



# Norfolk Children's Fund Strategic Plan 2005 - 2008

Change for children through preventive service delivery

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Programme Manager



## Section 1 - Introduction

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- *The introduction is extracted from the national guidance for the Children's Fund strategic plan.*
- 1.1** The Children's Fund aims to provide a responsive approach to meeting people at risk of social exclusion. It aims to develop services so that children and young people at risk of social exclusion are identified early. Its purpose is to fund services for children, young people, their families and communities which tackle the barriers and disadvantages they face and which help them to realise their potential.
- 1.2** The key messages emerging from the work of the Children's Fund are that it:
  - Is transforming preventative services for children aged 5-13
  - Stimulates and delivers partnership working
  - Actively involves the voluntary sector
  - Leads the way on children and young people's participation
  - Is at the heart of what Every Child Matters aims to achieve
- 1.3** In his budget statement in March 2004, The Chancellor committed to continue the Children's Fund to 2008 'to allow a smooth transition to new Children's Trusts, which will be focused on preventative work and developed and delivered with the full engagement of the voluntary sector.' This provides the opportunity for our Partnership to concentrate on clarifying the legacy of the Children's Fund and mapping what success in achieving lasting change would look like at local level, based on a review of achievements to date.
- 1.4** Norfolk Children's Fund Partnership is required to produce a plan based on the three-year allocation of funding in order to provide accountability to the DfES for this ring-fenced funding. The plan should be seen as part of the Local Authority's planning framework in terms of preventative and early intervention services for children and young people, sitting beneath the overarching Children and Young People's Plan. It should therefore have the sign-off of both the Local Authority and the Primary Care Trust Chief Executives, demonstrating a commitment to the Children's Fund strategy with a view to ensuring a robust linkage with the local area's integrated Children and Young People's Plan from 2006.
- 1.5** The three-year plan should set out a clear strategy for migration to the emerging local children's trusts. It should describe how the Children's Fund will contribute to the local delivery of the outcomes set out in Every Child Matters. It should also describe the Partnership's vision for what the programme will have achieved by 2008, highlighting the changes which the Children's Fund has already generated, and plot the journey to achieve future outcomes. This may necessitate a review of the Partnership arrangements.

- 1.6** It will be crucial to be able to demonstrate how effective activities financed to date by the Children's Fund will continue in the future. Subject to future spending decisions, we would expect that effective services developed through Children's Fund should be mainstreamed through the preventive work in the local children's trust arrangements.
- 1.7** We acknowledge that the local context is different for all programmes. Programmes have come on stream at different times, and Local Authorities are at different stages in their thinking and planning for the implementation of the Children Bill. It is therefore accepted that some partnerships will only be able to set out their agreed intentions for migration, whereas others will be able to be much clearer as to how local arrangements will develop. The local context will therefore be taken into account in assessing the plans.
- 1.8** The production of the plan, whilst primarily providing accountability to DfES for the funding allocated, also offers the opportunity to involve the partnership in re-committing to a programme of change and to produce material which may be used to engage in local debates on the development of strategic planning for children, and to influence local discussions on the mainstreaming of the Children's Fund. There is a clear expectation that the production of the plan will require close working with those within partner organisations who are leading on local planning for the implementation of the children's trust arrangements (which may or may not be the same individuals who sit on the Children's Fund Partnership).

## **2. A Focus on Prevention**

- 2.1** The purpose of the Children's Fund is to provide more and better co-ordinated preventative services. The Children's Fund has already contributed towards this purpose and has helped to shift the understanding of how a positive model of prevention can achieve change for children. In many cases, attitudinal and cultural shifts have been achieved, and lessons have been learnt from the commissioning process for preventative services.
- 2.2** The three-year plan should clearly set out what has already been achieved, (for example in partnership, multi-agency working, strategic commissioning, and voluntary and community sector involvement) and how this will be taken forward and built upon in the future. It should show how opportunities to use learning - to influence emerging developments for integrated children's services - will be maximised and contribute to local preventative strategies. It should also show how the Fund's commitment to prevention, and the partnership's work to refocus mainstream practice on prevention, will be taken forward to achieve a wider impact in the longer term.

### 3. A Focus on Participation

- 3.1 Participation is one of the underpinning principles of the Children's Fund, and Partnerships are encouraged to consider how best to evidence the link between participation and outcomes for children.

### 4. The Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector

- 4.1 The ability of the VCS to innovate and contribute to a preventative agenda has been critical to shaping Children's Fund so far; this role should be preserved, including in the arrangements being planned locally for the children's trust arrangements. The Department expects Partnerships to consider and demonstrate through their plans how the role of the VCS will be protected and further enhanced - in its capacity **both as a strategic partner and as a provider of services** in the next phase of the Children's Fund, and beyond.
- 4.2 The VCS should be an integral part of partnership working and the plan should demonstrate how this will be achieved in a meaningful way, ensuring that the VCS place as a strategic partner is not tokenistic. The plan will also need to indicate what level of resource the partnership anticipates allocating to the VCS in their role as a lead or accountable body (if relevant), and as a provider.

### 5. Youth Crime Prevention

- 5.1 One of the key objectives of the Children's Fund remains to ensure that fewer young people aged 10-13 commit crime and fewer children aged 5-13 are victims of crime.
- 5.2 The Youth Justice Board (YJB) is a key partner both for the Department for Education & Skills (DfES) and the Government in tackling anti-social behaviour and youth crime, and so Children's Fund projects that target these areas will continue to be a priority. Existing and planned Youth Inclusion and Support Panels (YISP) and Junior Youth Inclusion Programme (JYIP) projects should continue to be funded, unless evaluation shows these to be cost-ineffective relative to other programmes. YOT managers should be closely involved in any decisions about YISPs and JYIPs.
- 5.3 Plans should describe both what projects the Partnership will be supporting and make clear how much resource will be dedicated to these key areas. The existing flexibility around the activities that form the crime prevention requirement of Children's Fund will continue, but Children, Young People and Families Directorate (CYPFD) regional teams will not sign off plans that suggest the withdrawal of funding from effective projects where this is not consistent with overall movements in level of resource.
- 5.4 Partnerships should continue to build strong relationships with both the Youth Justice Board and the local Youth Offending Team (YOT). The YOT Manager should be a member of the Children's Fund Partnership Board, and their

continued active engagement in the development and signing-off of Partnership plans will be important. The CYPFD and YJB regional teams will continue to work together to progress the youth crime prevention agenda, and the YJB Regional Managers will be involved in the assessment of the plan for youth crime prevention elements.

- 5.5** Partnerships should be aware of the Prevent and Deter strand of the government's Prolific and Other Priority Offenders Strategy. This has a particular focus on reducing the number of young people who become prolific offenders, including by increasing the number of Youth Inclusion and Support Panels and Junior Youth Inclusion Programmes, or similar approaches, in every area. These programmes help to identify and target with intervention programmes those children and young people most at risk of developing a criminal career – from an early age onwards. We would therefore ask Partnerships to consider, in consultation with YOT managers, how the Children's Fund can be used in practical ways to help support the aims of the Prevent and Deter strand of the Prolific and Other Priority Offenders Strategy. A copy of guidance on Prevent and Deter can be found at [www.crimereduction.gov.uk/ppo](http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/ppo).

## **6. Parenting**

- 6.1** The Government is committed to supporting parents and families in their role in giving children and young people the best start in life. In acknowledging the role which parents and families play, specific family outcomes which correspond to the Every Child Matters outcomes have been developed as follows (see Sure Start Strengthening Families Programme):

- **be healthy** – parents, carers and families promote healthy lifestyles
- **stay safe** – parents, carers and families provide safe home and stability
- **enjoy and achieve** – parents, carers and families support learning
- **make a positive contribution** – parents, carers and families promote pro-social behaviour
- **economic well-being** – parents, carers and families are supported to become economically active

- 6.2** Partnerships are encouraged to highlight work which addresses these outcomes in their plan and build upon their existing good practice in this area.

## **7 Approval Process and Budget Forms**

- 7.1** The signed off plan with completed budget forms must be submitted to the CYPFD regional team by 31 December 2004 at the latest. The Regional Team will make a decision within one calendar month.
- 7.2** The budget forms will show an indicative 3-year spending plan broken down into the following areas:

Management costs (statutory / VCS)  
Strategic service work (statutory / VCS)

Monitoring and Evaluation  
Services – CF (statutory / VCS)  
Services – youth crime prevention (statutory / VCS)  
Services – On Track (statutory / VCS)  
Capital

- 7.3** The budget forms will show a more detailed spend for 2005-06, including details of services to be funded and the length of contract offered.
- 7.4** The regional manager will either:
- (a) approve the full three year plan, in which case only a brief self-assessment/review and a finalised budget for approval will be required by the regional team in each of the subsequent years or
  - (b) approve the plan for one year only, in which case the regional team will require you to submit a revised plan for the final two years, plus finalised budget forms for each of these years or
  - (c) negotiate with you on any work which needs to be carried out prior to approval
- 7.5** Plan approval will be subject to compliance with the Children’s Fund grant terms and conditions.
- 7.6** Feedback on the plan will be provided in each case and this will form the basis of any future self-assessments, reviews or a revised plan.

## Section 2 - The Context for the Plan

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- *Section 2 has been extracted and adapted from the national guidance for the Children's Fund strategic plan*

### 1. The context - the national framework

- 1.1** The Green Paper and Next Steps proposed whole system reform of children's services with the child at the centre. A cultural shift was instigated to enable better partnership working in order to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people. There was to be: a focus on opportunities for all children and young people and a narrowing of gaps; support for parents, carers and families; integrated services delivering early identification and intervention.
- 1.2** Over the last twelve months government has focused on the framework necessary to produce this reform introducing: a legislative spine; an outcomes framework, and key policy developments. Throughout this process there has been a building of coalition for change.
- 1.3** The national framework for 150 local change programmes has been driven by a shared understanding of the outcomes we want for all children. There is local flexibility around the timing and sequencing of the change programme depending on local starting points and priorities.
- 1.4** **The Green Paper - *Every Child Matters*** heralded a sea of change in services for children, young people and families, underpinned by legislation and regulatory reforms. It set out the 5 key outcomes that we want for every child – that they should be **healthy and stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution to society and experience economic well-being**. These outcomes are closely linked to the 7 sub-objectives of the Children's Fund and will increasingly determine the focus of the work of the Children's Fund.
- 1.5** **The Children Act 2004** creates the legislative spine for developing more effective and accessible services focused around the needs of children, young people and families by ensuring co-operation, clear accountability and safeguarding of children. Directors of Children's Services will be responsible for all Local Authority children's services, while the co-operation arrangements will bring together social care, education, health and other partners to make sure that competing priorities no longer get in the way of the best deal for children. The Children's Fund has key learning experiences to bring forward in overcoming barriers to multi-agency working
- 1.6** **Children's Trusts** -There will be a duty placed on Local Authorities and others to co-operate to secure better outcomes for children. The key vehicle for doing this will be the Children's Trust. Children's Trusts will bring together a range of partners, including the voluntary and community sector, to integrate the planning and commissioning of children's services.

- 1.7** A Children's Trust is a new way of working, putting improved outcomes for children and young people at the heart of integrated service delivery at every level across all local partners. The Children's Trust approach is about the whole drive towards the integration of children's services planning and delivery – from the workforce dealing directly with the child and family through to comprehensive high-level partnership arrangements in local areas. The expectation is that most Local Authority areas should have a Children's Trust or local joint commissioning arrangements in place by 2006, and all by 2008.
- 1.8** An outcome-based vision forms the basis of the Children's Trust approach and it should:
- drive the integration of front-line service provision so that multi-disciplinary teams, co-location of services, the use of a lead professional, and a common core of training for the workforce becomes commonplace;
  - support integrated working by ensuring front-line practitioners have a shared understanding of key processes such as common assessment and information sharing;
  - lead to joint strategic planning and integrated commissioning, supported by pooled resources, to ensure that the right processes and services are put in place to deliver improvements in outcomes, in the context of national and local priorities
  - lead to the establishment of a local framework for this new way of working, with local partners creating robust inter-agency governance arrangements which formalise the levers to service reconfiguration and integration
- 1.9** Children's Fund Partnerships have to varying degrees already tested out and gained much experience in the principles that have been identified for children's trust arrangements, such as joint strategic commissioning, voluntary and community sector engagement and capacity building and developing child-centred services. The three-year plan acknowledges the contribution that Children's Fund has already made locally and the difference it has made, and the Partnership's plans to build on this and influence the shape of the future agenda, articulating the process of achieving the vision and outcomes for the Children's Fund. For some partnerships the process of determining the legacy of Children's Fund will be a statement of intention, whereas others will already have embarked upon this road. It is Government's intention that the Children Act will include statutory duties on the local authority and its relevant partners to co-operate in delivering the five outcomes for children, listed in Every Child Matters and a power to pool budgets. Statutory guidance will be issued in April 2005 when the duty commences.
- 1.10 Joint Inspection Framework/Area Reviews**  
There will be a new framework for inspecting services for children and young people (Joint Area Reviews). With the proposed inspection framework's emphasis on outcomes for vulnerable groups, multi-agency work, child-centeredness and prevention, Children's Fund has much to offer Local Authorities to support the inspection process, for example in developing the

evidence-base, in local capacity building, and ensuring children contribute their views; attention should be given to how Children's Fund might contribute to this process.

### **1.11 Children and Young People's Plan**

There will be a statutory requirement for Local Authorities to produce a single integrated children and young people's plan from April 2006. This plan is part of Government's commitment to rationalise the number of plans required and to support the move to more integrated and effective services to secure the outcomes for children set out in Every Child Matters and reflected in the Children Bill. The plan will have a statutory core, with guidance to cover children's services more widely in time, in line with the co-operation arrangements which will bring together the partners covered by the duty to co-operate and others. It will include the full range of services to be inspected under the new arrangements for Joint Area Reviews. The Children's Fund Partnership will need to engage with the process of producing this plan locally, ensuring that there are clear linkages between the Children and Young People's Plan and the Children's Fund plan.

### **1.12 NSF for Children, Young People and Maternity Services**

The National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services is a ten year programme intended to stimulate long-term and sustained improvement in children's health. It is intended to lead to a cultural shift, resulting in services which are designed and delivered around the needs of the children and families using those services. The NSF sets national standards for children's health and social care. The implementation of the Children's NSF will be a major part of the Change for Children programme, driving up standards and leading to improved outcomes for children. Partnerships should have regard to the NSF in developing their plans.

## Section 3 - Norfolk Children's Fund Strategic Plan

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**Please note:** for detailed information on Children's Fund including the Children's Fund national outcomes framework, aims, principles and objectives, and background on the development of Norfolk Children's Fund please see the *Children's Fund Briefing Document*.

Norfolk Children's Fund is a wave 1 Programme and started service delivery October 2001. The expectation of wave 1 Programmes was that the voluntary sector would be major providers.

*Throughout the document letter 'A' in the margin denotes an achievement.*

### 1. Vision

**To maximise life chances for 5 – 13 year old children and young people at risk of social exclusion through a partnership of statutory, voluntary and community sectors working together with children and young people to deliver needs led preventive services evidencing improved outcomes for children.**

- 1.1 Children's Fund nationally has been a 'test bed' for multi-disciplinary, multi-agency, child centred commissioning and service delivery to children, young people and their families. Key elements of the Fund are to fully engage with the voluntary and community sectors as both strategic partners and service providers, and to trial new and innovative methods of service delivery.
- 1.2 In this the Children's Fund vision is coterminous with the vision that forms the basis of the Children's Trust approach, except that the focus of Children's Fund service delivery is purely on prevention. The service delivery threshold is set at intervention levels 2 and 3 (national intervention levels for Children's Fund as set by the Department of Education and Skills, see Children's Fund Briefing Paper for details), underneath statutory thresholds and criteria.
- 1.3 The Norfolk Children's Fund vision has always been outcome based, using soft as well as quantifiable data, deriving as it does from the local response to the aims, objectives and sub objectives embedded in the national outcomes framework for the Children's Fund, and set against evidence of need derived from the localities.
- 1.4 A part of the Partnership's long term vision will be to evidence sustained impact of service delivery in retaining improved outcomes for children *over time*, in addition to the regular monitoring to improve outcomes against targets. By 2008, when Norfolk plans to have a fully established Children's Trust approach, a number of our services will have a body of evidence spanning seven years of delivery. This proof of added value should ensure the continuation (subject to satisfactory funding arrangements) of all Children's Fund services that are meeting the Local Authority (Children's Trusts) strategic requirements. The Partnership is working to ensure that appropriate links are being made in to local strategic planning arrangements. Services will be supported to refine and refocus their delivery to meet new local strategic requirements as the *Every Child Matters* work develops.

1.5 The vision is very closely allied with the vision for Every Child Matters in Norfolk

**'We believe that all children and young people have the right to be healthy, happy and safe; to be loved, valued and respected; and to have high aspirations for their future'**

It contains the aspiration that every child should have the chance to achieve the best possible outcome in life.

## 2. Cultural change that has been and will be achieved

### 2.1 Partnership and prevention - relationships

A A part of the Partnership's vision has been to facilitate the building of professional relationships between the statutory and voluntary and community members of our Partnership. Voluntary and community sector (VCS) partners are empowered to take an equal role with that of statutory partners in the strategic functions, duties and responsibilities of the partnership and in the provision of service.

2.2 This equality has been achieved by capacity building through training provision, information sharing, sharing resources, networking, the provision of a national framework with shared objectives and outcomes, the development of a common language, and flexible responses to children's needs through integrated multi-agency service planning and delivery.

2.3 Norfolk Children's Fund does not fund single agency delivery, all services are delivered through multi-disciplinary, multi-agency partnership arrangements. Within these 'mini partnerships' one partner will take on the role of lead agency, taking responsibility for management of human resources, the service budget and data collation and returns. The size of the service partnerships can vary from two agencies to as many as there are in a locality (for example with the YISP panels). The average number of agencies in an NCF service 'mini partnership' is four.

A 2.4 To facilitate integrated cross agency working the Partnership has discouraged 'like to like' service 'mini partnerships'. Evaluation data provides evidence that every NCF service has a statutory partner involvement and this has been the case throughout the life of the Programme. This approach has facilitated cross sector engagement with new and innovative service types and delivery mechanisms as agencies have been able to directly observe service effectiveness.

A 2.5 However, the lead partner in each service 'mini-partnership' is most likely to be a voluntary or community organisation. The percentage of services with voluntary or community sector organisation as the lead partner has varied between 81% and 84% over the life of the Programme so far, and has never dropped below 81%. According to national monitoring data (with the average being 51%) **Norfolk Children's Fund has the highest percentage of voluntary sector involvement as lead service partner of any Programme in the country.**

## **2.6 Partnership and prevention - development**

In the early days of Children's Fund the Norfolk Programme was treated as a funding stream and debate centred on funding. As services began to develop, and service 'mini-partnerships' began to form close interdependent relationships, debate shifted to strategic issues.

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**2.7** Service providers were no longer in competition with each other for clients and resources but were jointly agreeing service delivery plans and sharing resources, workloads and accountability. The removal of obstructive single service elements freed up service providers to focus on improving outcomes for children.

**2.8** As new services were commissioned during following years service providers engaged with the Partnership ethos prior to service delivery through attending Local Group meetings. New providers were able to demonstrate an understanding of integrated service requirements and a commitment to the ethos and vision of the Children's Fund within their proposal for service delivery.

**2.9** Integrated multi-agency work is not easy. Commitment and hard work is required to overcome barriers such as cultural bias, and service clusters need a great deal of officer support, facilitation and mediation to overcome these barriers. It became clear that multi-agency integrated service delivery cannot be 'distance managed'. Operational management staff must be prepared to 'field work' in support of service delivery and partnership working. This support continues to be ongoing to provide effective change management for the Partnership' integration in the new emerging strategies for improved outcomes for children.

**2.10** The Partnership is therefore well placed to facilitate voluntary and community sector involvement in the local preventive strategy. Early evidence of the success of the change in local ethos has been seen in the involvement of the Partnership's VCS lead service managers as key members of working and planning groups for the preventive strategy.

## **2.11 Participation** *(Also see page 31).*

Norfolk Children's Fund has always been fully committed to user participation. The Partnership works to encourage children's and parents consultation and participation in decisions that shape the projects and the Programme. This is achieved through, for instance; child and adult training courses, project audits, children's and parent's surveys, child friendly information and children's participation in evaluation events and conferences (our own and those of other key partners). This has covered children across the whole age range i.e. 5 - 13 years and involved appropriate and imaginative mechanisms. The independent local evaluation of NCF provides evidence that user participation is central to our ethos and is embedded in our partnership culture. This strand is a key element of service quarterly reporting of progress against targets and outcomes.

**2.12** A user participation charter is in use (there is a children's version of this written in consultation with children and young people), there is also a user

participation policy and countywide and local user participation action plans. In terms of continuing to develop this strand, progress was delayed by the need to divert time and resources to the service review process required to facilitate budget reductions for 2004/05. The service review process involved the whole Partnership, including the children and young people who put forward their own strategic priorities for service delivery.

- 2.13** Work is going forward again: in October 2004 a full children's conference took place, and children and young people worked on the production of the YISP video and the NCF children's website. In November the Eastern Local Partnership Group entered phase 2 of their user participation pilot work in planning a children's district event that will widen beyond children involved in Children's Fund projects to include children involved with other local projects, organisations and schools. The district Youth Forum will play a key role in co-ordinating the involvement of children and young people in the planning and delivery of this event. This event will also be used to engage with children and young people on their views and wishes regarding services and facilities for the district and their evaluation of services currently in delivery. The information resulting from this event will be shared with the LCYPSP to be used for strategic planning purposes. Phase 3 of this work will be to roll out the process to other district areas via the Children's Fund again linking through the Youth Forum in each area and ultimately feeding to a County Youth Forum that will be developed in line with the County Strategic Partnerships. Through this process we will also engage with partner agencies, such as Connexions, dealing with different age groups of children and young people to provide young people with a route to deliver their views in a strategic and unified way. The views of very young children will be captured both by using innovative methods of engagement, and by encouraging representation by older peers. Care will be taken to ensure views of younger children are accurately represented through peer advocacy.

The NCF Development Officer with particular responsibility for User Participation has been invited to be a member of the User Participation sub group within the western pilot work for ECM. A second NCF Development Officer is funded to focus exclusively on widening the impact of this strand beyond the Children's Fund Partnership (through the implementation of the delayed sections of the user participation action plan) from January to March 2005.

#### **2.14 Services to be sustained**

Norfolk Children's Fund has developed a robust action research based performance management system. The Norfolk system will enable the Partnership to deliver sound evidence of service delivery to outcomes. This is in addition to the data acquired for and from the national monitoring systems for operational and financial performance.

- 2.15** As a wave 1 Programme, we are already building a reliable body of evidence against hard and soft outcomes to show that the current service delivery programme is effective in producing improved outcomes for children. **The Partnership feels that the provision of clear evidence of improved**

**outcomes will be the most effective means of ensuring that services delivering early intervention and prevention for vulnerable 5 – 13 year old children and families continue to be a priority for service commissioning and development in the long term.** Indeed, some of our services have been mainstreamed.

**2.16** The Programme has recently undergone a robust 8 month service review process in order to reduce service commitment to bring the delivery programme in line with new reduced budget allocations. A refinement of the performance management system has enabled the Partnership Board to continue to review service performance on a quarterly basis. The current service delivery programme is streamlined to strategic requirements both of the original strategic plan for Norfolk Children's Fund and in line with emerging requirements of Children's Trust arrangements. **The Partnership plans to commit to three year contracts for the current service delivery programme and continue work to embed these preparatory to mainstreaming.** See *appendix 1- Project Synopsis*.

**2.17** We have been working towards sustainability and mainstreaming in a number of ways:

- Close links with the Every Child Matters Manager and team (and through them the Project Board) who advise us so that plans are developed in tandem. This will become an increasingly important link as Children's Fund migrates to Local Authority responsibility in 2008.
- Close links with ISA planning to ensure that the views of the service providers from statutory, voluntary and community sectors remain uppermost when agreeing protocols and threshold criteria.
- Piloting pieces of work that impact on the future planning of the preventive strategy and the Green Paper response. In 2004 we held a Best Practice, Best Policy conference for the Partnership and key decision-makers in mainstream services to promote learning from Norfolk Children's Fund. *See 3.4 page 15 for details.*
- Strongly supporting key communications links e.g. with strategic planning groups and key service heads.
- Joint planning wherever possible with other partnerships e.g. YOT, CDRPs, Early Years, Extended Schools to ensure that services can be constantly updated to meet need appropriately. (The PM was part of the pathfinder planning group for Extended Schools).
- Using clear data and evidence of need to ensure appropriate service delivery, then monitoring and evaluating to ensure best value and quality assurance.
- Keeping the views of children and families uppermost throughout local planning processes.
- Demonstrating effectiveness to external partners through sound evidencing and evaluation.
- Working to acquire alternative funding and ensuring that monies available are appropriately dispersed. We are working with a local fundraising consultant to raise monies to allow partnership resourcing and events to continue as we feel this element of the Programme is key to the successful mainstreaming of the ethos of the Children's Fund.

- As part of the follow on from service review processes, we have continued to work with projects whose funding ceased 31 March 2004, for example in continuing to provide the benefits of partnership membership such as training opportunities. *For more information on mainstreaming see Section 6 - Ongoing monitoring and evaluation*

### **3. Elements of good practice to be embedded in new local structures**

#### **3.1 Partnership working and service practice**

A As a wave 1 Programme, the Partnership already has three years experience of delivering multi-agency integrated services. The Partnership has tested new and innovative types of preventive service delivery and reworked some tried and tested service types by experimenting with new delivery mechanisms and methodologies. In working together to overcome barriers to improving outcomes for children we have created a strong Partnership with children at the centre of everything we do. We have created a robust performance management process so that we can provide clear evidence of what works and what doesn't. This is backed up by an independent local evaluation of our performance. *See appendix 12 'Executive Summary of the Local Evaluation of the Norfolk Children's Fund'.*

**3.2** We don't pretend to have all the answers but we are keen to share the lessons learned by encouraging others to make use of the Partnership in any way that can facilitate local strategy and structure to move forward and build capacity. See page 29 for information on working with the Voluntary and Community sectors. Children's Fund is used to 'thinking outside the box' to determine the best integrated solutions for improving outcomes for children, and a child centred approach is embedded in our ethos. We can be useful in encouraging partners to explore options beyond the traditional by providing information about alternative methodologies and processes. One of the ways we can best do this is by ensuring membership of planning and working groups, and appropriate positioning of Children's Fund in the emerging new structures.

**3.3** Our Partnership has always been open to non-funded partners and we would welcome the opportunity to widen our membership to provide access for others to benefit from shared resources and good practice, networking, and free training and support.

A **3.4** We are proactive in disseminating good practice. We ran a 'Best Practice, Best Policy' seminar this year. Service providers ran workshops with practical demonstrations, hints and tips on good practice. The event was well attended by partners from all sectors. A good practice toolkit has been developed from this and is in the process of being published. This has been designed to be a practical step by step activity guide presented in 'lesson plan' style. A ringbinder format will enable future exemplar material to be added to the toolkit.

**3.5** The creation of service 'networks' has also been encouraged within the delivery programme. That is to say services provided by different agencies in different parts of the county but working to service the same theme or issue have been put in touch with each other to provide mutual support and sharing of

A practice. The independent evaluation of NCF provides evidence that this type of networking is effective in promoting shared learning and improved practice outcomes.

**3.6** One shared learning activity that was planned was for project staff to visit and observe other projects in action. The further development of this activity has been delayed by funding issues that required project staff to focus their time on action plans and budgets in late 2003/early 2004. However this will be revisited the near future.

**3.7** By widening the Partnership reach and using a variety of methods (as described) to disseminate knowledge Children's Fund can become a **learning Partnership**.

### **3.8 Publications**

A The **Good Practice Toolkit** 2004 joins the **User Participation Toolkit** published in 2003.

A **School transition pack** is also in development as is a pack on **anti-bullying work**.

A regular **newsletter** is published as a hard copy and electronically.

A A Norfolk Children's Fund **website** is set up and used as an operational tool for the Partnership. It contains 7 key 'pages' such as a library, events and news noticeboard, project information, and a discussion forum.

A Children and young people are involved in developing the **children's** part of the **website**, which will be launched soon.

Children's Fund websites and the newsletter are fully linked to the County Council sites and the Partnership is always willing to promote work and events of partners free of charge.

A Children and young people from the Partnership provided consultancy services to the film company which produced **information videos** about the **YISPs**. It is planned to make the video available to other Programmes.

A Joint working with Suffolk Children's Fund and Suffolk and Norfolk Area Child Protection Committees (ACPC) has taken place to develop the **SAFE programme**. This has resulted in a SAFE website, guidance booklets and training for our members being available in part since 2002 and in full since 2003.

A Norfolk Children's Fund was the first Programme to put in place a certificated training programme on child protection for its members and to fund a full time child protection officer within the ACPC team to oversee this work. The course that was developed has been accepted by other funders as robust evidence that appropriate procedures are in place to safeguard children using our services. The SAFE programme is slowly being rolled out with several other counties and some major commercial corporations already signed up to it.

A Children's Fund supported the pilot (2003) and initial roll out (2004) of '**Crucial Crew**' the keeping safe programme for children provided by the emergency services, by sponsoring the production of the workbooks for teachers and children and enabling them to access the materials and resources free of charge.

### **3.9 Training and funding application support**

A The Partnership provides a range of training for its members, and whenever possible this is free of charge. In addition to the child protection training outlined above, and the good practice seminar and publications, a rolling programme of training is provided on subjects such as: finance systems; evidencing soft outcomes; target setting and action planning; business planning; policy development and embedding policy in working practice (e.g. equal opportunities); user participation; and most recently first aid.

A **3.10** The central team has recently been asked to provide training on monitoring and outcomes for voluntary and community organisations in the west of the county. This will build capacity for engagement with delivery of the 5 key outcomes for ECM and facilitate funding applications for new lottery funding streams that are very heavily outcome based. **Our service providers tell us that it is thanks to previous training and support that two thirds of the successful Parenting Fund applications in the county came from Children's Fund service partners.**

**3.11** Work is in progress to strengthen existing links between Children's Fund and partner agencies such as the voluntary councils and Early Years with a view to sharing resources and establishing an integrated training programme.

### **3.12 Sharing of information and data to inform service planning and resourcing**

A Our local independent evaluators, the University of East Anglia (UEA), worked with the Partnership to develop a tailor-made ISA (Information Sharing and Assessment) system called Nortrack. The Nortrack system is used in conjunction with the performance management system, monitoring data, evaluation data and a service review system (also developed by the Partnership). Norfolk Children's Fund has already been able to provide to partner agencies data that has been used to inform service commissioning and resource planning, for example to the Crime, Disorder and Reduction Partnerships around numbers of families not on police records that are accessing Norfolk Children's Fund services for victims of domestic violence. Appendix 12 is an executive summary of the 2004 local evaluation.

### **3.13 Contributions that the Children's Fund make towards achieving the outcomes defined in Every Child Matters (staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and economic well-being)**

There is a great deal of work in progress locally through phase 3 of ECM and the ECM sub groups to define how outcomes will be achieved in

Norfolk. Expectations of NCF are yet to be made explicit. NCF contributes to this development work and has outlined the match between the current NCF work to the CF sub objectives and the ECM outcomes in appendix 2, and appendix 1 - Project Synopsis which details outcome matches with service delivery plans. For information on monitoring and evaluation processes that will provide evidence of work contributing to the ECM outcomes see section 5 and appendix 3 - Annual Monitoring Chart .

## Section 4 - Planning for Lasting Change

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### 1. Review of delivery service priorities

Norfolk Children's Fund service delivery Programme is regularly reviewed by the Partnership for effective performance and strategic fit to priorities as defined by evidence of local need. This process will continue but will link closely with emerging local structures. The Partnership will have clear links to all planning and decision making levels put in place by the Local Authority, from the County Children and Young People's Strategic Planning Group down to the locality cluster groups, so that a two way communication process can occur. The Partnership will share data, evidence and strategic information with Local Children and Young People's Strategic Planning Groups (LCYPSPG) and participate in agreeing service needs and priorities. This essential information will be brought back into the Partnership and will be used to refine and refocus service delivery targets as appropriate to ensure that Children's Fund delivery priorities match local plans and requirements of ECM.

### 2. Pilot Local Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership

The West Norfolk Local Strategic Partnership is piloting work on local structure and governance for planning and commissioning of services under Every Child Matters. This work is in its very early stages, sub groups were formed under the direction of the District Council and the ECM team, key stakeholders participated in a planning day to originate the vision, purpose, principles and aims, objectives and structure. A small core group met to produce a draft document outlining these elements and a diagram of the possible structure for planning and commissioning that may be piloted. Once the draft has been approved by Local Authority cabinet members it will go out to other Strategic planning groups for consultation. A number of consultation 'Big events' are planned in West Norfolk to allow all stakeholders to participate in the development of the local structure. Norfolk Children's Fund has been involved in the pilot work with both the Programme Manager and the voluntary sector Chair of the Children's Fund Local Partnership Group as members of the core group producing the draft document. It is not possible to append the draft document until it has been approved for consultation. The diagram shown in appendix 4 outlines the DRAFT ECM structure for local areas showing the position of the Children's Fund. It must be stressed that this has not yet been released for consultation.

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### 3. The key outcomes for Children's Fund as aligned with ECM

The 5 key outcomes for ECM (and to a lesser extent the 11 National Service Framework standards) mesh well with the 7 sub objectives of Children's Fund. See appendix 2. Because of the close correlation it is easy to identify key outcomes against the service delivery plan –see appendix 1 - Project Synopsis where links to the ECM outcomes and the 11 NSF standards have already been identified.

It is encouraging for partners to see how work already being delivered aligns

closely with the ECM outcomes. Over time delivery will be refined to locally agreed indicators.

The Norfolk Children's Fund Programme is focused on the following themed areas selected from the Children's Fund national aims and objectives:

- ◆ Schools focussed
- ◆ Family support
- ◆ Rural access

The key ECM outcomes for the Programme will be:

- ◆ Enjoying and achieving
- ◆ Making a positive contribution
- ◆ Experiencing economic well being

Plus:

- ◆ Staying safe

As a key outcome for the Programme's crime prevention strand.

From the National Service Framework the following standards will be key for the focus of the Programme:

- ◆ Standard 2 Supporting Parenting
- ◆ Standard 3 Child, Young Person and Family-Centred Services

Plus:

- ◆ Standard 5 Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children and Young People

As a key outcome for the Programme's crime prevention strand.

#### **4. Measuring progress against the key outcomes**

These will be measured using a combination of the national monitoring and evaluation systems, Programme performance management and review systems and Programme independent local evaluations. See appendix 3 Annual Monitoring Process Chart

**4.1** The Local Authority is developing centralised performance management structures for service delivery. Programme staff are already working closely with the ECM team to both share learning and to contribute to developing new integrated

A structures of performance management. It is an expectation that current Programme systems may need to adapt in the interim in order to deliver required data as service delivery is refined to meet local planning and commissioning requirements.

#### **4.2 Joint Area Reviews**

Children's Fund also has a contribution to make to the Joint Area Review framework in supplying supporting data and facilitating user participation. NCF

A already has a three-year body of evidence to support preventive service delivery outcomes.

#### 4.3 Targets and traditional and non-traditional indicators

The action planning system of performance management developed by the Programme does not rely solely on hard data but provides innovative mechanisms for evidencing effectiveness of outcomes to soft targets.

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Many non-traditional indicators are successfully used to evidence soft targets and these are most often applied to access the views of the service users – the children, young people and their families for example:

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- ◆ Very young children are assisted to use the Partnership's multi-media resources and may draw pictures or take digital photographs to express their views and highlight aspects of their service that they like/don't like.
- ◆ Smiley face charts have been used to indicate happiness levels, amongst other techniques.

In determining the most appropriate methods to be used as outcome indicators due note is taken of the professional knowledge service providers have of their users special needs, capabilities and issues. Reports of activity and anecdotal evidence can be key here, for example:

- ◆ A child speaking to project staff for the first time after six weeks of service use may well be an event that evidences a significant breakthrough in terms of the child's engagement and in improving outcomes for that child.

4.4 Targets and the indicators used to measure programme performance are based on national and county first tier targets, local (service) targets or second tier targets are linked with these through the sub objectives. Additional targets and indicators that are designed to measure progress against soft outcomes are agreed and recorded in action plans. Depending on the service type, targets and indicators for both hard and soft outcomes may go down to the level of the individual child or family. In terms of information management, individual user targets and outcomes can be reported as part of overall performance reporting of the whole service.

This type of evidence is key to proving the impact of preventive service delivery. In determining the effect of preventive service delivery it is not enough to provide 'dosage' figures – it is easy to provide data to evidence an improvement in a child's school attendance but not so easy to provide evidence that a child is happy and engaged in learning.

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NCF maximises the reach of the Programme to as many of the targeted children and young people as possible although the emphasis has always been on quality delivery not quantity. Appropriate targeting is achieved through the use of a range of data relevant to different service types and integrated working between partners to ensure agreed criteria and referral processes.

**4.5 The NCF service delivery Programme is extremely diverse in content and spans all statutory agencies and a significant number of local voluntary and community agencies who provide services to children. The**

A **performance management system in place works across all agencies and service delivery types as a mechanism for drawing together diverse data and evidence strands to enable analysis of effectiveness of delivery to target outcomes.**

#### 4.6 Key milestones

Because the ECM Norfolk Plan is still in the early stages of development in terms key timelines and milestones the Partnership is unable to produce a chart showing *parallel* actions and timelines. However a table listing future development tasks and links where known is shown in appendix 5.

#### 4.7 Opportunities for embedding Norfolk Children's Fund Partnership's projects, principles and policies into emerging Children's Trust arrangements.

NCF officers and key partnership members such as Local Group Chairs and Vice Chairs are working to ensure that NCF is represented in key meeting rounds, working groups and pilot projects. Clear lines of communication are established within the Partnership whereby strategic information is shared via the County Board. Information is also disseminated to organisations and feed back facilitated by key members of the Partnership. NCF officers support each level of meeting.

By ensuring good representation and a looped flow of communication the NCF Partnership is able to respond flexibly to local requirements as the Local Authority strategic planning and commissioning structure develops. For example:

- ◆ NCF Officers have been working to develop links with Crime, Disorder and Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) over an extended period of time. Officers attend the 7 local CDRPs and the County CDRP. This will facilitate the provision of the management data now required by CDRPs in respect of the *Prolific and Other Priority Offender Strategy – Guidance Paper 3 Prevent and Deter (issued September 2004)*. CDRP' are to share in the monitoring of the performance and throughput of YISPs with both Children's Fund and Youth Justice.
- ◆ Early discussions are in progress with regard to possible funding from CDRPs to cover NCF budget shortfalls and allow for full provision of planned YISP service.
- ◆ NCF is already providing open access to data to CDRPs for CF services other than YISPs that meet the crime prevention objective. This data is being used in planning and resourcing services. Data is available for all partner agencies to access.
- ◆ NCF working with CDRPs to develop a common language and understanding of approaches that support crime prevention for children (as opposed to level 4 crime reduction measures for children and adults)
- ◆ Joint working with YOT partners to support crime prevention service delivery and to determine practical ways that Children's Fund can support the delivery of the Prevent and Deter strand.
- ◆ The Programme Manager will participate in a new senior manager's forum to share good practice and learning with regard to project management

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- ◆ See appendix 4 showing the **draft** structure of the western pilot. The connecting lines show the flow of information which enables principles and policies to be shared.
  - ◆ NCF officers and other key partnership members (such as Local Group Chairs) attend the current Children's Strategic Partnerships to ensure links are maintained with local developments and information is shared.
  - ◆ The Partnership has strong links with the voluntary councils in Norfolk, providing joint training opportunities and mutual strategic support, particularly in disseminating information.
  - ◆ The Partnership principles of user participation are being disseminated by facilitating access to the views of children and young people on planning, commissioning and delivery
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**4.8** In Norfolk phase 3 of the ECM work is underway. Appendix 6 shows the latest ECM update on phase 3 from the Local Authority. This phase involves the appointment of the Director of Children and Families and the creation of 8 sub groups looking at different aspects of the ECM programme delivery such as performance management. The results of this work will be reported to both cabinet members and the newly appointed Director during December and January. The Programme Manager has recently become a member of the Advisory Board where reports are received from the sub groups, and of the Joint Management Group where ECM issues affecting service delivery and staffing are discussed. Linked work has been taking place through direct work with the ECM team and involvement with sub group work at a locality level such as within the structure and governance western pilot outlined in appendix 4.

**4.9** The Partnership has so far focused on involvement in local activity and development as previously described as a mechanism for embedding NCF principles and policies in developing strategy. The Programme Manager and the Independent Chair will also be contributing the Partnership's views to county level planning meetings.

**4.10 Challenges to the migration of Children's Fund into Children's Trust arrangements**

- ◆ Partnership valued by income not outcome
- ◆ Inequality in membership of key strategic groups due to determination by status not by learning and skills (particularly as relevant to voluntary and community sector)
- ◆ Need for schools to be aware of mainstreaming potential
- ◆ Myths, misconceptions and misunderstandings around what the Children's Fund is and does that obstruct engagement and inclusion
- ◆ Lack of understanding around the position of CF with its sister funds Sure Start and Connexions
- ◆ Belief that CF is a funding stream, rather than what it is – a government initiative delivering and managing broad based pure preventive services
- ◆ Lack of public and professional awareness that many successful preventive projects across the county are either current CF services or were supported through start up by CF

- ◆ Undermining of positive achievements through the shift in focus to negative funding issues
- ◆ CYPFD criteria and contract requirements obstructing a flexible response to local requirements
- ◆ CYPFD imposition of directives/systems/changes to and provision of guidance in an untimely fashion that obstructs effective local change management
- ◆ Insufficient resources to facilitate a smooth transition to Children's Trust arrangements
- ◆ Loss of key staff needed to effect a smooth transition

### **Strategies to overcome these challenges**

- ◆ A need to re-brand Children's Fund and publicise positive achievements more effectively (this is important in positioning services for mainstreaming and the Partnership strategically)
- ◆ Positive representation of CF by partners and members
- ◆ Careful linking of NCF and the work of the Extended Schools programme
- ◆ Support from the accountable body and lead agency Norfolk County Council to ensure that NCF is correctly positioned in emerging structures
- ◆ Continuing good support from the regional team in the implementation of CYPFD directives
- ◆ Continued support from the accountable body and lead agency to ensure that CYPFD directives are facilitated or challenged as appropriate
- ◆ Continued support from the accountable body and lead agency as the employers of the Programme Manager and the Programme Team.

#### **4.11 Plans for work to support projects and others to ensure that those preventative services that are effective are sustainable in the longer-term.**

The Partnership strategy for supporting the sustainability of services through robust evidencing of positive outcomes and via correct positioning of NCF strategically to ensure that the service delivery programme is refined and refocused as necessary to meet emerging strategic priorities has been detailed in this document on pages 10, 12, 13,14 and in sections 5 and 6.

## Section 5 - Partnership and Management Structure

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*\*Extract from the national guidance for the Children's Fund strategic plan.*

*In order to ensure that Children's Fund is able to influence the realignment of children's services, Partnerships need to be actively represented at a senior level in the local area's children's services' strategic structures - Children & Young People Strategic Partnerships (CYPSP), Children's Trust Boards, integrated services management groups (as appropriate). Given the pace of change and the different pathways each individual Local Authority area may take, strategic structures are likely to change in line with emerging developments; the plan should therefore be set out in this context and should describe how the Children's Fund Partnership will respond to working within a new structural framework.*

### 1. Structure

The accountable body and lead agency for Norfolk Children's Fund is Norfolk County Council. The Programme team are currently hosted by Social Services and sit with the Planning team within the Performance and Resources Division. See appendix 7 for key timelines and actions for organisational changes.

Norfolk is a large rural shire and has a two tier authority. The structure of the Children's Fund Partnership in Norfolk reflects this. There are five Local Partnership Groups - Central (meets in Norwich), Western (meets in Kings Lynn), Eastern (meets in Great Yarmouth), Southern (meets in Thetford and elsewhere in the South) and Northern (meets in North Walsham). Membership of local groups is a mixture of service providers and relevant statutory partners e.g. district managers of YOT and YCS, community police, health visitors. Local Groups were linked with existing structures as much as possible, for example the Southern group is closely connected with the Southern Children's Strategic Planning Group which is based on PCT/Social Services boundaries. No attempt was made to draw up strict geographical boundaries for Local Groups and partners were invited to attend the Group most conveniently located to them. This arrangement has worked very well and boundaries have been naturally defined by usage and convenience. This has been particularly helpful to partners since statutory boundaries of PCT's, education, social services and District Councils are not coterminous.

The Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Local Groups are members of an overarching Partnership Board and feed local strategic and voluntary sector views into the Board. Statutory sector membership of the Board is at a strategic level e.g. Deputy Head of Service for YOT, Head of Service Early Years and Sure Start, Assistant Director of Education, Chief Executive of Connexions. There is an independent Chair of the Partnership Board. The Partnership has strong links with the Children's Strategic Planning Groups in localities and has also forged links with other groups such as the 7 CDRPs.

The Partnership reviewed the structure of the Local Groups in July 2004 to bring their working process in line with the local children's strategic planning groups. The Local Groups currently have two meeting rounds that alternate so that there is a meeting every six weeks to comply with CYPFD contractual requirements. The regional team were involved in supporting this restructuring.

The two meeting rounds are:

- 1.2 Strategic** – service managers and district managers from partner agencies meet to share strategic information on policy and developments in their parent organisations that are supporting ECM work. Whenever possible speakers attend these meetings to provide information on current key issues that may affect management of policy implementation or management of service practice such as changes in the child protection structure (a recent speaker). Some strategic business issues particular to CF are also discussed. This arrangement supports rationalisation of meetings as whenever possible this meeting round is held in the same venue and immediately prior to the local Children's Strategic Planning Groups as many members also attend the planning groups. The strategic function of this group, via the Chair and Vice Chair who are members of the Board, is to feed information about local developments and priorities up to the Partnership Board to inform Partnership decision-making and over arching planning.
- 1.3 Networking** – practitioners and community members (service managers are not excluded from this group and vice versa) meet to share business and operational information and good practice. A progress report on service activity is provided by funded members and there is the opportunity to link with activities taking place in other services for joint working and shared resources. Training sessions take place within or immediately after these meetings whenever possible such as recent training on using the checklists and support packs to gain child protection certification for services. This meeting round 'skills up' members and builds capacity and understanding to empower members to participate in the strategic meetings.
- 1.4 Interim arrangement**  
This arrangement was developed to be a 'holding' or interim arrangement pending agreement on the structure and governance to be used for Norfolk under ECM. The western pilot for this structure has been described on page 18 as has the involvement of NCF in this pilot.

The Partnership has plans to review this interim arrangement as soon as the new structure is agreed. In reviewing this structure the Partnership will take into account the support requirements of partner agencies. The Partnership will be advised by the Local Authority as the accountable body and lead agency for NCF. The statutory guidance, which will be issued in March 2005 by the Secretary of State for Education, will inform the review. Local partners will be enabled to understand and implement their duty to co-operate. The Partnership will continue to review its internal structure and governance and respond flexibly to emerging arrangements for the Children's Trust approach as appropriate to the Norfolk Plan.

## **1.5 Local Authority plans to realign strategic structures and planning arrangements**

The Local Authority ECM update is shown in appendix 6

Realignment of organisational structure is outlined in appendix 7.

Details of the western pilot for changes to structure are available on page 19 and in appendix 4.

Full details of proposals, briefing papers and plans are available via the Norfolk County Council website under Every Child Matters.

A Project Board (formerly Preventive Strategy Board) with a Chief Officer membership has been overseeing the development of Norfolk's strategy in response to changing policy for children. This inter-agency board is Norfolk's response to the Green Paper, *Every Child Matters*, integrating within this the preventive strategy and ISA.

Underneath this there is a multi-agency Advisory Board of senior officers, of which the Children's Fund Programme Manager is a member.

A Programme Manager and project team for Every Child Matters provide operational support to the work of the Project Board.

## **1.6 Work to realign strategic structures and planning arrangements is being delivered in phases:**

Phase 1: a major consultation and research exercise examining if an integrated children's service was the right thing for Norfolk.

Phase 2: a wide engagement process to develop ideas of what a service might look like based on the consultation. Cabinet agreed:

- The recruitment of the Director of Children's Services
- The criteria against which to judge any new model of service
  - child focused
  - preventive
  - integrated
  - local
- to set up a County Strategic Partnership for Children and Young People
- the vision as a basis for future work

Phase 3: is the current delivery phase: the appointment of the new Director and the implementation of eight sub-project teams tackling areas such as 'what outcomes can we achieve for children and young people in the next five years?' and 'how we will plan and buy services jointly in the future', and 'how we develop the workforce for future integration'. This work is expected to report by late December 2004/early January 2005.

## **1.7 Since key decisions have yet to be made about implications, process and implementation of the work strands, a work plan, a timeline and key milestones for achieving the Norfolk ECM work plan have yet to be drafted.**

It is not possible, therefore, to include key milestones for Children's Fund that are parallel matched to the ECM milestones as required in the CF plan guidance.

We do not wish to preempt the emerging plan and will wish to link as closely as possible with the milestones defined by the Local Authority as they are published. Therefore the future development tasks shown in appendix 5 are a reflection of our intentions within the vision for *Every Child Matters* and indicate links with ECM work where known and a broad timescale for completion of tasks. This will be refined and detail added as ECM plans are published.

## **2. Opportunities and barriers to creating synergy between the work of the Children's Fund and the broader children's service reform**

### **2.1 The organisational position of the Children's Fund**

It is not possible to append an organisational diagram that includes the position of the Children's Fund core team/programme manager as required by the plan at this time.

Appendix 7 details the timeline and the process that will take place to restructure the organisation of children's and families services. The new Director takes up appointment 1<sup>st</sup> February 2005 and will meet with all service managers in the interim. The Programme Manager will attend a meeting with the new Director on 20<sup>th</sup> December so that if possible the required appendix can be provided as a late addition to the plan.

### **2.2 Stakeholder consultation**

An extended all day strategic Board meeting took place 15<sup>th</sup> October 2004. Guest speakers were the Programme Manager for ECM in Norfolk, who provided updates on the Norfolk Plan; and the Director of Children and Families research at the University of East Anglia who leads the CF local evaluation team and the national evaluation team for Children's Trusts, who provided information on the developing Children's Trusts and the role of the Children's Fund within this approach.

Aside from constituted Board members a number of key stakeholders attended as guest members, for example the designate Director of Children's Services, the Member Champion for Children, and the Every Child Matters Programme Manager. The views of the stakeholders are incorporated throughout this document.

### **2.3 Synergy between NCF and NYJB/YOT**

Norfolk Children's Fund has a dual relationship with Norfolk Youth Justice.

The two organisations are joint partners in overseeing the delivery of the crime prevention element of the Children's Fund Programme. Each partner has specialist knowledge to bring to the delivery strand.

Norfolk Youth Justice has specialist knowledge of crime-related issues and experience of collation and analysis of hard data and a network of statutory

links with mainstream provision.

Norfolk Children's Fund has specialist knowledge of preventive service delivery mechanisms and working with a younger age group than that usually targeted by YOT, experience of collating evidence against soft targets such as raising self esteem, and a network of links to the voluntary and community sector in addition to statutory.

The complementary strengths of the two organisations has led to the successful implementation of the crime prevention strand. The Children's Fund does have an additional level of accountability in that funding for this strand of preventive service delivery is derived solely from the Children's Fund budget.

- 2.4** A governance process was agreed by both Boards at the start of the joint delivery and this has worked well in terms of shared decision making and communication. In brief the teams work together to prepare joint briefing papers on any issue that needs to be agreed by the Partnerships. The paper is presented jointly, undersigned by YOT and NCF managers, to the YOT and NCF Boards who are then enabled to make informed decisions.
- 2.5** The second level of relationship is at the service level. Norfolk Youth Justice gained the tender to deliver the Youth Inclusion and Support Panels (YISPs) service (Norfolk's choice from the menu of options). The YISPs are a Children's Fund service for which NYOT are the lead agency within the service 'mini partnership'. At this level NCF has the same relationship with NYOT as with all other lead service providers delivering Children's Fund services in that regular meetings take place between YISP staff and NCF staff where performance is monitored and YISP staff attend Local Group meetings in areas where panels are based.
- 2.6** Of course there is a cross-over in the dual relationship and both teams have worked very well together to develop the YISPs and ensure their success and the success of the launch.
- 2.7** It is the predicted success of this service provision and that of the other elements of successful Children's Fund crime prevention service provision that is engaging and will engage partner agencies, and will ensure that service strategies and methodologies will inform wider children's service developments. An example of this can be seen in the performance of the YISP panels where the assessment process rationalises service delivery, conserves resources, avoids duplication and ensures that service is provided to clear evidence of need and in a timely fashion. Partners can demonstrably see the benefits of integrated multi-agency working and the improved outcomes for children. A further example of successful crime prevention can be seen in the North Lynn Discovery centre provided by Children's Fund. The activity centre also provides education on issues such as drugs awareness, and by engaging children safely in diversionary activities reduces the risk of offending. The centre is providing for over 1000 children drawn from target wards across King's Lynn, far exceeding the original target figure of 200 children from the ward where the project is based.

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**2.8** In terms of practical support for our YOT partners in their delivery of the Prevent and Deter strand: as a wave 1 Programme we have a fully committed service budget, and therefore no uncommitted financial resources to support the expansion of the YISP or to commission new service for the implementation of JYIP (Junior Youth Inclusion Programme). However we will seek to support joint applications for additional funding from sources such as the lottery's Young People's Fund strategic strand. We will also seek to refine and refocus service delivery to meet the requirements of JYIP where possible and appropriate. In planning this we will work closely with our YOT partners to determine need and viability.

### **3. The Voluntary and Community Sector**

The voluntary and community sector is involved in planning and managing services through membership of the Partnership. There are clear decision making processes in place which allow local views to be appropriately fed into higher level strategic planning. Within the Board meetings, voluntary sector members have equal empowerment with statutory members in determining budget disposition, service commissioning and structure and governance arrangements. Voluntary sector members also have equal responsibility and accountability for monitoring performance and best value.

**3.1** Through integrated service delivery, voluntary sector partners have built relationships with statutory partners. This joint working has enabled mutual respect to develop around skills, knowledge and practise.

Through the Partnership mechanisms there has been capacity building of the voluntary sector so that a wider view is taken in the localities of the sector as key stakeholders. For example many of our voluntary sector Chairs and Vice Chairs play a key role in representing Children's Fund and their own organisations in strategic groups and meetings.

Given that the voluntary sector dominate as lead agency service providers within Norfolk Children's Fund evidence of professional effectiveness is readily available to demonstrate the value of voluntary partners both as strategic partners and service providers.

As part of capacity building the Partnership has also provided training and fundraising support.

**3.2** *'The East of England Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure Strategy, Investment and Implementation Plan'* presents a number of challenges to the VCS. The Children's Fund has a developed good working relationships with VCS partners and the voluntary councils in Norfolk and is well placed to provide the infrastructure required to support the voluntary and community sector in engaging with 'Change Up east' under the following areas:

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- modernising infrastructure - accountability, ISA, planning needs led local services, analysis and reporting of data to other agencies
- embedding quality - workforce development, sharing best practice, improved performance

- improving ICT support - we have provided modern ICT facilities for all our services and provided training as appropriate in the use of innovative software systems such as the Nortrack ISA and monitoring system.
- Building capacity in key service areas - we have built capacity by bringing key VCS providers with specialist knowledge into other localities to provide service to locally defined needs and priorities and provided the links between voluntary service provision and statutory commissioners.
- Management and evaluation - we have provided the infrastructure for VCS to participate in administration, co-ordination, commissioning and delivery of activities that further the agreed objectives (of the Children's Fund). We have provided the infrastructure for benchmarking, monitoring and evaluation of activities and provided support where required\* to facilitate engagement and understanding of the process and purpose of monitoring systems.
- Focus of investment - we have provided a forum whereby the VCS are enabled to participate in decision making about budget allocation, staffing and commissioning from government funding

The continued development of these skills at a county level will enable the VCS to participate in the delivery of the regional strategy.

\*Many of our VCS partners have the skills to engage in strategic activities but have benefited from a strategic framework within which to ground their operations. It is this framework that will continue to provide one of the best routes to mainstreaming and sustainability in the long term.

The Children's Fund Partnership is engaged in negotiations with the developing Voluntary Sector Forum via the voluntary council with regard to providing support for VCS local partnerships. Draft terms of reference and governance structures for VCS local groups will be drawn up by the Voluntary Forum. Proposals for involvement of NCF in facilitating these groups will be brought to the NCF Board for approval early in the New Year.

#### **4 Children and Young People's contributions to decision making and commissioning**

This has been detailed in part in pages 12 and 13.

##### **4.1 How children and families have and will shape the Programme**

A There has been an extensive programme of user participation training, reaching all levels of those involved in delivery and developing projects. Project managers have received training on policy and CYPFD and Ofsted standard requirements. Project workers have received training on how to consult and involve children and parents in decision-making, including how to plan events that involve children at all stages, such as what activities, the venue and how to spend the budget. We have also piloted training in partnership with the West Norfolk PCT specifically for children in developing the skills and confidence to take on a sense of ownership and responsibility for the running of their projects. This included self-esteem raising and how to read adults' body language. We would like to roll this out across the Programme but the financial resource is not available at present.

Every project is audited for evidence on user participation for service reviews and during quarterly monitoring. Services use a wide range of strategies as appropriate to service type to involve children and families in planning and delivery and management decisions. Parents of both genders make up a high proportion of service volunteers within 86% of the projects with voluntary staff support. *See also 2.13 page 13.*

#### **4.2 Helping children to make choices as to which services and approaches should be mainstreamed**

We consulted children on what type of services they wanted and needed as part of the service review. One hundred and fifty four children took the time to complete a questionnaire. This information was then presented to the panel making the funding decisions. Every child that took part was given feedback of the results in the form of a two-sided poster and a goody bag as a reward. This was later followed by group feedback with an NCF officer who informed children how their views had been used in planning strategy and how the service delivery programme had been matched against their priority ratings.

This strand is part of an ongoing process to ensure full participation. Children within our services are currently involved in discussions with wider planning groups working on the ECM strands.

We are working with children to enable them to be full 'consultants' rather than to be consulted with using traditional mechanisms. Recently children have enjoyed directing the operations of the professional production team filming a YISP information video (deciding on sound track, scenes and fine tuning 'realism' for professional actors).

The self generated children's committee in the NCF North Lynn Discovery project reviewed the delivery plans for six wave 2 and 3 Children's Fund Programmes in the Eastern region. On the basis of the children's recommendations some Programmes were required to submit amendments to their plans.

We continue to work with our child partners to develop new ways of engaging with their views.

#### **4.3 Child and parent friendly information**

So that children understand how their projects are funded and whom they are accountable to, we have developed a comic strip to inform children "What is the Children's Fund". It has been published in Norfolk Crucial Crew, a children's workbook on safety which aims to make children feel safe and involved. The comic strip has been used by many other Programmes around the country.

We ensure that all partners are fully briefed on developmental progress, including parents. Our new website is in constant use as a communication and operational tool by all partners. There is a discussion area and partners are able to post notices and comments. We have a newsletter that also contains materials submitted by the children.

#### **4.4 Processes by which children and parents will be involved**

Children and parents have varying degrees of involvement within services as appropriate to service type such as parent support groups, children's committees where children monitor peer access to services and impose their agreed behaviour sanctions.

Other processes have been mentioned elsewhere such as peer facilitation and service review surveys.

Children as well as adults are full delegates at our conferences and events. At our annual conference in 2003 children ran workshops, others were delegates and one young person chaired the Question Time Panel which included The Right Honourable Charles Clarke, Secretary of State for Education (at that time) as a panel member. Our 2004 conference was a full children's conference where children aged 5-13 with mixed ability and from a variety of schools across the county engaged in a variety of activities around the theme of diversity. The children themselves informed us that they were able to come together in a mixed group with none of the tensions that might be expected because 'we are all Children's Fund'. NCF has built up the capacity of children and young people in carefully stepped stages over the life of the Programme to enable high level participation of this kind. There is a psychological benefit to seeing that many other children have issues that require support. *See also 2.13 page 13.*

#### **4.5 Involvement in development of the plan**

Children and Young People's involvement in the review process has been outlined. The survey used was a repeat of the initial consultation survey undertaken to facilitate the original Programme 3 year plan. By comparing the results of the two surveys and analysing the shift in the children's strategic requirements the Partnership was able to determine the impact of the first two years of service delivery on the children's needs. This information was also used to inform the overarching strategic distribution of service type. Further information about regular and ongoing involvement in planning, development and delivery of services is shown in appendix 12 - Extract from the Independent Local Evaluation.

#### **5. Changes and proposals for change in the lead and accountable body**

The lead and accountable body for NCF is Norfolk County Council. Norfolk is a two tier authority and there are no unitary authorities within the county. Appendix 7 details the changes to fit with new and emerging structures and how the transition will be managed.

#### **6. Proposed Activities for 2005 - 2008**

Norfolk is a wave 1 Programme and therefore undertook a full service review in November 2003 with service cuts to the value of £1.4 million having been undertaken to:

- a) reduce to our standard allocation for 2004/5 after a budget uplift resulting from the carry forward of funds from the late start in year one.
- b) adhere to the requirement to decommission services from a fully committed

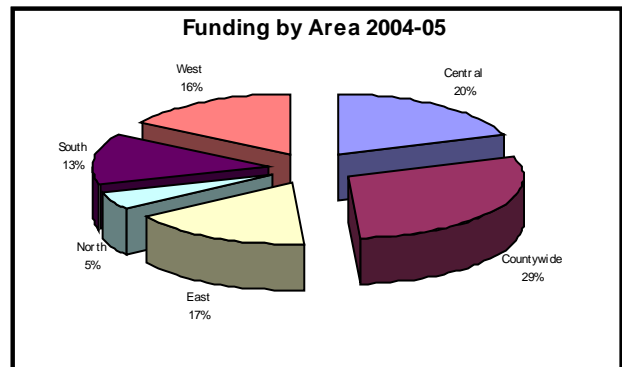
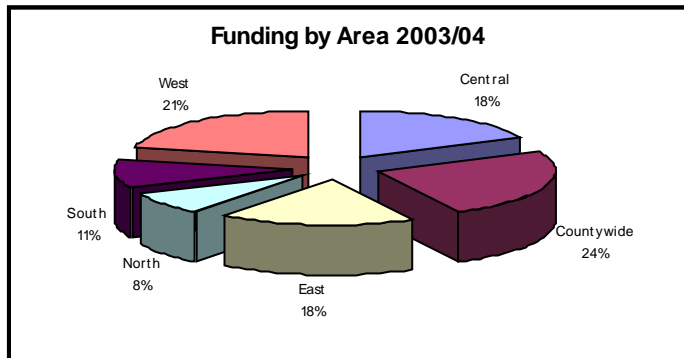
service programme in order to free up monies to accommodate the 25% spend on crime prevention.

- 6.2** A second review took place in February 2004 to further reduce service commitments in line with national budget reductions.
- 6.3** The review decisions were made on a strategic basis using a whole range of information and data, for example: the views of Statutory Heads of Service around the sustainability and mainstreaming potential of services; prioritisation at a local level by local groups based on information from local children's strategic partnerships about their priorities; and the strategic views of the children themselves who prioritised service type. The flow chart outlines the evidence included in the review (Appendix 8).
- 6.4** The local evaluation of Norfolk Children's Fund shows that the Programme has remained successfully focused on its objectives and has been effective in achieving these. A strategic plan was produced to inform the review process, incorporating evaluation findings and preventative strategy (which did not require significant shifts strategically for the Programme). The key strategic issues for the future in the plan were:
- Strategic priority needs to be given to rural access services.
  - Current distribution across sub- objectives is compatible with the strategic priorities in the original plan, and with ECM outcomes and to a lesser extent the National Service Framework standards. Appendix 2. This balance needs to be maintained.
- A
- Services are successfully targeted to deprivation indices areas.
- A
- Gender targeting within NCF services is in line with national weightings.
- A
- NCF services are successfully targeting the specified age group.
- A
- Delivery to hard to reach groups such as ethnic minorities, travellers and refugees and asylum seekers is exceeding proportional targets (based on 2001 census figures).
  - The high proportion of voluntary agency lead service providers as opposed to statutory agency lead should remain
  - Strategic care must be taken to maintain links and networks between projects.
  - The children's priorities should be strongly borne in mind for future Programme planning

A review panel reviewed the evidence and made recommendations for the future programme, which were approved at a special meeting of the Partnership Board in November 2003. There was a reduction in services from 53 to 28.

- 6.5** The second review process in February 2004 used the same process and panel to accommodate the national budget cuts announced in January 2004. The 28 services remaining from the first review were retained without further terminations although all services sustained a reduction in individual budgets and therefore will be delivering a reduced service from 2003 levels.

**6.6** By using strategic criteria to make review decisions the balance across target groups, areas and themes has been maintained. 10 of the 11 trailblazers will continue and the balance of funding across the county has only altered slightly as shown below.



**6.7** Quarterly monitoring processes were enhanced to provide ongoing review and performance data to the Board. Therefore after the August 2004 announcement of the three year budget allocation, a further full service review, although discussed as an option, was not felt to be necessary to accommodate the third reduction in budget (a 16% reduction on the original allocation).

**6.8** It is planned that the current delivery programme of 28 services will continue, minus 1 that will be mainstreamed in 2005. Services will be issued with a three year contract to comply with the Compact agreement and to allow sufficient time for mainstreaming. As figures for 2005/06 service budgets are provisional until quarter 4 2004/05 when variants will be known it is not possible for services to commit to guarantee delivery at the time of writing the plan.

## **7. Crime prevention delivery**

Deliveries under what was known as 'the 25%' (as being the percentage of the NCF budget applied to this service strand) do not differ from the original menu choice and are proceeding according to plan in terms of developing a delivery and staffing structure. All decisions are made with the full involvement of the Head of Norfolk Youth Justice Service and both partnership Boards are kept fully informed and are involved in any decision ratification necessary.

**7.1** The menu option chosen is YISPs. A countywide manager has been in post since the end of October 2003. This post sits within the YOT team and is line managed by the YOT Manager responsible for Prevention. The development of YISPs was chosen as one of four pilot initiatives within the County's original Preventive Strategy and was launched at an executive level county conference in June 2003.

**7.2** The tender to deliver the YISPs was awarded by a special panel in December 2003 to the Norfolk YOT. The national budget changes have necessitated a reduction from the planned five panels to three in order to ensure sustainability

through to the original allocation term 2004-2006. The new allocation term runs from 2005 - 2008. The provision will be kept under review by both Boards and should additional funding become available consideration will be given, again by both Boards, as to whether it is practical to extend the provision. YISP panels went 'live' in June 2004 and a full launch of the YISP scheme took place in September 2004. YISP Keyworkers, Administrative and Research and Information staff are employed by YOT to support the panels. Data from the YISPs will be used to identify service needs and gaps that will be filled through commissioning with both voluntary and statutory sector organisations supported by a small commissioning budget.

- 7.3** Late in 2003, Norfolk's Children's Fund took part in a joint inspection of Norfolk's CDRPs which focussed on vulnerable young people. There was positive feedback on the range of Children's Fund services aside from YISPs that work to support crime prevention to varying degrees.

## **8. Commissioning**

Appendix 9 outlines the commissioning process. This is a bottom up needs led approach that has enabled the views of every partner to contribute to the commissioning process at a level appropriate for each individual. The Programme has a fully committed service budget aside from the small commissioning budget available to support the YISPs. See appendix 10 for changes in the commissioning process to accommodate YISP service support.

- 8.1** Should the Programme access additional funding the current commissioning process would dovetail very well with the proposed local structure as outlined in appendix 4 for the western pilot. It would be expected that the priorities for service delivery determined by the local strategic planning groups would be used to inform commissioning decisions made by the Board. It must be remembered that NCF is a countywide Programme and adjustments may need to be made to local priorities in order to retain cohesion in an overarching countywide service strategy.
- 8.2** It is possible that Children's Fund may be one of a number of agencies that could be resourced to deliver preventive services to a specific commission and brief from a local strategic planning group during the interim period whilst formal commissioning processes are developed. In this eventuality the Board would clearly have no influence on the brief, but could be required to select or short list on behalf of the LSPG, based on expressions of interest, the partner best placed to deliver the service required and to monitor and report back to the LSPG on the performance of the service.
- 8.3** New commissioning frameworks are in the early stages of development. There may be interim stages that NCF can support in the progression towards formal agreed processes for the county. NCF will endeavour to remain flexible and responsive as this area develops.

The Partnership will regularly review structure and process as new mechanisms are put in place to deliver the agreed outcomes for ECM, and make changes as necessary to enable the achievement of the agreed outcomes.

- 8.4** Within a universal context, the Partnership will ensure that children and young people are targeted and directed to the most appropriate services. The Partnership uses a range of referral mechanisms appropriate to service type for example the formal assessment process of the YISP panel, as compared to the self referral of a drop-in centre. The Partnership believes that 'no one size fits all' and in terms of reaching the most vulnerable children a range of choices should be available that match service delivery type and the individual needs of the child. Service access criteria also vary according to the nature of the service and the intervention level of the service provision.
- 8.5** The Partnership uses the Nortrack monitoring and ISA system developed by the UEA. The system software is designed to link with other ISA systems so that a link/merge in the future with Local Authority systems should be quite straightforward. The system is already used by the service partners to enter their quarterly monitoring data which is downloaded into the national monitoring system via an electronic link. See *'section 6 on-going monitoring and evaluation'* for full details of this system. The YISP service uses the UMIS system as recommended by CYPFD and YJB and in addition feeds information in to the Programme databanks through use of Nortrack. The NCF contracts and monitoring officer has been a member of the Local Authority working group for ISA since its inception and is currently supporting the ECM team with work in this area as an interim measure pending the start of the new ISA post holder.
- 8.6** Services the Partnership is supporting are described in appendix 1 - Project Synopsis which also defines the links between the objectives of the Children's Fund and the ECM outcomes and relevant NSF standards. The Project Synopsis also lists service partners.
- 8.7** Our most recently commissioned service is the YISP with the tender being awarded in December 2003. After that the 'youngest' services have been in place for around 19 months and the oldest since December 2001. Service 'mini partnerships' have been firmly encouraged as a strategic requirement of funding to work across each other and with other initiatives that form an integrated children's service since their inception.
- A **8.8** The UEA External Evaluation Report July 2004 confirms that 96% of our services have formed strategic or operational links with one or more other Children's Fund supported projects, most frequently as a group. The reasons for this linking are as follows;
- To avoid duplication of provision
  - To maximise joint training opportunities
  - Strategic and operational benefits of pooling resources and knowledge to create a 'network of integrated service delivery'
  - Sharing knowledge and support to enable co-ordinated packages of support
  - To provide a holistic approach to service provision
- A **8.9** The UEA External Evaluation Report July 2004 confirms that **all** CF service has links with related area-based initiatives, special grant regimes or services.

Representatives from one or more related initiative have been involved in management or development structures within each CF service. 76% of CF services report representatives of **five or more** related area based initiatives, special grant regimes or services to be involved in management or development structure within their project. *Most frequently reported* links were as follows:

- 76% Social Service Area Teams
- 70% linked with schools (155 schools receive service)
- 64% Services for Children with Mental Health Problems
- 60% Sure Start
- 60% Connexions

52% of services had received funding or material resources from one or more related initiative such as New Deal for Communities or Social Services Area Teams.

**8.10** The Programme Manager was involved in the core working group for the Extended schools pilot in Norfolk. NCF service is often linked to school clusters, for example; YISP panels operate with the Full Service school in Great Yarmouth, and the Excellence Clusters in Kings Lynn and Earlham Norwich, Families @ Bowthorpe service group operate in the Earlham cluster, and a group of services support the Thetford cluster.

The continuation of this integrated work means the Programme is well placed to merge with ECM service structures as they develop.

**8.11** NCF Development Officers constantly work in support of services to refine and develop service delivery to enable providers to maximise their potential to reach targets. Targets are based on the CF sub objectives. This process is ongoing which enables each service to be bespoke in terms of its delivery to required outcomes. The Programme is therefore able to respond flexibly to new strategic and policy requirements. Services provided an annual action plan and negotiated targets with the central team (approved by the Board prior to the issue of contracts); a long term development plan was also produced. These are monitored on a quarterly basis which enables support and development needs to be quickly identified.

**8.12** The review process streamlined services to focus delivery on current strategic requirements. **The only key changes** to existing services that occurred was the joining up of some services to form new networks in order to provide better coverage geographically and better use of resources through sharing and rationalisation. There were no major changes to service type or delivery process.

**8.13** In terms of **cost effectiveness and best value** the integrated service delivery and networking through the Partnership ensures that service is not duplicated and resources are shared. Non funded partners can also access our resources and training opportunities.

Through monitoring processes we are able to establish that funds are being spent on agreed activities. The finance officer and his assistant also work very closely with services to provide support and to ensure appropriate audit trails and financial recording systems are in place. The Finance Officer also provides training to service staff as necessary.

Service budgets are closely examined and adjustments for best value are sometimes required before the central team will confirm that a proposal is viable for the Board to determine approval for funding. Once funded service budgets continue to be closely monitored with best value in mind and explanations required of variations. Added value is also calculated on an annual basis taking in to account other funding, material resources and in kind support from partner agencies.

**8.14** The volume of resource for crime prevention and VCS involvement is detailed under section 6 - The Three Year Spending Plan. The role of the VCS in service design and delivery and support for capacity building is detailed on pages 30 and 31.

The role of children, young people and families in the design and delivery of services is detailed on pages 12,13 and 31.

## Section 6 - On-going Monitoring and Evaluation

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*See appendix 8 for the review process structure*

### **1. Service Review**

The Partnership has developed a robust service review process that works alongside the Programme's performance management systems. The review process allows for additional external data to be brought into play when analysing performance and making strategic decisions around the commissioning, termination and allocation of funding to services. Management Information, Quality Assurance systems and targets have helped inform decisions about the future shape and direction of the programme. It is crucial to the success of multi-agency partnership working that strategic decision making as related to commissioning and funding allows for a wider process than a reliance on quarterly performance and monitoring data. For the process to be as transparent, fair and inclusive as possible it must empower all partners to contribute to the process and not rely on Board members or CF officers alone.

- 1.2** The review process developed by Norfolk Children's Fund enables the engagement of all partners. It contains a number of elements and stages for example a review of services with appropriate statutory service heads, and a self- evaluation document used by service providers. The self-evaluation document was developed from a workbook commissioned by Social Services from the University of East Anglia and enables service providers to make their own judgements about the position and performance of their service.  
*Full details of the elements of the process are available on request from the Programme team.*

### **1.3 External views on the validity of the service review process**

*The external evaluators have examined all documentation relating to the Full Service Review process closely. The weight of documentary evidence has led the external evaluators to the overarching conclusion that the Full Service Review Process undertaken by Norfolk Children's Fund was comprehensive, sophisticated, objective, equitable, representative and transparent. This conclusion also needs to be set against the context of the rapid national-level policy developments that Norfolk Children's Fund has been required to manage at an operational level over the last six to eight months in particular.  
(Extract from External Evaluation Report 2004 University of East Anglia)*

*I would like to take this opportunity to once again thank you, the partnership and other members of the central team on all the hard work that you have all done, especially under some of the most trying and difficult circumstances. As you know, we at the Regional team have always considered Norfolk Children's Fund as a strong programme and have often put forward areas of your work as exemplifications of good practice, most recently around your review process.  
Extract from a letter to the partnership 20.5.04 from Thinley Topden, Regional Programme Development Officer*

**1.4** The service review process has been adopted for use by a number of Programmes across the country.

## **2 The Partnership's system of performance management and quality assurance**

The structure of the Programme's monitoring and quality assurance system is shown in appendix 3.

### **2.1 Target setting**

Early in the Programme's delivery 'first tier' targets (Countrywide/national Key Performance Indicators) were set as required by the monitoring guidance. Service proposals identified the sub objectives that services would be working towards and how these first tier targets would be worked at a local level and in turn feed into the first tier targets.

Specific targets are identified for each service for action during each contracted year of service and once agreed are recorded in the service's action plan. The proposal (business plan) and the annual action plan are attached to the contract. Delivery to these targets has been monitored as part of adherence to contractual terms.

In April 2003 the target setting system was considerably expanded. Templates were developed for services to deliver long term development plans and short term action plans. Particular attention was paid to the key elements such as user participation. Both plans contain clear targets for service delivery. Delivery is monitored and the process supported through a variety of means:

- monitoring/audit based visits by the Programme team
- regular presentations/written reports from the service providers delivered to the local group meeting, and then to the team
- a range of evidence (press cuttings, children's drawings, meeting minutes, annual reports, events flyers) is logged in the service files by the Programme team. Evidence is colour coded and tabulated against the six key standards as defined on the CYPFD 12/18 month audit forms.
- The team runs evidence surgeries and provides ongoing training in target setting and action planning. The most recent training for projects was on 15th March 2004
- The team is currently engaged in creating a more generic training session on target setting, monitoring and outcomes at the request of non funded VCS partners in the west. This will be provided free of charge as part of capacity building.

**2.2** A service self-evaluation package was developed by the University of East Anglia for Social Services in Norfolk at a cost of £40,000. This has been adapted under the guidance of the UEA for use with generic preventive services. This has been an invaluable tool for services to assess their own progress against targets.

**2.3** Evidence is used to provide data for a team scoring document. This is also

based on the six key standards and enables objective assessment of operational performance.

- 2.4 Data of the effectiveness and impact of service delivery is being acquired through work with the local evaluators. Some of the sub objectives and key performance indicators can be quantified by hard data e.g. improving school attendance. Softer targets, e.g. raising self-esteem, are being evidenced through comparators.
- 2.5 During March 2004 the monitoring and evaluation systems were again reviewed and refined. The service quality assurance process now includes a quarterly reporting form for services to record progress against their targets. The report forms the basis of a team assessment. Services are provided with written feedback on their progress to targets at a quarterly monitoring meeting with team officers. Within the quarterly feedback meetings new targets can be agreed if previous targets have been achieved and issues discussed and action and support agreed. Support has been given to services in producing the report if required.

Information gathered from this process is presented in tabular form to the Board so that service performance can be assessed and monitored both quickly and accurately. This sits alongside a formal report on monitored outcomes for the whole Programme which contains information about targeting children, numbers serviced, gender, ethnicity, special needs etc.

- 2.6 Because there is a close correlation between the 5 ECM outcomes and the CF 7 sub objectives, it will be relatively straightforward to refine the system further to include this target requirement. We will be working with our local *Every Child Matters* team, regional government officers, and our local evaluators to agree how the Children's Fund 7 sub objectives, the 5 key outcomes for Every Child Matters and the relevant National Service Framework outcomes mesh. We will develop and adapt our current systems to ensure this information is captured in a transferable format that can be used to inform future plans and structures for services in Norfolk.
- 2.7 Appendix 1- Project synopsis shows the service links, and appendix 2 shows the target links. These are early **drafts** of the possible links drawn from the work produced at our recent extended strategic Board meeting. Quarter 3 meetings with services will be the forum for negotiating linked targets to the 5 ECM outcomes and where appropriate the 11 NSF standards within each action plan. The links indicated on the Project Synopsis are **suggested** at this stage. As local commissioning processes and structures develop the Children's Fund will need to be responsive and flexible in adapting its processes to support and merge with agreed formats.

### 3 Correlation to the developing local commissioning structure

The models outlined above deliver the opportunity for stakeholders to bring forward their views on service planning and delivery on several levels strategically. It is an important part of the Children's Fund vision of Partnership working that every Partnership member, no matter what their parent

organisation or sector, is *equally* empowered to contribute their view around commissioning processes. The Children's Fund facilitates a 'bottom-up' approach, although final decision making takes place within the Board, a county level group with senior management membership. This multi-agency commissioning structure mirrors the planning structure being developed under the *Every Child Matters* work in Norfolk, therefore the Children's Fund can offer proposal processes, models and the Partnership's experiences for examination and discussion as part of the local consultation process.

#### **4 Quality Assurance of data reported to the CYPFD**

**4.1** Proposals for service delivery must contain affirmation of how the service provider will make suitable arrangements for provision of the data collected through the formal monitoring and evaluation processes of the CYPFD. This requirement is also written into the service contract.

**4.2** The operational performance of each Programme is evaluated through quarterly monitoring and financial returns to the CYPFD and regular direct inspections and audits.

#### **4.3 Arrangements for inputting data to the online system**

In order to assure the quality of the Programme's data the Partnership has put in place the following arrangements for inputting data into the national Children's Fund web based monitoring system.

#### **4.4 NORTRACK**

Programme data collected for the National Children's Fund web based monitoring system, is collected in an electronic format specifically designed for Norfolk Children's Fund by the University of East Anglia called "Nortrack". This data identifies individual users of services in a much more detail than the data required for the on line monitoring, therefore we are able to check registers to ensure data sets match and correct data is being submitted.

**4.5** In order to preserve the anonymity and confidentiality of the client group, the data is encrypted at source. The service provider keeps a code list for cross-referencing their own client base. However, no one else - including the Programme team - can gain access to that code list.

#### **5 Using data to contribute to the performance management of the Programme and inform operational decisions**

**5.1** Children are now tracked with the NORTRACK system, improving accuracy. This system complies with the current CYPFD requirements to make provision for Information Sharing and Assessment (**ISA**) at a Programme level. The Programme team has maintained officer attendance on the Local Authority ISA working group. Links will continue to be maintained in order to ensure ongoing development of the tracking and monitoring systems used within the Programme continue to be coterminous with Local Authority systems.

## 5.2 On line data

On line data has been used to inform the review of Norfolk Children's Fund services since November 2003. A summary of the data is presented to the Partnership Board at each meeting to provide an overview of performance; age, gender, ethnicity, SEN etc. This information is used to refine service delivery and to identify gaps.

## 5.3 Identifying service patterns through data

NORTRACK data can already be used to identify patterns of attendance, such as numbers of children accessing more than one service, or services of a similar kind. This improves accuracy with regard to **the number of children receiving services across Norfolk**, assists in determining where action can be taken regarding waiting lists, and identifies service gaps. This data is particularly useful in determining best value in ensuring there is no duplication of services to children.

5.4 The next phase of the NORTRACK system development is to enable access to trend data. This will be used to inform service development and identify gaps in service provision thus providing evidence of need.

## 5.5 The independent local evaluation

The independent local evaluation of Norfolk Children's Fund is provided by the University of East Anglia via a research team based in the Centre for Research on the Child and the Family, School of Social Work and Psychosocial Studies. The team was already experienced in evaluating Sure Start Programmes and had conducted national studies on the performance of Breakfast Clubs and the involvement of fathers in children's service delivery. The team also conducted the local evaluation of Leicester Children's Fund and are members of the local evaluators national forum in support of the National Evaluation of the Children's Fund. This team was also selected to provide the National Evaluation of Children's Trusts.

5.6 The evaluation is in its third year and the current brief is to evaluate performance against outcomes, partnership working, user participation and the impact of a change in culture. The evaluations provide data that evidences the degree to which the Programme is appropriately targeting service delivery and meeting funding and strategic criteria. The current and future evaluations will also determine the degree to which the Programme is aligning itself with the Local Authority strategic requirements for preventive service delivery under *Every Child Matters*. The Partnership and the evaluators will be using the ECM outcomes framework shown in appendix 11 to define performance indicators and measure progress. In this way performance monitoring will be in line with emerging inspection criteria for Children's Services.

5.7 **Publicising local evaluation data** Full copies of the local evaluation documents are provided to all key stakeholders and executive summaries are sent to a wider range of partners such as Chief Executives of District Councils. The documents are available on our website which is linked to the county council site.

**5.8 Publicising national evaluation data** The national evaluation website has been publicised in Norfolk and partners are signposted to particular information contained within the site that will be useful for planning and development. This method of dissemination particularly applies to meetings and strategic groups at a local level. Information is also disseminated through our newsletter and the Programme Manager's report to the Board.

The Programme Manager is a member of the national forum for the national evaluation along with the Bedfordshire Programme Manager. Both managers ensure information is circulated to other Programmes in the region via the regional network meetings.

## **6 The combined performance systems**

The combination of; the Programme performance management system, the NORTRACK system, the online monitoring system and the local evaluation work, will provide a robust audit trail that allows measurement of service quality against the number of children receiving service and the level of funding devolved, in line with efficiency savings requirements from the CYPFD.

**6.1** The combined monitoring systems used by Norfolk Children's Fund will also provide evidence required by partner agencies for preventive planning purposes. We have already supplied data to support domestic violence service planning under the CDRPs and have recently been approached by some Borough and District Councils for data to support local need and prioritisation of preventive services for children.

**6.2** A point of action within the Programme team development plan is for the team to undergo further training in information management. This will facilitate more precise and effective communication of management information to the Partnership and the broader partnership across the Local Authority. This is planned to take place during the next team training day early in the New Year.

### **6.3 Learning from the Children's Fund**

This is detailed on pages 14 - 17.

### **6.1 Preventive services developed through the Children's Fund that have been mainstreamed or have received alternative funding**

#### **A Services that have been mainstreamed**

- PACE - an attention deficit behaviour support service, a service funded by the West Norfolk PCT is still running
- Norfolk Contact Centres in Partnership - supervised contact with absent parents under court supervision, statutory partners are supporting continuity
- Diss School Health Clinic - statutory and private sector funding for 2004
- Thetford Multi-agency Co-ordinator for school cluster, original post now working to 13+ and funded by Connexions, a second post working to under 13's funded by the school
- Diss transition - worker now employed by high school as PSHE staff, but continuing with some elements of transition work, freeing funds for an additional post to support transition group work expansion

- School pastoral worker Great Yarmouth now half funded by middle school

## A **Services with alternative funding**

- Kids at Heart - family support
- Supervised contact (working with Norfolk Contact Centres in Partnership)
- Smart Kids - autistic support
- Disability Sport Co-ordinator
- NEAD - diversity awareness education

A number of our services and partners have gained additional funding for other work strands on the back of Children's Fund performance evidence, for example Parenting Fund.

## 8 **Achievements to date**

*Throughout this document achievements have been flagged by the capital letter 'A' in the margin.*

- 8.1** Following the September 2003 operational audit the local Programme received the top possible ranking of 'Doing Well', maintaining Norfolk Children's Fund as one of the top Programmes in the country.
- 8.2** The Norfolk Programme is in the process of the second audit commission financial inspection(2003-2004 accounts). The Regional Team completed a successful mid-year financial review of the Programme during November 2004.
- 8.3** Norfolk Children's Fund is and has been highly regarded by government as an exemplar Programme delivering a responsive approach to meeting needs and developing good practice for services for children and young people at risk of social exclusion. In recognition of this, Norfolk Children's Fund received a visit from the former Minister for Children and Young People, John Denham during 2002.
- 8.4** The Programme has participated in piloting systems for the CYPUP and now the CYPFD. The Norfolk Programme has also been instrumental in aiding the development of national systems, for example, monitoring and finance materials include documents developed by Norfolk Children's Fund, and the recently developed service review package is in use within many Programmes across the country.
- 8.5** There have been many Programme achievements to date, including the delivery of groundbreaking, innovative services and some of these have been recognised as the first of their kind nationally. These 'beacon' services have frequently been used as case studies for ministerial and national presentations and have appeared as exemplars within government publications (please see section 9 for more information about services).
- 8.6 Case study 1** Of particular note is a joint piece of work between Norfolk and Suffolk Children's Funds and Norfolk and Suffolk Area Child Protection Committees to deliver a phased programme around safeguarding children called S.A.F.E. Elements of this system are particularly directed at voluntary

and community organisations, for example S.A.F.E. 2 which is a guide to taking children to events, on visits and on residential trips. The joint Children's Funds also provided funding for the development of phase 3 which is a website mainly for children which incorporates an area for childcare professionals and teachers. This system is in the process of being rolled out nationally.

- 8.7** As part of their work on Child Protection Norfolk Children's Fund was the first Programme nationally to fund a full-time ACPC officer within the ACPC team to be responsible for ensuring that all NCF service partner agencies are trained in and are following child protection procedures.
- 8.8** The Norfolk Programme Manager was one of 6 Programme Managers on the national working party that developed the national programme audit standards for the Children's Fund and is currently involved in the national forum group for the National Evaluation of the Children's Fund.

At a recent National Stakeholder's Forum meeting it was agreed that the Norfolk Children's Fund team would organise and deliver the next National Children's Fund Conference to be held in Birmingham during March 2005.

## **Section 7 - Three-Year Spending Plan**

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Please see annex 1 for budget templates showing the quarterly profile for 2005-06, the 3 year profile for 2005-08, the 2005-06 individual service financial listings, and the proposals for underspend 2004-05 into 2005-06.

Contained within these documents are details of the crime prevention allocation and the voluntary and community sector service allocation.

### **Reduced management costs**

The Programme Manager has applied the efficiency savings requirement to the central costs operational budget in accordance with the guidance. However the requirement to reduce by 2.5% each year from 2005-08 to reach a total of 7.5% reduction has been exceeded. The total reduction to central costs has been 15% overall. Savings have been transferred to the grant budget to offset service budget reductions. This budget movement has been approved by the Partnership Board and is shown in the spreadsheets in Annex 1.

### **Efficiency savings**

In accordance with CYPFD instructions we are awaiting further guidance on a possible requirement to implement an additional efficiency savings process, that is to say to increase the number of children receiving a service by 2.5% each year proportionate to the budget. Initial calculations to determine a Programme target show that this would be achievable if required, providing the target was applied to the whole Programme and not to each service individually.

### **Annex 1 budget forms**

## **Abbreviations**

CF	Children's Fund
NCF	Norfolk Children's Fund
PM	Programme Manager (of the Children's Fund)
C & F	Children and Families
CT	Children's Trust
ECM	Every Child Matters (Green Paper)
CYPFD	Children, Young People's and Families Directorate
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
SSD	Social Services Department
PCT	Primary Care Trust (Health)
NSF	National Service Framework (for Children, Young People & Maternity Services)
LEA	Local Education Authority
SEN	Special Educational Needs
YOT	Youth Offending Team
NYOT	Norfolk Youth Offending Team
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YISPs	Youth Inclusion and Support Panels (crime prevention)
JYIP	Junior Youth Inclusion Programme (crime prevention)
POPO:P&D	Prolific & Other Priority Offenders Strategy: Prevent & Deter
CDRP	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
LCYPSP	Local Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership
LCYPSPG	Local Children & Young People's Strategic Planning Groups
UEA	University of East Anglia
VCS	Voluntary and Community Sector
ACPC	Area Child Protection Committee (to become Safeguarding Children Boards)
SAFE	Safer Activities for Everybody
ISA	Information Sharing and Assessment
ICT	Information Communication Technology
GO-East	Government Office for East of England

## **Appendices and attachments**

- Annex 1 - Budget forms for section 6 of the plan
- Children's Fund Briefing Document
- Appendix 1 - Project Synopsis
- Appendix 2 - ECM/NSF outcome links with Children's Fund sub objectives
- Appendix 3 - Annual Monitoring Chart
- Appendix 4 - DRAFT structure for Western pilot
- Appendix 5 - Future Development Tasks
- Appendix 6 - ECM update phase 3
- Appendix 7 - Realignment of organisational structure for accountable body
- Appendix 8 - NCF Review Process Flow Chart
- Appendix 9 - NCF Proposal and Commissioning process
- Appendix 10 - YISP support commissioning process
- Appendix 11 - ECM outcomes framework
- Appendix 12 - Extract from Independent Local Evaluation