

Organisational Review of Children and Families

The City of Edinburgh Council

21 February 2008

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 The new Director of Children and Families has reviewed the management structures within Children and Families in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the service. This report outlines the Director's proposals which will be subject to wide consultation with staff and key stakeholders.

2 Background

- 2.1 Children and Families was established in 2005 when Education and Social Work services were brought together into a single service. There was a subsequent reorganisation in April 2007. There are a number of significant strengths of current arrangements which will need to be maintained in any new structure:

- there is widespread support for the integration of education and children's social care into one service which addresses children's needs in a holistic way;
- early years services, education services and community learning and development have all received positive external inspection feedback over recent years;
- staff report the significant improvements which have been made in children's social work services over recent years and there are strengths in aspects of field work services, residential and other services;
- the service has developed strong partnership arrangements with other agencies, including the voluntary sector and there is huge potential for the further development of integrated joint agency services for children and families;
- good progress has been made in developing neighbourhood teams and in local coordination, for example, the establishment of tasking and coordination groups with Services for Communities and the Police.

- 2.2 However, there are also a number of issues which need to be addressed:

- the current management structure is expensive with more managers than in other similar sized authorities;
- there is a lack of clear accountability for key city-wide strategic functions within the authority and a number of managers have overlapping or similar responsibilities. This results in key managers not feeling empowered to make decisions and a confusion about roles and responsibilities;

- key leaders, such as head teachers, report that they feel over-managed and distant from the Director and strategic decision-making;
- the recent Child Protection Inspection report identified significant weaknesses in child protection arrangements including lack of consistency of practice across the city and difficulties accessing services and provision;
- the service faces significant financial pressure requiring £18m savings to be found in 2008/9. There is a £2.5m shortfall in funding to meet current staffing levels.

3 Proposed Changes

Key Messages/Principles

- 3.1 A new management structure for Children and Families is proposed for consultation. This will address the issues identified, improve service delivery and reduce management costs.
- 3.2 The new structure will help to:
- clarify roles, responsibilities and accountabilities;
 - improve strategic leadership and capacity;
 - strengthen devolved management and empower staff at all levels;
 - reduce bureaucracy and micro management;
 - strengthen support to schools at the heart of their communities;
 - strengthen support to vulnerable children and families, including a particular focus on strengthening children's social work services;
 - provide a balance of central direction and local delivery;
 - coordinate and strengthen our neighbourhood arrangements;
 - create more integrated services on the ground for children, families and schools building on the team around the child model;
 - ensure that the service operates on a sustainable financial basis.

4 Aims

- 4.1 The Director is in the process of developing with partners, a new Children and Young People's Plan for Edinburgh, which sets out the key outcomes to be achieved for children and young people in Edinburgh over the next three years and the strategies for achieving these.
- 4.2 Key objectives include:
- ensuring that all children have the best start in life;
 - ensuring that all children are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens;
 - strengthening support for children at risk;

- ensuring that all children live healthy and active lifestyles;
- ensuring that children are protected from harm or fear of harm;
- reducing inequalities.

4.3 Achieving these objectives will require a focus on:

- strengthening support to schools so that they are able to meet the needs of all their pupils;
- strengthening support for families to enable them to meet the needs of their children, thereby reducing the number of children who need to be looked after or in need of protection.

4.4 The new structure will support the development of these objectives.

5 New Structure

5.1 The new structure proposes four heads of service with clear accountabilities as follows:

Head of Schools and Community Services (schools, early years, community learning).

Head of Services for Vulnerable Children (children's social work, children with additional support needs, youth justice).

Head of Resources (finance, human resources, communications, ICT, asset planning, facilities management).

Head of Planning, Performance and Quality.

6. Consultation

6.1 There will be extensive consultation with staff and stakeholders on the proposed changes. A detailed paper has been shared with senior managers and will be made available to all staff over the next few days. All feedback will be taken into account in finalising the proposals.

7 Financial Implications

7.1 The Service faces significant financial pressures. The organisational review is intended to reduce staff costs across the department by £2m in a full year. Consultation on the proposed changes has commenced and the outcomes will be reported to the Education, Children and Families Committee on 15 April. Implementation of the changes will be complete by the end of June and therefore savings in 2008-09 will be £1.5m

8 Recommendation

8.1 Council is asked to:

- i) note the Director's intention to consult on proposed organisational changes which will achieve full year staff savings of £2m and to request a further report to the Education, Children and Families Committee on 15 April 2008.

- ii) approve delegated authority to the Director, in conjunction with the Director of Corporate Services, to finalise the Heads of Service structure by the end of March



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Appendices

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Wards affected

**Background
Papers**