
Meeting of the Cabinet – 9th September 2009

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Realignment of Services

Purpose of Report

1. To seek Cabinet's approval for the realignment of services within the Directorate of Children's Service – with a planned and phased 8 months approach to review the delivery of services and develop changes that will contribute to efficiency savings and transformation of our service provision in line with performance targets and external reviews
2. The initial phase will involve a realignment of Assistant Director responsibilities – forming four key divisions as detailed below

Background

3. Following the appointment of a new Director of Children's Services, a review of the Directorate structure in line with the strategic objectives of the Local Authority; external reviews, two significant forthcoming duties for the Council, and preparation for the new unannounced child protection and announced safeguarding inspections has been undertaken. In order to move to 'outstanding' as a Children Services there is a need to build upon the present strengths in the Directorate. Furthermore the Council is expected to make a 'readiness to deliver' submission for Building Schools for the Future in December this year. Work is already underway to effect the transfer of 14-19 commissioning and provision from the Learning and Skills Council to the Council from April 2010. The Directorate Policy Team have considered options available and determined that the new duties on the Council will be managed within revised portfolios of the existing four Assistant Director posts.
4. The proposed changes of divisional responsibilities would lead the Directorate over the next year to develop practise and realign services to promote Leadership, ensure Transformation, and further Partnership working in the context of budget pressures and creating further efficiencies. Efficiencies will be made during this realignment phase to absorb the new duties on the Council. Each division would have a span of children and young people universal, targeted, and acute service provision, with responsibilities for both maintenance and development activity. Each division would be committed to continuous improvement and learning in order to deliver outstanding outcomes for all children and young people.

5. The proposed new structure will be as follows:

1. Children and Families

This division is largely made up from what were the responsibilities within the Children's Specialist Services Division, although without "Safeguarding" and "Inclusion". Additionally it will include "Early Years" from the old Early Years, Youth & Education Services Division.

Key Imperative: Delivering the government priorities for child protection and integrated early intervention and prevention and improve educational outcomes for the under 5's.

Role Specific

- To take lead responsibility for the leadership and management, deployment, and review of those teams and services that constitute the Children and Families Division
- To ensure the effective integration and collaboration of services which have been drawn together to form the Children and Families Division.
- Initiate, develop and manage the Local Authority's strategic planning in relation to Early Years, looked after children (LAC), children in need & child protection, children with disabilities, the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). In conjunction with the Assistant Director Education, Play, and Learning, ensure outstanding educational outcomes for early years. In conjunction with the Assistant Director Transforming Futures, ensure the delivery the 2025 vision (0-19).

2. Education, Play and Learning

This division is largely made up from what were previously the responsibilities within the Early Years, Youth & Education Services Division. As detailed above the "Early Years" section has come out of this division but Education Inclusion comes into it. The "Youth" section also comes out and moves into Transforming Futures Division.

Key imperative: Delivering government expectations on quality provision (ensuring there are no vulnerable schools) and narrowing the achievement gap (improving educational outcomes and aspirations).

Role Specific

- To take lead responsibility for the leadership and management, deployment, and review of those teams and services that constitutes the Education, Play, and Learning Division.
- To ensure the effective integration and collaboration of services which have been drawn together to form the Education, Play and Learning Division.
- Initiate, develop and manage the Local Authority's strategic planning in relation to school improvement and inclusion, play provision, equality and diversity for children and young people services and related activity and initiatives. In conjunction with the Assistant Director Children and Families,

ensure the Virtual School delivers outstanding outcomes for all Looked after Children. In conjunction with the Assistant Director Transforming Futures, ensure the effective quality assurance of 14 – 19 education and delivering the 2025 vision (0-19).

3. Quality and Improvement

This division is largely made up from what were previously the responsibilities within the Performance & Partnership division, with the additional responsibility for the “Safeguarding” section from Children’s Specialist Services and Business Services / Resources, which includes services from what was the Resources Division.

Key Imperative: Delivering government key priorities for a Children’s Trust and Safeguarding Board (with a clear emphasis on policy and performance) and lead the work of the Directorate for external inspection and review.

Role Specific

- To take lead responsibility for the leadership and management, deployment, and review of those teams and services that constitute the Quality and Improvement Division
- To ensure the effective integration and collaboration of services which have been drawn together to form the Quality and Improvement Division.
- Initiate, develop and manage the Local Authority’s strategic planning in relation to: policy and performance management (including research and assessment and equality & diversity) across Children Services, ensuring management and input into external inspections of Children Services and the Council; partnership development and operation including statutory requirements for the Children’s Trust and the Safeguarding Board; Business service management; Safeguarding quality and review.
- In conjunction with all Assistant Directors, ensure successful outcomes in all external inspection and review. In conjunction with the Assistant Director Children and Families, ensure appropriate safeguarding quality and review. In conjunction with the Assistant Director Transforming Futures, ensure the delivery the 2025 vision (0-19).

4. Transforming Futures (Strategic Planning)

This is a new division and includes the “Youth” section from Early Years, Youth & Education Services, and E-services from what was the Resources and Policy and Performance Divisions.

Key Imperative: Developing and delivering ‘Vision 2025’ (0-19) including the new government priorities Building Schools for the Future / Primary Capital Programme and the 14-19 Machinery of Government.

- To take lead responsibility for the leadership and management, deployment, and review of those teams and services that constitute the Transforming Futures Division
 - To ensure the effective integration and collaboration of services which have been drawn together to form the Transforming Futures Division.
 - Initiate, develop and manage the Local Authority's strategic planning in relation to: Cabinet and Select Committee, Children's and School Workforce Development; E-services – including Dudley Grid for Learning (DGfL); integrated 14-19 youth provision (including targeted youth provision, Youth Offending Team, 16+ team, Connexions and Machinery of Government (MOG) commissioning working with Colleges, Schools, Workplace and Apprenticeship providers and the voluntary sector. Building Schools for the Future (including Primary Capital Programme), township / locality / place planning and development.
 - In conjunction with the Assistant Directors for Children and Families and Education, Play, and Learning ensure a coherent and integrated provision for all 14-19 year olds. In conjunction with the Assistant Directors for Children and Families, Education, Play and Learning and Quality and Improvement plan and lead the delivery the of 2025 vision (0-19).
6. Currently, the Directorate has five Assistant Directors – two of which are Interim posts. The two interim posts will end with the two interims returning to their substantive posts. This is not a reflection on the ability of the interim post holders, but to ensure a fair and open recruitment process.
 7. The Education, Play, and Learning Division will require the recruitment of an Assistant Director.
 8. Once the senior management structure is in place the Assistant Directors will work with their management teams to progress with the alignment of services within the new divisions over the following eight months. A professional development and support programme has been developed to assist Assistant Directors and Senior Mangers within Children's Services with the management of change required over the coming months.
 9. Any implications on current headcount, resources, efficiencies, and/or budgets will be brought back to Cabinet as and when appropriate.

Finance

10. The 2009/10 Directorate of Children's Services budget provides for the appointment of four assistant directors at a spot point of £71,795, gross pay including estimated pay award plus on costs. The initial phase of realignment into four key divisions is therefore achievable within the budget available. Efficiencies will be made during this realignment phase to absorb the significant forthcoming duties in respect of Building Schools for the Future, new inspection requirements, and the transfer of post 16 provision from the

Learning and Skills Council, which will be managed within the revised portfolios of the existing four Assistant Director posts.

The second phase of the realignment, to be achieved over the next 8 months, will review and realign the delivery of services with the intention of realising efficiency savings for the Directorate overall.

Law

11. The main provisions relating to the Council's Children's Services function are contained in the Education and Children Acts."
12. Section 111 of the Local Government Act, 1972 enables the Council to do anything, which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of its statutory functions.
13. Section 112 of the 1972 Act requires the Council to appoint such officers as it considers necessary, and on such terms and conditions as it thinks fit, to enable its various statutory functions to be discharged.

Equality Impact

14. The proposals in this report are consistent with the Council's Equality & Diversity Policy.

Recommendation

15. That the Cabinet agree to:
 - The proposed realignment of services under the divisional structure outlined above
 - The substantive appointment of an Assistant Director to replace the current interim arrangement



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Mark Wyatt
Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer: Mark Wyatt, Director of Children's Services
Telephone: 01384 814200
Email: mark.wyatt@dudley.gov.uk

List of Background Papers