



Council and Democracy

[NCC Home](#)
[Council and Democracy Home](#)
[Every Child Matters](#)
[Project Update
October 2004 - Phase
3](#)

You are in:> [home](#)> [Council and Democracy](#) > [Every Child Matters](#)> [Project Update October 2004 - Phase 3](#)

Project Update

October 6th 2004

Moves to integrate services for children in Norfolk reach a major milestone this month as the selection process for the new Director of Children's services nears its conclusion.

The new director will head up services for children and young people for Norfolk County Council and take the lead in the 'Every Norfolk Child Matters' project which is the County's response to the Government's Green Paper 'Every Child Matters' and the 2004 Children Bill.

The principle behind the large-scale reform is to put children at the heart of policies and to organise the services around their needs. Ultimately this should mean every child will have the opportunity to fulfil their potential with none slipping through the net.

Over time the aim is to provide a well co-ordinated multi-agency approach having addressed the barriers between professionals and agencies involved in children's services

What we've done so far

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

Phase Two: a wide engagement process to develop ideas of what a future 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 the basis of future work

The vision is an aspirational statement that aims to guide the development of services by all involved organisations. It puts the focus firmly on the child or young person and their family.

Our vision for children and young people 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."

Where we are now

Our main task now is to prepare for the appointment of the new Director so that he or she will have a clear overview of the situation they have inherited, together with the vision and options for the future.

In order to achieve this we have expanded the range of people driving the project to senior managers from the public and voluntary sectors. There are eight sub-project teams to drive work forwards on a 'task and finish' basis.

The eight sub-project teams are multi-agency involving Education and Social Service senior managers and staff from health, Connexions, the voluntary sector and other organisations. The teams are supported by the project team with a 'critical friend' from the Advisory Board. Their brief is to work on a key aspect of the programme and report to the Advisory Board in January.

The areas being tackled by the sub-project teams are:

- ADOPTION AND PROMOTION OF THE VISION to ensure everyone involved with children and young people signs-up to the same aspirations
- EXAMINING WHAT RESOURCES WE HAVE AVAILABLE FOR THE NEW SERVICE looking at what works well now, what things need changing or replacing and how we start to integrate Education and Social Services
- WHAT OUTCOMES WE CAN ACHIEVE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS identifying realistic joint outcomes based on the vision and setting out logical steps to achieve them
- WHAT WE NEED TO DO TO MAKE BETTER-INFORMED DECISIONS how we improve information sharing including compatible IT systems, what assessment framework we use, and joining up research and management information functions
- HOW WE WILL PLAN AND BUY SERVICES JOINTLY IN THE FUTURE looking at whether we can improve existing arrangements as well as developing new ones and how these things will be overseen at a high level
- HOW WE DEVELOP THE WORKFORCE FOR FUTURE INTEGRATION examining implications for the workforce of new ways of working, information sharing and integration and what support is needed for staff going through such changes
- PURSUING 'QUICK WINS' looking for developments which will have a high impact on the progress of the project and can be achieved within this phase
- HOW WE WILL MEASURE OUR SUCCESS including an integrated performance management framework and what useful performance indicators we can develop for the future.

[Clicking on a sub-project title will open the Project Brief for that sub-project - all briefs are pdf files]

And underpinning all this are two strands of work:

- Making sure people know what is going on and get involved
- Changing the way we think and work and moving us all forward

What happens next

We anticipate the new Director will take up their position in December/January. In our next briefing note we will be introducing them to you and telling you about their plans and aspirations which will be so central to forming the future.

If you have any questions you would like answered please contact the Every

Child Matters team on 01603 228851 or email
everychildmatterscomments@norfolk.gov.uk

If you would like more information go to the county council website on
<http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/> and follow the links to Every Child Matters.

You can also read more about the project in the County Council's external
newsletter 'Norfolk Matters' which is widely distributed to stakeholders.

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