

Every Child Matters in County Durham

21 December, 2005

COMMISSIONING FRAMEWORK FOR SERVICES TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Report to the Every Child Matters Implementation Team

Introduction

- 1) The Government has set out its vision for children's services in '*Every Child Matters: Change for Children*'.
- 2) The term 'children's services' includes all services received by children, young people and their families including education, early years, sure start, components of health care such as health visitors, school nurses, CAMHS, services within social care and health including fostering and adoption, parenting programmes, child protection, services provided at a local level including housing, nursery provision, leisure services, connexions and youth engagement services including job centre plus, services provided by the voluntary community and independent sector and those services that engage the local police and probation.
- 3) By 2008, local authorities are required to have in place arrangements that produce coordinated and integrated working at all levels, from planning through to delivery with a focus on improving outcomes for children, young people and their families. In order to achieve this, some areas across the country are developing arrangements to put in place Children's Trusts. Across County Durham, the County Council is consulting with its partner agencies on how best to deliver services for children and young people.
- 4) Within that context, the County Durham Every Child Matters Implementation Group has agreed to the development of a commissioning framework to ensure that children, young people and their families experience more coordinated/integrated and responsive services, and specialist support embedded in and accessible through universal services. The commissioning framework will bring together people into effective multi-professional teams underpinned by joint training supported by integrated processes.
- 5) The County Durham Every Child Matters Implementation Group has acknowledged that effective joint planning and commissioning is at the heart of improving outcomes for children, young people and their families. It has also acknowledged that no single agency can deliver the requirements of the '*Every Child Matters*' agenda.

- 6) A commissioning work stream group has been established to develop a framework that will help to specify and secure services for children, young people and their families.
- 7) The framework will offer the opportunity to map the collective resources of the statutory, voluntary and independent sector and to critically evaluate their performance against a range of criteria, feedback from children, young people and their families and an analysis of indicators and inspection findings.
- 8) It will also offer the scope for comparing what we currently deliver independently and collectively against best practice and will provide us all with the opportunity to consolidate what is working well and to re-focus and to develop new services, or alternative service configurations against the ideal. The commissioning framework will encompass all statutory, voluntary and independent sector services that children, young people and their families may need.

Background

- 9) In 2003, the Government published a green paper called '*Every Child Matters*'. This was published alongside the formal response to the report into the death of Victoria Climbié who was horrifically abused, tortured and eventually killed in February 2000 by her great aunt Marie Therese Kouoao and her partner Carl Manning. The evidence from the inquiry confirmed many of the messages from previous inquiries into similar child protection failings; the imperative to see and listen to children and respond to their needs, and to improve the quality of communication and joint working.
- 10) The green paper prompted an unprecedented debate about services for children, young people and their families and following wide consultation, the Government published '*Every Child Matters: the Next Steps*', and passed the Children Act 2004, which provided the legislative framework for developing more effective and accessible services focused around the needs of children, young people and families. In November 2004, '*Every Child Matters; Change for Children*' was published.

Every Child Matters: Change for Children

- 11) Through *Every Child Matters: Change for Children*, the Government has made explicit its ambitions for every child and young person, whatever their background or circumstances, to have the support they need to experience the following five outcomes:

- Be healthy
 - Stay safe
 - Enjoy and achieve
 - Make a positive contribution
 - Achieve economic well-being
- 12) The five outcomes are universal ambitions and are mutually reinforcing, for example, children and young people learn and thrive when they are healthy, safe and engaged; and the evidence shows clearly that educational attainment is the most effective route out of poverty.
- 13) Keeping the outcomes in mind at all times will help us all to focus on how services can better be brought together around the child, young person and family. Within that context, it is important to be clear about what they all mean in practice and how progress towards them will be measured. Attached as appendix one, is a copy the Government's *outcomes framework*, which shows the relationships between the outcomes, aims, targets, indicators and inspection criteria. The *outcomes framework* will act as a basis for agreeing local priorities and will also inform local planning and commissioning decisions with regard to the future pattern, development, re-configuration or de-commissioning of services.
- 14) The Every Child Matters green paper also identified the following four key themes that must underpin the work of the five outcomes:
- Increasing the focus on supporting families and carers – the most critical influence on children's lives
 - Ensuring necessary intervention takes place before children reach crisis point and protecting children from falling through the net
 - Addressing the underlying problems identified in the report into the death of Victoria Climbié – weak accountability and poor coordination/integration
 - Ensuring that people working with children are valued, rewarded and trained
- 15) These themes provide a focus for the commissioning framework to ensure that the future pattern of service delivery enables all agencies working with children, young people and their families to intervene earlier, prevent more effectively; support families better, work in partnership and in different ways where necessary.
- 16) This means that the organisations providing services to children, from hospitals and schools, to police and voluntary groups, will be teaming up in new ways, sharing information and working together, to protect children and young people from harm and to help them achieve what they want in life. Children, young people and their families will have

far more say about issues that affect them as individuals and collectively.

Holistic approach to meeting the needs of children and young people

- 17) The Government has outlined that a holistic approach to meeting the needs of children and young people is essential to the Every Child Matters agenda. It has also highlighted that this means achieving better **co-ordination** of the work of agencies that traditionally have provided discrete services to meet different aspects of the needs of children, young people and their families. The Government also aims to support the development of **coordinated/integrated** frontline services, and more specifically, the **development of different models** of multi-agency working that complement the work of existing core services.
- 18) The Government has also outlined its intentions for supporting multi-agency working and has outlined: -
- To ensure that children and young people achieve the five outcomes, it will be vital to have a children's workforce that is skilled, well led and supported by effective, shared systems and processes. The DfES is working with partners to identify good practice with a view to developing guidance and toolkits to support new ways of working locally. It is expected that such integrated working will take a variety of forms depending on the needs of children, young people and families locally. Reforming the children's workforce so that it supports the five outcomes underpinned with a strong emphasis on early intervention, family support and partnership, will require action at both national and local level.
 - The introduction of a common assessment framework (CAF) for use by practitioners in all agencies so that they can communicate and work more effectively together. Information will follow the child and build up a picture over time. All local authority areas are expected to implement the CAF between April 2006 and the end of 2008.
 - That to enable multi-disciplinary teams to work together more effectively in the interests of children and young people, a Common Core of Skills and Knowledge is to be introduced against which everyone working with children, young people and their families must be able to demonstrate a level of competence covering:
 - Effective communication and engagement with children, young people and their families

- Child and young person development
 - Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child
 - Supporting transitions
 - Multi-agency working
 - Sharing information
- That local authorities and partner organisations should ensure that information sharing is robustly addressed and that:
 - Change strategies and service delivery plans incorporate effective and clearly understood mechanisms for sharing information across service and professional boundaries
 - Relevant managers and practitioners receive adequate training on information sharing
 - Managers, practitioners and other staff understand the legal basis on which information can be shared
 - Sharing information becomes an integral part of the way in which practitioners fulfil their duties
 - Strategic managers are familiar with the guidance that their managers in children's services should follow
 - That there is also an expectation that there will be:
 - More coordinated/integrated, accessible and personalised services built around the needs of children and young people and not around professional or service boundaries
 - Services co-located in places such as children's centres and extended schools
 - The development of multi-disciplinary teams
 - Lead professionals who will act as a single point of contact to support children, young people and their families in making choices and ensuring that they receive appropriate interventions

Effective joint planning and commissioning

- 19) Effective joint planning and commissioning is at the heart of improving outcomes from children and young people. No single agency can deliver any one of the five outcomes for children or the 25 aims set within the *outcomes framework* by working autonomously.
- 20) From April 2005, there is a statutory duty on agencies and bodies delivering children's services to co-operate in arrangements to improve the well being of children and young people and local authorities with children's services responsibilities have a duty under the Children Act 2004 to:

Section 10 – to make arrangements to promote co-operation between agencies in order to improve children’s well being, defined by reference to the five outcomes and a duty on key partners to take part in those arrangements. It also provides a new power to allow pooling of resources in support of these arrangements.

Section 12 – *creates a duty for the key agencies who work with children to put in place arrangements to make sure that they take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children when doing their jobs*

- 21) The arrangements for co-operation to improve well being in the Children Act 2004 are intended to operate at a strategic level and the duty to co-operate applies only to strategic level bodies involved in assessing need, developing overarching plans and commissioning services. Schools and GPs are not under a duty to co-operate and will continue to commission services through their respective delegated planning and practice based commissioning arrangements.
- 22) However, the commissioning framework acknowledges the crucial role that these types of commissioning methodologies have to play and regard them as being a crucial contribution to the Every Child Matters agenda. Within that context, the commissioning framework will always take into account and acknowledge the work of schools and GPs to ensure that their vital contribution to the delivery of the five outcomes is made explicit and linked to overarching strategic planning requirements and decisions at a local level.
- 23) The commissioning activity of schools and General Practitioners will be coordinated within the Children’s Services Authority strategy via the strategic relationships already in existence between the County Council and the Primary Care Trusts.
- 24) Schools will be encouraged to participate in Local Children’s Boards via Communities of Learning or Schools Cluster arrangements. (currently subject of consultation as part of the ECM functional model.)
- 25) GPs will be encouraged to participate in local planning arrangements through Local Delivery Plans.
- 26) As outlined above, the five outcomes are universal ambitions for every child and young person, whatever their background or circumstances. However, improving outcomes also involves narrowing the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers. The Government is therefore paying particular attention on improving outcomes for vulnerable children such as looked-after children, children with learning difficulties and disabilities and on reducing the incidence of teenage pregnancy and the number of young people not in education, employment or training.

- 27) The Government recognises the crucial role of parents, carers and families in improving outcomes for children and young people and the need to provide support for parents, carers and families in order for them to do so. The Government also recognises the important role of the local community.
- 28) There are some areas set within the Every Child Matters programme, where it is appropriate for Government to take the lead, especially with regard to:
- Setting the strategic direction
 - Determining specific priorities for supporting disadvantaged groups
 - Outlining the performance management framework
 - Setting up specific areas of funding and incentives
 - Providing practical support for training and sharing good practice
- 29) However, in general, it wants to leave maximum scope for local determination, acknowledging that every local area has a different starting point and different circumstances whilst at the same time will need to balance the pace of reform against the need to maintain ongoing services.

The Commissioning Framework

- 30) The Children Act 2004 subsumes many existing planning requirements into a single children and young people's plan (CYPP) that CSA's will be required to have in place by April 2006, (although councils that have been graded as 'excellent' through the Comprehensive Performance Assessment will be exempt from the requirement). CSA's will work with local partners towards the recommendations and targets set out within the CYPP.
- 31) The CYPP will cover all of the services available to children and young people in a locality and will link to other services, including health services, youth justice, voluntary and community services, Connexions and drug action for children and young people.
- 32) As outlined earlier, effective joint planning and commissioning is at the heart of improving outcomes for children and young people. However the term 'commissioning' can mean different things in different situations and across various organisations. For the purpose of this work stream, commissioning has been defined as:

'A process for specifying and securing services in line with the needs of children, young people and their families and arrangements for monitoring the progress of planned change'

33) The **process for specifying** will involve:

- Agreement of clear vision, values and outcomes
- Analysis of need
- Audit of current service provision and service performance
- Development of consensus on the “ideal type” service configuration to achieve outcomes for all children
- Comparison of current state provision and performance with ideal state
- Identification of duplication, gaps and unnecessary activity
- Development of commissioning framework, describing the commissioning and decommissioning activity required in the short, medium and long term to achieve required service state, in respect of political and legislative parameters.
- Development of clear processes for moving from current to future.

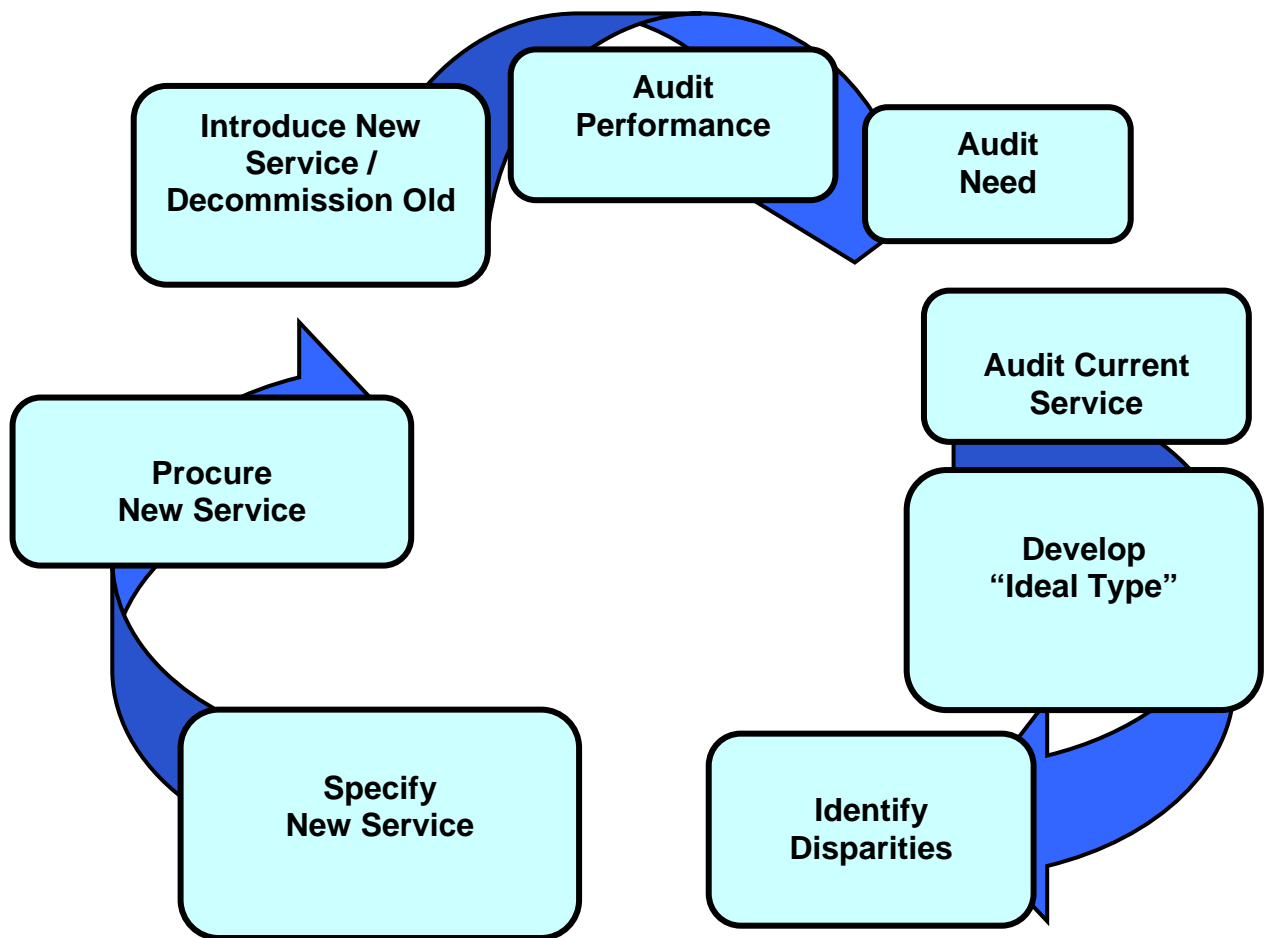
Securing services will involve:

- Delivering the improvements through pooled budgets, better co-ordination, integration or the development of new models through a range of providers from the statutory, voluntary or independent sector;
- workforce and other changes in local processes and ways of working necessary to support delivery.
- Specifying procurement processes to be used to ensure best value is achieved in all services
- Delivering change within budget

Arrangements for monitoring the progress of planned change will involve:

- Monitoring the delivery of the improvement and decommissioning programme (as opposed to monitoring operational key performance indicators).
- Monitoring key performance indicators to ensure that services continue to deliver best quality and outcomes for children, young people and families.

COMMISSIONING FRAMEWORK



LEVELS OF COMMISSIONING

It is useful to differentiate two levels at which the commissioning framework operates:

- Strategic Level
- Service Level

Commissioning at strategic and service levels follows the same framework, but is not the same activity. To have an effective commissioning framework, both forms need to be in operation.

Strategic Commissioning

Strategic Commissioning is the term used to describe the processes that will be needed by the Children's Services Authority to plan and deliver the Service to all children, young people and their families in County Durham. This is the high level analysis of needs, patterns and trends in pursuit of the overarching objectives of the service.

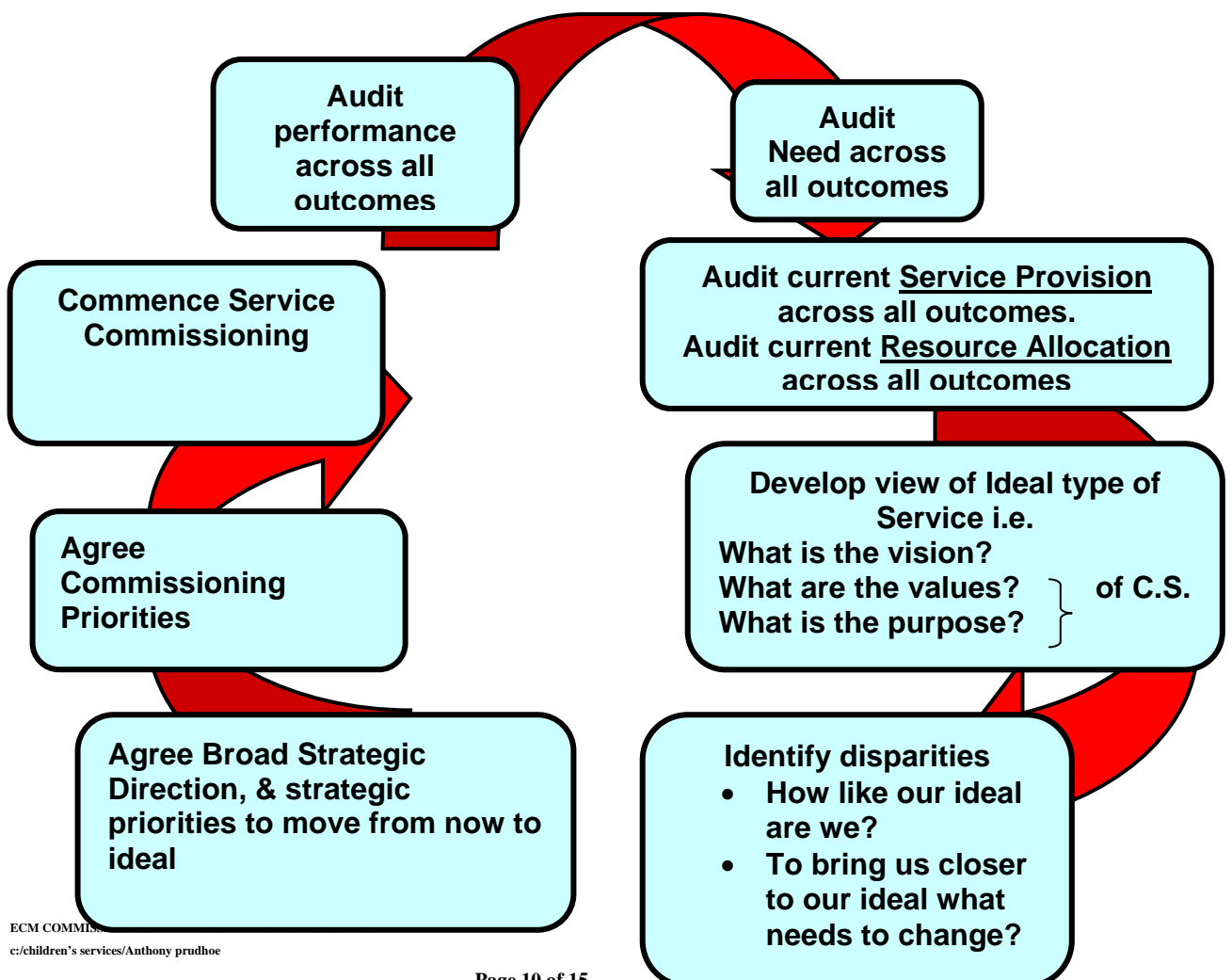
In this respect, strategic commissioning is indistinguishable from strategic planning.

2. Service Commissioning

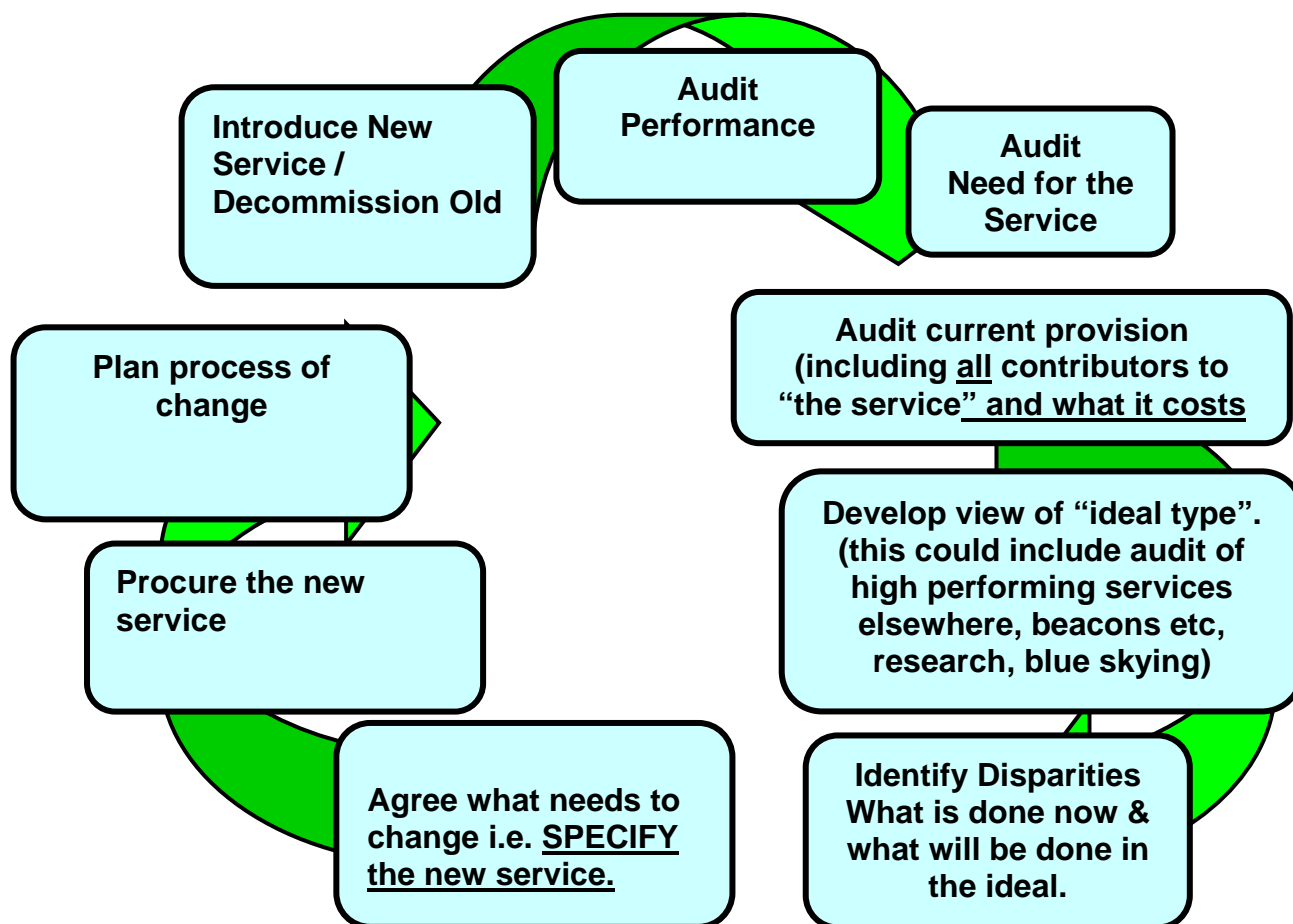
Service Commissioning describes the processes that will be used to specify, secure and monitor individual services for children, young people and their families. These services may be universal, targeted or specialist and so may be delivered locally or County-wide.

The following applications of the commissioning framework illustrate the difference between the two.

COMMISSIONING FRAMEWORK: Strategic Commissioning



COMMISSIONING FRAMEWORK: Service Commissioning



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRATEGIC AND SERVICE COMMISSIONING

It is clear that neither level of commissioning can function effectively without the other. Service Commissioning will be informed and shaped by Strategic Commissioning and vice versa. The Executive Board represents the Children's Services Authority and has statutory responsibility as such. However, the development and maintenance of effective working relationships with the Local Boards will be a key measure of its success.

The Every Child Matters functional model describes the relationship between the Executive Board and the Local Children's Boards. These arrangements must facilitate the free flow of commissioning information between the Boards to ensure that commissioning remains an inclusive process.

COMMISSIONING RESPONSIBILITIES

Under the functional model, both the Executive Board and the Local Children's Boards would have responsibility for Service Commissioning, but only the Executive Board would have responsibility for Strategic Commissioning.

- 34) Commissioning at **Executive Board** level will take both forms:
- I. Strategic Commissioning: establishing priorities for action based on needs and desired direction, and monitoring the allocation of resources against priorities.
 - II. Service Commissioning: the CSA will be involved with Service Commissioning for those services that are retained centrally. This would include commissioning of services to meet needs whose low incidence requires a county-wide, regional or national response, or whose delegation to local level would pose great a risk to the CSA.
- 35) Commissioning at **Local Children Board** level will be consistent with the overarching CSA Commissioning Framework and Strategy. LCB's will be responsible for Service Commissioning of:
- universal services locally
 - local services targeted to specific needs
 - local services targeted to population level need

Delivering improvements through co-ordination, integration and new developments

- 36) As outlined above, an integral part of commissioning is the development of consensus on the 'ideal type' of service both at Strategic and Service levels.
- 37) To help structure this part of the framework, we will utilise parts of the '*continuum of collaboration*' * model that provides a structure for describing those services that we have currently in place and for determining whether we would want to move them from, autonomous service provision towards co-ordination or integration. We can also use the continuum to determine whether we would want services to be moving towards a different approach involving a completely new service direction.

* Integrated care network – integrated working a guide – June 2004

Continuum of collaboration

Autonomy services	Co-ordination*	Integration**	New
<p>There is no holistic view of user needs; actions and decisions are arrived at independently and without co-ordination</p>	<p>There is a shared view of user needs; actions and decision making are co-ordinated</p>	<p>Fragmentation between providers and autonomous action are minimised. Working practices become transparent. Integration is of greatest benefit to those with complex needs</p>	<p>Different approach to delivering services</p>

* **Co-ordination** – a network of separate staff, services and systems that co-ordinate activity to meet user needs.

** **Integration** – a single system of service planning and or provision put in place and managed together by partners, who remain legally independent but share the same vision, culture, budgets, accommodation, administration and records.

38) This part of the Commissioning Strategy will assist strategic managers in being able to be explicit about those parts of service delivery that would improve outcomes for children, young people and their families through either a co-ordinated or integrated or new developmental approach.

Next Steps

- 39) Strategic commissioning activity has already begun. This will be required before Service Commissioning can commence.
- 40) There is ample performance data to identify strengths and weaknesses in current services. The ECM audit of needs and services will provide an overview of the current situation with services to children in relation to the outcomes framework.
- 41) Further work is required to develop a consensus of the “ideal type” of children’s service, so that analysis of current versus ideal can be carried out. This must be an inclusive exercise, so that all stakeholders feel their voice has been heard.
- 42) Together with performance data, this exercise will allow the identification of two types of strategic priority: the “must-dos” from performance and inspection and the “want to dos” from visioning. These shared priorities will form the basis of the Children and Young People’s Plan and represent the intersection between commissioning and planning.

- 43) Priorities so identified will become subject of Service Commissioning, so that new service can be specified, procured and monitored, following the service commissioning framework.

Conclusion

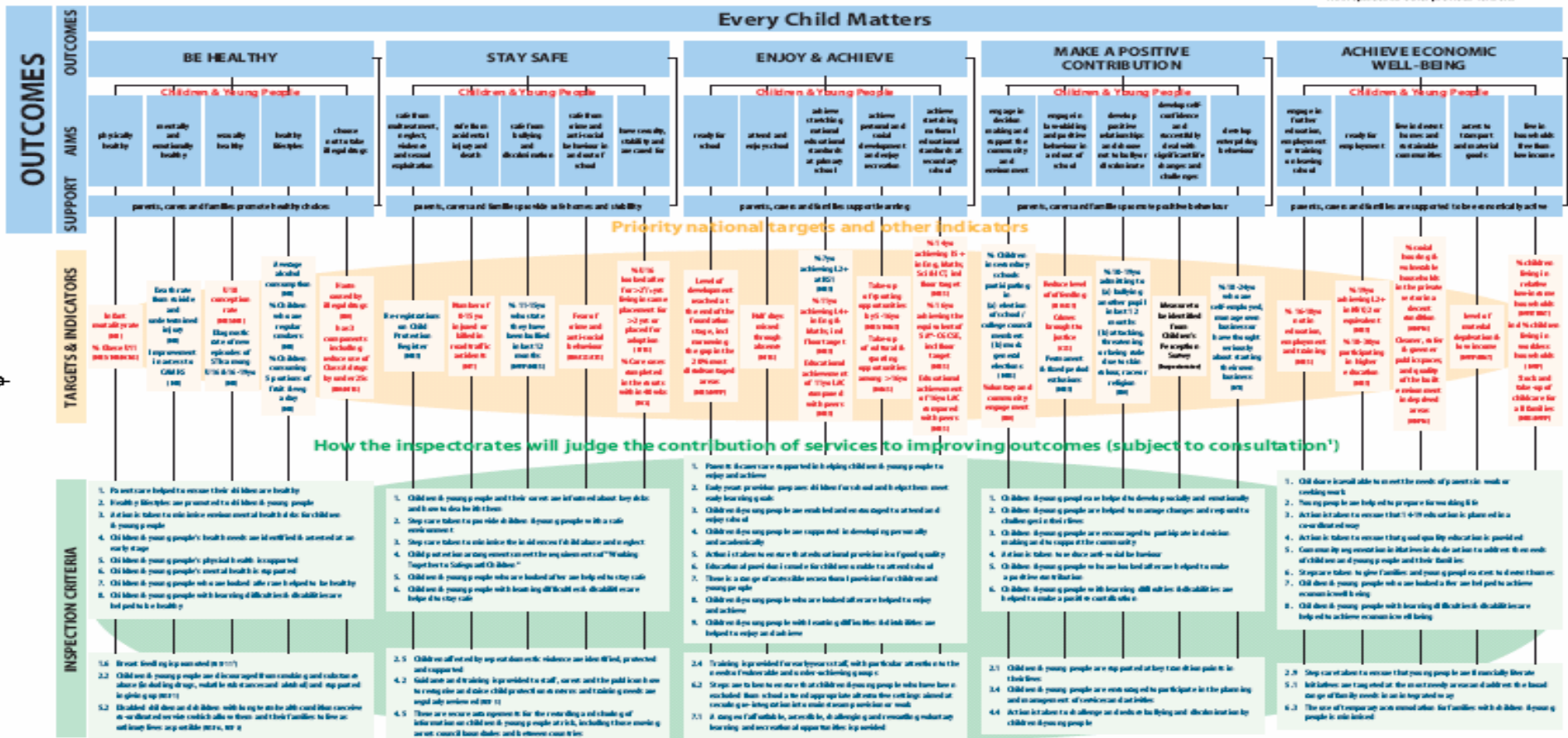
- 44) All agencies providing services have a responsibility to ensure that, through earlier intervention and more effective preventative strategies, children, young people and their families living in County Durham are healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being.
- 45) Along with these responsibilities, there must be an acknowledgement that existing services can become more effective and accessible. Everything we do autonomously or collectively must be subject to critical evaluation against the criteria set by the five outcomes and four underpinning themes.
- 46) Children, young people and their families must experience integrated and responsive services, with specialist support embedded in and accessible through universal services, delivered through multi-professional teams underpinned by joint training and supported by integrated processes.
- 47) The commissioning framework provides us with the structure for specifying, securing and monitoring services in line with the needs and aspirations of children, young people and their families at strategic and service levels. More than this, the framework opens existing services up to constructive scrutiny and challenge and offers County Durham the opportunity both to create services fit for the twenty first century.

Appendix one – outcomes framework

There are 26 PSA targets in total and 13 other key indicators. For the PSA on stability of looked after children the associated performance indicators are also shown under 'Enjoy & Achieve'

OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

Version 1.0
Published with Every Child Matters: Care for Children, 1 December 2004
This replaces all other previous versions



For queries please contact: everychild@det.nhs.uk
 NB: All the headline criteria are shown on the top row. Examples of detailed criteria are given for illustrative purposes on the bottom row.

Footnotes:
 1. CfE and CfC issued from 6 December 2004.
 2. NCF refers to the National Childcare Framework, with the number referring to the corresponding standard.