

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

**OUTCOMES OF COMMON ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK SCRUTINY REVIEW:
PROGRESS UPDATE**

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To report progress on the actions undertaken in response to the recommendations of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel's Report and recommendations on the Common Assessment Framework.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Council's Scrutiny Panel undertook a review of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) in 2009 to find out how far the CAF has progressed and become embedded in practice, since being implemented in April 2007. A range of agencies took part in the review, including Children & Young People's Services, Schools, and a range of Health services.
- 2.2 All Local Authorities, working with their other partners in the Children's Trust, are responsible for introducing arrangements to ensure that the CAF is being conducted in a high quality way across all children's services (including Sure Start Children's Centres, schools offering access to extended services, third sector organisations, etc).
- 2.3 The CAF incorporates the four-step process outlined in national guidance for managers and practitioners. Step 1 involves identifying needs early; Step 2 means assessing those needs; Step 3, delivering integrated services; and Step 4, reviewing progress.
- 2.4 It requires that all services have staff trained and working on early identifiers of need and managers accountable for ensuring high quality CAF performance.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 The Scrutiny Panel made eight recommendations, which broadly fall within the following areas of focus:
- Training, networking and supporting staff
 - Multi-agency compliance and senior management buy-in
 - Quality assurance and feedback
 - CAF performance targets and monitoring systems

3.2 In response to the recommendations an action plan was implemented and the Children's Trust has agreed to support the full implementation of the CAF through embedding it within service provision and commissioned arrangements (action plan and progress attached).

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 The Scrutiny Panel's recommendations all relate to national government guidance to local authorities and their partners to ensure that the CAF process is being conducted in a high quality way across all children's services.

4.2 The response, in the form of an action plan, outlines how the recommendations can be implemented locally within a framework of national government guidance.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 All services that provide preventative services will have to continue to shape their services, processes and management to ensure their service provision and performance is in line with the nationally agreed CAF and further uptake of the CAF is evident within North Lincolnshire.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)

6.1 The CAF is based around the individual and unique circumstances of the child and their family. Equality and diversity are considered as part of the assessment and support plan.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

7.1 The Scrutiny Panel consulted with all agencies involved in using the CAF. All key agencies across the Children's Trust are now represented in the Integrated Systems Group which oversees and quality assures agencies' performance in relation to the CAF.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That Cabinet notes the report on the CAF Scrutiny Action Plan.

8.2 That Cabinet supports that all reasonable steps be taken to successfully complete actions that are currently in progress.

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Hewson House
Station Road
Brigg
North Lincolnshire
DN20 8XJ
Author: Dave Basker
Date: May 2010

Background papers used in the preparation of this report – Nil

CAF SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS ACTION PLAN

RECOMMENDATION		PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD/ RESPONSIBILITY	SET TIMESCALE/ STATUS	PROGRESS AND POSITION TO DATE – MAY 2010
1	That everyone involved throughout this review be thanked for their contributions, and the team within North Lincolnshire Council working on the implementation and ongoing training of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) be congratulated on their hard work and ongoing commitment to the process.	The Scrutiny Report is distributed to all involved in the review.	Chair of Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Common Assessment Framework/ Children with Additional Needs (CAF/CWAN) Action Group	Achieved	The report was distributed to those involved and thanked for their part in the review.
2	That consideration be given to introducing training events/forums specifically designed for line managers to assist with aspects such as two way feedback, establishment of networking opportunities with all agencies, and to deliver ideas on how to provide effective and practical support for practitioners.	<p>Regular themed forums are arranged providing feedback regarding any issues and aimed at practitioners and their supervisors/ line managers</p> <p>A Family Intervention Resource Allocation meeting be arranged as a pilot of the locality panels. They should meet regularly to look at referrals for Family Intervention Project workers and other targeted resources and provide opportunities for agency operational managers to discuss any issues they may have. `Invitation is multi-agency.</p> <p>Integrated working training to be revised in line with the national model. This would provide separate training pathways for practitioner in each of the 5 responsibility groups as defined by Working Together (2006)</p>	<p>CAF Coordinator arranges the Forum meetings.</p> <p>Integrated Services Development Group (ISDG)</p> <p>Integrated Services Development Group (ISDG)</p>	<p>Achieved</p> <p>Achieved and ongoing</p>	<p>6 forums per year are provided on a ½ termly basis focussing on a different area as requested by the group. Meetings have taken place in this way since scrutiny recommended this action.</p> <p>Meetings are held weekly and are fairly well attended. Attendance is improving. Issues regarding non-attendance of any agencies at these meetings are raised at the Integrated Services Development Group meetings.</p> <p>Training is available through the LSCB training plan.</p>

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		An online e-learning package be purchased to assist in the delivery of the basic integrated working training	Chris Pope, Katie Newborn and Becky McIntyre		Negotiations are taking place with neighbouring authorities regarding joint funding of this resource.
3	That the Council emphasise to all agencies involved that the CAF is now a key piece of Government guidance within the 'Every Child Matters' agenda and everyone must be engaged in the service delivery. To ensure that all agencies complete the national CAF training and also that appropriate senior management attempt to bring all agencies fully on board, specifically those who have not yet completed the appropriate training.	Report to Children's Trust Partnership regarding new guidance. In particular, proposed changes to training and integrated working infrastructure including creation of a Senior Management Group (SMG) responsible for ensuring the adequate discharge of agency responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people (S10 and S11, Children Act 2004) including the training of the children's workforce to an adequate standard in order to meet Ofsted and CAA inspection standards.	Children's Trust	Achieved Achieved Achieved	Integrated Services Development Group (ISDG) formed as 'Senior Management Group' for CAF. Report submitted by CAF Coordinator regarding actions required to be compliant with national guidance including the new Quality Assurance Framework for CAF (Published by Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) February 2010) This report included the requirement of all agencies to support training by providing personnel to deliver the new training pathway. The CAF Coordinator will oversee the framework. Training and Development Group to be formed to support this process consisting of identified 'Champions' including Head Teachers.
4	That lines of communication, feedback to practitioners and evaluation of the process be improved to ensure the ongoing commitment of all practitioners and line managers.	Proposed new arrangements include new responsibilities of the LSCB in scrutinising the processes. Performance will be reported to the LSCB on effectiveness of the CAF implementation. The distribution of regular newsletters by the CAF coordinator identifying success stories, good practice and the activity of agency champions.		Achieved	Children and Young People's Service (CYPS) Performance Team. Ongoing CAF Coordinator

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5	That consideration be given to introducing an additional forum, specifically aimed at capable practitioners and line managers, delivered by senior officers and arranged on a more flexible basis to allow all agencies the opportunity to periodically attend.	Appointed champions from each service will meet periodically with the Integrated Services Development Group (ISDG) to report achievements and any difficulties or areas for development.	Integrated Services Development Group (ISDG)	Ongoing	Training and Development Group to be formed
6	That all agencies take responsibility within the target setting process to ensure that performance targets are realistic and achievable.	Accountable Managers' Group (AMG) to manage performance. Senior operational managers represented on the AMG to set their agency's own performance targets, reviewing their effectiveness, quality assurance and ensuring that their staff access appropriate training and are supported to implement integrated working processes such as CAF and the lead professional role.	Integrated Services Development Group (ISDG)	Ongoing development following agreement.	Agreed at meeting of 16 March 2010
7	That in line with the Council's Head of Safeguarding and Practice 'State of Readiness' report, September 2008, a robust performance monitoring system be introduced and made available to all agencies by January 2010.	Integrated Services Development Group (ISDG) to review as a priority.	Integrated Services Development Group (ISDG)	Achieved	Performance Report submitted to Integrated Services Development Group (ISDG) and LSCB.
8	That it be noted the panel supports and endorses the school cluster programme, with appointed Head teacher taking on the role of professional lead and assisting other school's practitioners within the cluster.	CAF Coordinator in identifying lead teachers to be part of each locality cluster	Integrated Services Development Group (ISDG)	Schools are committed to the CAF with over 42 schools having taken a lead in the use of the framework. 1 July 2010 Subsequent to this date.	School Improvement Partners (SIPs) to support head teachers in this role SIPs to be trained to perform this role Report to be submitted to schools forum.