

**Herefordshire Council:**

**JAR Performance Improvement Action Plan**

**Summary Progress Report**

DATE: 19.05.06

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Summary Progress to date</b>	
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**The recommendations are grouped according to the urgency with which their delivery is required. The red / amber / green (RAG rating) flags are a measure of whether recommendations are completed or on track.**

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<b>JAR Timescale Requirement</b>	<b>January – June 2006</b>	<b>Completed / On track</b>
<p><b>1.Ensure that appropriate criteria are set for the involvement of the LA’s professionally qualified SC staff In child protection cases</b></p>	<p>All milestones /actions now completed.</p> <p>Various performance monitoring systems are in place to test that the.criteria are being operated properly. The results of work completed on performance data are feeding into the Annual Performance Assessment (APA) submission.</p> <p>Examples of testing and reinforcing are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly audit/review of files highlighting compliance and quality of practice is being maintained as a routine requirement.</li> <li>• Audit of files to verify data accuracy/completeness and setting of performance targets. Key data have been reviewed and validated. Work is on target for submission of the APA within the required timescale ie 31<sup>st</sup> May 2006.</li> </ul>	

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<p><b>2. Ensure that these criteria are clearly understood by all concerned and consistently applied in practice.</b></p>	<p>Immediate actions completed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further communications work and “road shows” on Child Concern Model and new requirements of common processes – Common Assessment - across all agencies have been rolled out from April 2006. It will also be part of Every Child Matters Championing Children programme to be delivered across the county.</li> <li>• Testing and survey of implementation continues.</li> </ul>	
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<p><b>3. Ensure that there is an effective workforce strategy to address the recruitment and retention problems within the local authority's Social Care Service.</b></p>	<p>Workforce strategy for social care completed. Details of this are included in Children &amp; Young People's Plan.</p> <p>Significant improvements have been achieved in relation to covering and filling social work vacancies – particularly in relation to covering vacancies in the duty team to ensure statutory requirements are met in relation to safeguarding. Meanwhile, permanent recruitment strategies are also beginning to deliver. Central recruitment team has been crucial to these improvements.</p> <p>There are no unallocated cases held by the Duty Team.</p> <p>There are still some hard to fill vacancies e.g. for specialist support to Local Safeguarding Children Board. Some further work required on competitiveness of employment conditions is being undertaken with corporate HR as a result of issues arising from current recruitment experience.</p> <p>Corporate HR with the support of the Children's Workforce Development Council is taking a Children's Services Workforce strategy for the area forward to be set up on 22nd June</p>	

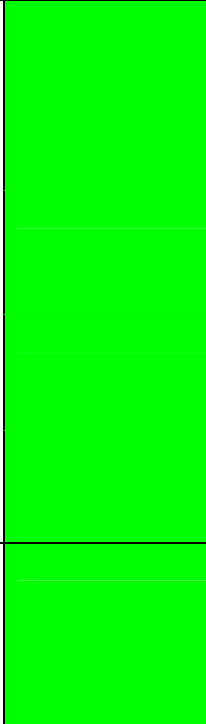
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<p><b>4. Ensure that a written record is made of all contacts with the Social Care Duty Team.</b></p>	<p>System in place and operating properly. Regular management checks to ensure compliance.</p>	
<p><b>JAR Timescale Requirement</b></p>	<p><b>June 2006 -</b></p>	
<p><b>5.Ensure that there is a single referral, assessment and service planning framework for children in need, which is consistently and effectively applied in practice.</b></p>	<p>To achieve whole systems approach – linkage with threshold criteria (Child Concern Model as above in 1) and development of Every Child Matters common processes – Information Sharing, Common Assessment is being developed for implementation through pilots developing from July 2006. Monitoring and tracking systems will be put in place to ensure consistency and congruency of practice.</p> <p>It will also be part of Every Child Matters Championing Children programme to be delivered across the county.</p> <p>A draft Information Sharing strategy was presented to the CYPPB on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2006; this is for consultation till the end of June 2006. Then further work on operational protocols will be undertaken.</p>	


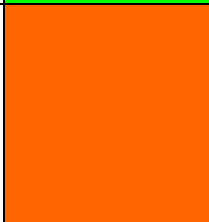
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<p><b>6.Ensure that the training, guidance and support needs of all staff contributing to the implementation of the Child Concern Model are addressed, both in terms of the time required to undertake the tasks involved and the necessary skills.</b></p>	<p>A two-day training package has been designed for CCM consultants and will be rolled out alongside road shows for staff on common assessment and processes.</p>	
<p><b>7.Ensure effective implementation of the multi-agency healthcare planning procedures for looked after children.</b></p>	<p>Most actions completed and performance has improved.</p> <p>National Healthy Care Standards workshop to update policy and review local practice to be held across agencies at the end of June, facilitated by National Children’s Bureau.</p>	

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<b>8.Improve access to Occupational Therapy Services.</b>	<p>Required action completed.</p> <p>All new referrals since January have been seen within The local 12 week target. (There is currently no national target).</p> <p>Support and challenge on the whole agenda for children with disabilities and / or learning difficulties is being provided through Philippa Russell from the Council for Disabled Children.</p>	
<b>9.Ensure appropriate Social Care support for the families of children with learning difficulties and disabilities.</b>	<p>Development work is under way and progress is as required within timescales prescribed.</p>	
<b>10.Ensure better co-ordinated transition planning for all young people with learning difficulties and disabilities.</b>	<p>Progress has been made and actions to date completed as per required timescales.</p>	
<b>11.Improve communication with parents and young people with leaning difficulties and disabilities in terms of both the assessment of need and planning of provision.</b>	<p>Work on this issue is progressing in line with the timetable.</p> <p>As above, for all the recommendations 8-11, support and challenge on the whole agenda for children with disabilities and / or learning difficulties is being provided through Philippa Russell from the Council for Disabled Children.</p>	



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<p><b>12.Improve action planning to deliver strategic aims and objectives and, in particular, ensure that associated resourcing needs are met.</b></p>	<p>CYP's Plan has been completed and approved by Cabinet and CYP's partnership Board. Forward Delivery Plan for CYP's Plan is being developed for completion by end June 2006.</p> <p>All new and updated plans will be reviewed by the CYP's Partnership and the LSCB to ensure safeguarding issues are properly addressed.</p> <p>The Councils funding of £100K towards the delivery of this plan and the PCT's ongoing £70K funding for Family Support Services has been secured for 06/07.</p> <p>An Interim Senior Manager is assisting in the development and delivery of this plan, preparations for the APA, and transformation/cultural change.</p> <p>The consultant appointed by DfES is now with us. Final feedback from the consultant is expected on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2006. Initial feedback on action taken to date on safeguarding systems and practice has been positive. Work is continuing on development of the revised action plan and a further meeting with the consultant will take place on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2006.</p>	

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<p><b>13.Improve information systems within the local authority’s Social are Services to enable better management oversight and evaluation of service effectiveness.</b></p>	<p>A new approach to ensuring that a whole system performance culture and processes are being put in place. Audit and supervision arrangements have already been strengthened and regularly recorded to improve assurance levels regarding information/data recording accuracy and completeness.</p> <p>Scoping of required information needs and systems is under way. This is being linked to the corporate performance system and the performance management system required for Children’s Services. It has been recognised that additional expertise, planning and design is needed and this has been identified; the Institute of Public Care (Oxford Brookes University) is assisting with this; IPC has a strong record of improvement work with other Las including some others in the W Midlands. This will also contribute to Recommendation 17 on performance management systems and requirements.</p> <p>The action required will be aligned with the Herefordshire Connects programme and its timescales.</p>	

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<b>14.Improve access to hospital in-patient provision to meet children and young people’s mental health needs (tier 4 CAMHS).</b>	Proposals in place, including a Public Finance Initiative (PFI ) bid to government. Work competed to justify this. Also identifying a more local approach to meeting the needs of the most vulnerable young people	
<b>15.Improve coordination of consultation with children and young people to support their participation in strategic planning and review.</b>	Progress made. Hear by Rights Standard adopted but dedicated resources and monitoring will be required if we are to implement it successfully. Shadow C&YPPB and Youth Council in place. Dedicated resources have to be identified for the CYP’s Partnership Board to ensure a thorough and sustained approach to the involvement of children, young people and their families.	

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<p><b>16.Improve housing provision for both single young people and families.</b></p>	<p>Significant progress has been made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsibility for homelessness and advice and information returned to the Council's Strategic Housing Service from 1<sup>st</sup> April 06.</li> <li>• Protocol developed for referrals from Duty Team where tenancy is at risk affecting CYP assessed at level 1.</li> <li>• Updated needs analysis including Young People's views being used to inform planned provision.</li> <li>• Offers have now been accepted on 3 properties for care leavers and it is currently anticipated they will be ready for occupancy in June; on target to secure a further 3-7 units of additional provision.</li> <li>• Use of bed and breakfast accommodation is reducing.</li> <li>• Targets for affordable housing have been met for 05/06.</li> </ul> <p>Further work on provision for homeless young people required. This will be taken forward through the CYPP.</p>	
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<p><b>17, Strengthen performance management processes involving elected members and senior officers at all levels including the Children and Young Peoples Partnership Board and the local authority's Children's Services Scrutiny Committee.</b></p>	<p>In place as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly reporting to cabinet member, Leader and Chief Executive in place regarding progress against this action plan.</li> <li>• Overall reporting arrangements within children's services will be in accordance with the council's performance management framework and that adopted by the Herefordshire Partnership in respect of the Local Area Agreement. Full arrangements to be in place by June 2006</li> <li>• In relation to the CYP's Partnership accountabilities – a system for reporting and monitoring delivery against the 5 outcomes for all partners and the local area is to be developed by July.</li> <li>• A developmental programme for the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee is being planned with the member development working party</li> </ul>	
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