

ACTION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO THE INSPECTION OF TORBAY COUNCIL

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

BY THE COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL CARE IMPROVEMENT

JANUARY 2005

CSCI Inspection of Children's Services – Improvement Action Plan

Recommendations – National Priorities and Strategic Objectives							
Rec No	Recommendation	Service Area	Action	Progress/Outcome/Measure	Time Scale	Resources <i>(additional revenue in bold)</i>	Lead Person
2.1	Senior Managers and Councillors should ensure that there is sufficient planning and development capacity to ensure operational managers are not diverted from key operational tasks.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit to Policy and Planning Co-ordinator and Project Officer role within new Children's Services structure. Change Fund Grant to be used to enhance planning and development capacity by buying in sessional work. Expansion of Child Protection Unit to develop safeguarding strategies using Safeguarding Grant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy and Service Development Co-ordinator in post by May 2005. Organisation and Policy Services Section set up within Children's Services. Expansion of Child Protection Unit to deliver Safeguarding developments. 	June 2005 April 2005 May 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change Fund Grant £41k. 	TC MD
2.2	Senior Managers and Councillors should ensure that joint commissioning is properly developed with the necessary capacity and expertise to support it.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of commissioning arrangements within Children's Services Directorate and with PCT. Develop and implement joint commissioning strategy in partnership with PCT for all complex and independent sector placements. Finance and Resources task group to be set up to pull together information required for pooled resources (including budgets) and joint commissioning. To develop templates and mechanisms for joint reporting. To create single cost centres where appropriate within Children's Services Directorate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CFC Finance and Resources Task Group set up and Action Plan being developed. Draft Joint Agency Agreement for out of authority/independent sector placements protocol to stakeholders for consultation. Children's Partnership Executive to agree pooled budget and joint commissioning arrangements 	April 2005 July 2005 July 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officer time 	VC/SG/ MR
2.3	Senior Managers should conclude the work started on the consultation and completion of a detailed children's services integration plan by September 2005.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Integration Project Plan to create Children's Services by April 2005. Implement Change for Children Project Plan: (Children's Partnership Executive, Integration Steering Group, Children and Young Peoples Planning Group, Finance and Resource Task Group, Systems Task Group, Performance and Management Information Task Group, Training and Professional Development Task Group, Participation Task Group, Workforce Remodelling Task Group, Communications Task Group). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial Project Plan implemented – Children's Services Directorate functional from 1st April 2005 All Task Groups set up and Action Plans Developed. 	1 st phase completed May 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Integration Project Plan 	TS See Various Task Group Leads
2.4	Senior Managers and Councillors should develop a clearly planned and structured cross-	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation Task Group work plan - identifying key stakeholders including children, young people and families to participate in the development of integrated service and children and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop clear participation strategy for children's services. To monitor participation of children, young people and parents and carers within service 	Oct 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officer time within Task Group, Children's Fund 	MD

	departmental/agency participation strategy for children and families.		<p>young peoples plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify mechanisms (e.g. QNA Bulletin, Newsletter, Face to Face, Streaming Video, Internet, Intranet) and frequency of communication with stakeholder. To secure effective participation of consultation with all service users. 	development.		Initiative.	
2.5	The Area Child Protection Committee/Local Children's Safeguarding Board should develop a clear sense of purpose and direction over joint accountability.	ACPC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACPC Workshop – moving to local Safeguarding Children's Board in Torbay – 19th April 2005. Agree formal structure for LSCB to fit into the wider integrated Children's Trust Board. Identify objectives/issues which may be better met regionally rather than locally. Consider strengths and weaknesses of existing ACPC to ensure LSCB is fully effective. Develop and implement LSCB Action Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop completed. Consultation undertaken with local partners and regional advisers. Action plan being developed 	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Various using Safeguarding Children's Grant 	VC/JE
					Completed		MD
					June 2005		VC
					June 2005		VC
					April2006		MD
2.6	Senior Managers should swiftly address the unreported weaknesses in safeguarding compliance identified in the inspection findings of the 2004 Victoria Climbié Audit return.	Children in Need/ Permanency Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team Training Days arranged to address issues raised within initial feedback from CSCI. Operations Managers to reinforce consistent practice with Service Managers and front line staff. Address specific issues as raised in detailed letter to Chief Exec. Training in the Use of Evidence Based Assessment Tools Commissioned by DH and DFES 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Training consultation meetings arranged. Consistent practice to be assisted by implementation of PARIS system. Tools/training purchased. 	July 2005	Officer time	VC
					Sept. 2005	Within PARIS budget	VC
					July 2005	£5k	VC

Effectiveness of Service Delivery and Outcomes

	Recommendation	Service Area	Action	Progress/Outcome/Measure	Time Scale	Resources (additional revenue in bold)	Lead Person
2.7	Senior Managers should consider extending the capacity of the Family Group Conference Service as a means of diverting more children from care.	Children in Need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of current service provided. Expand Family Group Conferencing Project to all children within Children in Need and Permanency Planning Service. Increase the number of sessional FGC Co-ordinators from 6 to 10 promote stronger use of FGC in Children in Need and Permanency Planning Services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial review of service undertaken by Project Manager. Expansion of service from 1 Co-ordinator to Project Manager and 6 sessional Co-ordinators completed Oct 2004. Referral monitoring of FGC now under way and reporting issues/themes to CSMT. Further expansion to be considered 	<p>March 2005</p> <p>Sept 2005</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £62k 	VC
2.8	Senior Managers should quickly resolve the lack of capacity for the independent chairing of child protection conferences and enable the child protection operations manager to assist the LCSB	Child Protection Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediate recruitment of 2 full time Child Protection Co-ordinators (1 new post). Proposals to expand CP Unit to safeguarding Unit to ACPC To implement safeguarding proposals to expand Child Protection Unit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment process completed 1 new post appointed further recruitment under way. Proposals agreed by ACPC. 	<p>April 2005</p> <p>April 2005</p> <p>Sept 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of Safeguarding Grant £60k 	MD
2.9	Senior Managers should ensure that statutory requirements are met and the necessary resources provided in relation to the 1999 Private Fostering regulations and the related amendments to the Children Act 2004.	Accommodation Services/ Children in Need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Private Fostering Regulations. Recruitment to Specialist Private Fostering Post. Develop information support and advice for local community. Maintain register notification of all private fostering arrangements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment under way for Specialist Post. Issue highlighted with Intake Team to ensure private fostering assessments are notified and given priority. Review of Private Fostering arrangements October 2005. 	<p>April 2005</p> <p>Oct 2005</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of Safeguarding Grant £41k 	VC

Quality of Services for Users and Carers

	Recommendation	Service Area	Action	Progress/Outcome/Measure	Time Scale	Resources <i>(additional revenue in bold)</i>	Lead Person
2.10	Senior Managers should ensure that the current issue of capacity and uncertainty around the front line management of the intake teams is quickly resolved.	Children in Need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment undertaken for vacant Service Manager Post. Wider Recruitment and Retention Action Plan developed and being implemented to reduce staff turnover in Children in Need and Permanency Planning Services. Contingency management arrangements agreed with Family Intervention Team Service Managers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vacancy filled Consultation under way with staff and Union Representative. Review of Salary Grades undertaken with proposal to implement wage differential for Children in Need and Permanency Planning staff. Increase in Service Managers from 3.5 to 4 posts within Children in Need Service. 	April 2005 July 2005	£78k	VC
2.11	Senior Managers should ensure that there is consistent adherence to child protection procedures across all teams.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Protection Training Workshops to be planned within Children in Need, Permanency Planning Service and Children with Disability Service. Develop Section 47 Investigation to incorporate core assessment documentation. Quality Assurance role of Child Protection to be expanded to provide further support and consultation to Service Managers. Inter-agency child protection procedures to be reviewed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training dates for teams identified. Work in progress Review of Child Protection Procedures underway. 	May 2005 Sep 2005	Officer time Use of Safeguarding Grant	VC
2.12	Senior Managers should ensure that the quality of assessment is improved within the Department and that the new Common Assessment Framework is properly implemented across all agencies.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change for Children Task Group to be set up to progress common assessment framework, information sharing and assessment and Integrated Children's System. Torbay to propose date for second wave CAF Pilot introducing electronic common assessment tool to extended schools. Build Training Plan to embed CAF Tools development of shared understanding and language of needs across Children's Services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Torbay proposal as CAF pilot area Multi-Agency Information Sharing Protocol agreed. Information Sharing Protocol launched with multi-agency training workshops March 2005. All practitioner provided with Information Sharing Protocol Handbook. 	May 2005 April 2006		MD
2.13	Senior Managers should review and develop the current arrangements for	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement PARIS Project Plan which will include review and update arrangements for core and initial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PARIS Implementation Project Group set up for Children's Services. 	Sept 2005	Project Group time demands on Officer time	VC

	the completion of core assessments and case flow to ensure that unnecessary disruption for service users is avoided.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> assessments. Implement Training Strategy for all front line staff for implementation of PARIS. Implement PARIS electronic core assessment and initial assessment tools. Clear performance accountability built into supervision process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process Mapping 80% complete. PARIS implementation on plan for September 2005. 			
2.14	Senior Managers should ensure that initial and core assessment timescale performance is significantly improved.	Children in Need and Permanency Planning and Children with Disability Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of PARIS Management Information System will enhance compliance with initial and core assessment timescales. Ongoing staff training and support through implementation and bedding of PARIS system. Review of PARIS system 3 month after implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To achieve significant improvement in performance related to initial and core assessment timescales. 	Dec 2005	Staff time	LB
2.15	Senior Managers should review the current capacity and quality assurance role of the Independent Reviewing Service given the current volume of children looked after.	Independent Reviewing Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and report to Director for Social Inclusion of IRO Unit/Activity. Reduce numbers of Looked after Children to increase quality assurance capacity of Unit. Increased number of Independent Reviewing Officer Posts by 1. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review completed Reports to Margaret Dennison February 2005. 	Feb 2005 April 2006 Sept. 2005	£46k	MD
2.16	Senior Managers should ensure that a review takes place of business processes for family support cases across fieldwork and provider teams.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mapping and review of services to be undertaken as part of implementation of Change for Children Project Plan. Review of Care to Community Team criteria and service structure to expand capacity for allocation of Looked After Children cases. Development of Children Centres/Extended Schools and tier 1 extended services to provide more effective services. Review the role of Family Centres within preventative strategies. Administrative staff to be line managed by Service teams. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CFC Project Plan developed and Task Groups started. Review of CTC undertaken and proposals developed. 	April 2006 July 2005	Officer time	MD
2.17	Senior Managers should ensure that a full range of information leaflets are available at all public access points.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full range of information leaflets provided to Union House and Parkfield public access points. To be reviewed on a monthly basis by Senior Administrators within Union House and Parkfield. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information leaflets in place at public access points. 	April 2005	Administrative time	NB

Fair Access							
	Recommendation	Service Area	Action	Progress/Outcome/Measure	Time Scale	Resources (additional revenue in bold)	Lead Person
2.18	The Council should ensure that its plan to reach Level Two of the local government race equality standards is completed by September 2005.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the Quality and Inclusion Policy to ensure Equality Impact Assessments are completed. Managers to attend to attend Equality Impact Assessment Training Workshops. Ensure Equalities and Inclusion are addressed within Children's Services Business Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Race Equality Impact Assessments undertaken. All Operations Managers attended Equality Impact Workshops 	May 2005	Officer time	MD
2.19	The Council should ensure that signposting in ethnic minority languages is provided on Children's Services posters and leaflets at public information access points and on its website	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Children's Services Posters/Leaflets to include signposting for copies in ethnic minority languages. 		Sept 2005	£2k	VC
2.20	The Council and partner agencies should urgently review the currently high thresholds for services for children and young people with disabilities as well as current co-ordination of service delivery.	Children with Disabilities and Special Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thresholds to be reviewed as part of Change for Children Project Plan – Learning Inclusion Form Torbay (LIFT) co-ordination of service delivery to be further developed with reference to evaluation undertaken as part of the Team Around the Child Early Support Pilot. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task group set up to take forward review 	Oct 2005 April 2006	Officer time	KT
2.21	Senior Managers need to ensure that there is proper consultation and a clear written public strategy for the development of short break care for disabled children and young people.	Children with Disabilities and Special Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy to be written in consultation with service users and form workplan within LIFT. Review and update current continuum for Short Term Breaks Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task group set up to take forward review 	Dec 2005	Officer time	KT

Fair Access							
	Recommendation	Service Area	Action	Progress/Outcome/Measure	Time Scale	Resources <i>(additional revenue in bold)</i>	Lead Person
2.22	Senior Managers and Councillors need to ensure that an advocacy service is provided for children and young people with disabilities.	Children with Disabilities and Special Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracts being negotiated with Independent Sector Provider for advocacy arrangements. Information Leaflets to be provided to Parents and Carers accessing the service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy currently provided on spot purchase basis 	Sept 2005	£15k	TC
2.23	Senior Managers and Councillors need to ensure that there is regular scrutiny and analysis of complaints and comments from services users as well as an annual report.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints and comments procedures to be reviewed as part of Integration of Children's Services to be picked up as action point within Participation Task Group. Report on Complaints to go to Children's Services Performance Board on a quarterly basis. Develop Service User feedback mechanisms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's services Performance Board set up. 	Sept 2005	Officer time	VC
2.24	Senior Managers and Councillors need to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to meet: complaints, file access and freedom of information regulatory requirements.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated Children's Services Complaints/Comments Service to be set up. Specific post to be created to provide information, guidance and facilitate access to records. 		Oct 2005	£20k additional resource £25k	VC

Cost and Efficiency							
	Recommendation	Service Area	Action	Progress/Outcome/Measure	Time Scale	Resources <i>(additional revenue in bold)</i>	Lead Person
2.25	Senior Managers and Councillors need to ensure that the budget setting process is based on an accurate evaluation of need and priority.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget preparation cycle to include detailed projected commitments of independent sector placements. Delivery of financial strategy for children's social care to include block contracting arrangements, expansion of in-house placement options and project plans to reduce numbers of Looked After children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitments for 2005/06 fully costed and budget for additional placements. 	Sept 2005	Officer time	MD
2.26	Senior Managers need to quickly ensure that a clear and detailed medium term placement strategy is produced that addresses current resources, future needs and budgetary requirements.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placement strategy to be produced and presented to Executive June 2005. Block contracting with independent sector. Expansion of Contract Care Service. Expansion of Kinship Care Service. Implement private foastering Service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in progress to deliver pooled (Torbay Council/PCT) budget for independent sector placements. Joint Policy/agreement. Joint placement funding formula. Joint process/decision making. 	June 2005	Officer time Total costs in region of £178K (£98K from various grants - £80 additional revenue)	MD
2.27	Senior Managers need to develop a clear understanding of unit and activity costs in regard to the value for money of family support and safeguarding services.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium term placement strategy to demonstrate reduction in placement costs and increase in family support and safeguarding services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit costs provided on Bi-monthly basis to AD Children's Services. 	April 2006	Officer time	MD

Management and Resources							
	Recommendation	Service Area	Action	Progress/Outcome/Measure	Time Scale	Resources (additional revenue in bold)	Lead Person
2.28	Senior Managers should ensure that all children looked after are allocated to qualified social work staff.	Permanency Planning Service/Children in Need, and Children with Disability Service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Recruitment and Retention Plan to include Recruitment Campaign to hard to fill posts, Trainee Social Work Scheme, Overseas Recruitment and review of Service Level Agreement for administrative support to front line staff. Reduce numbers of Looked After Children to bring the Council more in line with National average. Implement proposed changes criteria for Care to Community team to allocate looked after cases at 16 plus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment and Retention Plan drafted. Proposals for CTC changes being implemented. 	April 2006	As per costs outlined in 2.10	VC
2.29	Senior Managers should review how current organisational capacity and human resource strategy can eliminate the current volume of unallocated work in the short and medium term.	Permanency Planning Service/Children in Need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Recruitment and Retention Plan to include Recruitment Campaign to hard to fill posts, Trainee Social Work Scheme, Overseas Recruitment and review of Service Level Agreement for administrative support to front line staff. Reduce numbers of Looked After Children to bring the Council more in line with National average. Implement proposed changes criteria for Care to Community team to allocate looked after cases at 16 plus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment and Retention Plan drafted. Implement CAF process to develop multi-agency approach. 	April 2006	As above	VC
2.30	Senior Managers should address the relationship and case ownership protocols between Permanency Planning Teams and the Care to Community Team.	Permanency Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake review of service delivered by Care to Community Team to contribute to reduction in numbers of Looked After Children and expand the case holding provision of the Care to Community Service. Agree transfer of children and young people aged 16 plus to be managed and allocated within the Care to Community Team. Enhance LAC Training Programme for existing CTC Personal Advisors. Set up Service Managers Steering Group to plan changes in transfer of cases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of CTC service undertaken. Proposals being considered by Senior Management Team. 	July 2005	Officer time CTC posts £42K	

2.31	Senior Managers should ensure that regular file audit and robust quality assurance systems are put in place.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Operations Managers and Service Managers to implement the current file audit tools to ensure that audits take place and are recorded on the individual case work file. Quality assurance/audit capacity within Child Protection Unit and Independent Reviewing Service to be increased to make the auditing process more robust. Children's Service Management Team to undertake quarterly auditing using NCB Children's Services Audit Tools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit tools developed and implemented Operations Managers to ensure regular monitoring of Service Manager audits. 	Immediate Oct. 2005 June 2005	Officer time	VC
2.32	Senior Managers should further consolidate service planning at business unit, team and individual appraisal levels.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations Managers to produce Service Plans in line with the Children's Services Business Plan. All staff to receive RADARS with clear objectives related to specific service outcomes within their team service plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's Services Business Plan completed. Operations Managers undertaking draft Service Plans. RADAR Programme underway 	June 2005	Officer time	VC
2.33	Senior Managers should develop improved local performance management information and comparative benchmarking.	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Performance Indicators to be agreed in consultation with stakeholders and service users. Local Performance Indicators to be built into Children's Services Business Plan. Monitoring of Performance Indicators through Children's Services Performance Board. 		May 2005	Officer time	VC

KEY:

KT	Keith Thompson	Acting Special Needs Services Manager
LB	Lindy Brown	Operations Manager Children in Need
MD	Margaret Dennison	Director of Social Inclusion
MR	Matt Redwood	Assistant Director Resources
NB	Nikki Bedwell	Finance Manager
SG	Siobhan Grady	Associate Director of Public Health
TC	Terry Connolly	Director of Learning and Resources
TS	Tony Smith	Chief Executive Designate Children's Services
VC	Vincent Clark	Assistant Director Children's Services