commissioned and monitored efficiently and effectively.

Project Lead: Les Cowling

Project Team: Les Cowling, Norman Chesman (Placement Manager), Joe Sardone (Contracts Officer)

## **APPENDIX 2 – TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Improvement Programme Board**

The board will be comprised of Senior Managers and Council members who are members of the Safeguarding Children Forum. In addition there will be a co-opted member of the Corporate Parenting Panel and the chair of the NSCB.

## **Remit**

- Providing challenge to the projects submitted for approval to ensure that projects are achievable and will deliver expected benefits
- Ensuring the programme is effectively resourced and managed
- Providing updates to the sponsoring group of members and senior managers
- Ensuring the Programme remains within its budget

## **Safeguarding and Looked After Improvement Programme Executive Group**

### **Purpose**

To provide strategic and operational management and support to the Safeguarding and Looked After Improvement Programme in Nottinghamshire;

To support the operational progress and implementation of the programme, reviewing individual workstreams as described in the Project Initiation Document (PID) and assisting in providing appropriate solutions.

### **Objectives**

1. The Executive Group will provide senior officer engagement across the Trust to oversee the management and help steer the delivery of the individual project workstreams.
2. The Executive Group will provide the link between the Project Board and the Project Team involved with the individual workstreams. In this role, the Executive Group will be responsible for monitoring the progress of and supporting the delivery of the project's workstreams.
3. The Executive Group will carry out the following functions:
  - Ensure that the key milestones as described in the PID are kept in focus at all stages of the planning and delivery of the Programme, and are not compromised, by providing on-going support, review and challenge to the Senior Responsible Owner, Programme Director and the Programme Team;
  - Ensure that the workstreams are adequately resourced and supported by all partners at all times to deliver the Programme;
  - Ensure continuing buy-in of all key partner agencies to the programme;

- Participate in the ongoing review and development of the Project Initiation Document and Programme Plan;
- Participate in making recommendations to Project Board on the establishment and scope of services to safeguard children and support those children looked after by the local authority;
- Monitor any operational issues that may impact on the delivery to time / cost / quality of the Programme and the steps being taken mitigate their impact.
- Monitor key risks – both strategic and minor – that may impact on the delivery of the Programme.

**APPENDIX 3 – CHILDREN’S SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME  
GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

