

<p>LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT</p> <p>Executive - 14th February 2005</p> <p>Report from the Chief Executive</p>	
For action	Wards affected: All

Report Title: Establishing a Children and Families Department in Brent - follow up report.

Forward Plan Ref: CE-04/05-03

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The Executive considered a report in December 2004, which outlined detailed proposals for implementing the Children Act in Brent. The report presented options for consideration in implementing the Children Act. The main recommendations centred on the proposal to establish a Children and Families department, subject to further consultation with staff.
- 1.2 This report gives an update on consultation with staff and partners and outlines plans for future consultation. The report seeks from the Executive agreement to proceed with the creation of the new department.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Executive is asked to:
- (i) Note the responses to consultation with staff and partners which broadly offers support for the proposals for the creation of the new department.
 - (ii) Agree to establish a Children and Families department in Brent, (Option 4 in the Chief Executives report, 'Establishing a Children and Families Department in Brent) by May 2005.
 - (iii) Agree to create a new post of Director of Children and Families.

- (iv) Note that the appointment to the new post will be made by an Appointments Sub-Committee and should be made by May 2005.
- (v) Recommend the appointment of a Lead Member for Children and Families
- (vi) Agree that the Council will not opt to set up a Children's Trust but continue instead to develop comprehensive inter-agency partnership arrangements as laid out in the previous report from the Chief Executive, 'Establishing a Children and Families Department in Brent.'
- (vii) Note that other and consequential structural changes arising from these recommendations are addressed in a separate report on the agenda.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Implementation of the 'Children Act' – Consultation Update

3.2 Following the Executive's discussion of the Chief Executives report, 'Establishing a Children and Families Department in Brent' in December 2004, the decision was made to undertake further consultation with staff, both those directly affected by the proposed new arrangements and those not directly affected, and unions. In addition the proposals were communicated to Partner agencies and Government advisors.

Progress to date:

3.3 The focus so far has been on ensuring staff, particularly those in Social Services and EAL, are aware of and consulted on the proposals and the possible implications for them. There have also been communications with external partner agencies and Central Government Advisors.

3.4 A meeting was held between the Human Resources team the Director of EAL, and Staff Unions to discuss implications of the new arrangements. The key proposals for a Children and Families department were broadly well received, and a commitment has been made to keeping the Unions fully informed and involved in further communications and consultation events.

3.5 In December 2004 the first issue of 'Every Child Matters' a bulletin for all staff in Social Services and EAL was published. A copy is attached as Appendix 1. This was also distributed to Members.

3.6 The bulletin explained the introduction of the Act and how it would affect staff by using a questions and answer format. It suggested a timetable for the proposed change and contact numbers for further information.

Its publication and distribution was deliberately timed to coincide with the report to the Executive on 13 December to ensure staff in Social Services and EAL were informed as soon as possible after the meeting.

- 3.7 The bulletin is intended to be one of the main channels for regularly updating staff that are directly affected by the proposals. Staff received either a hard copy or were sent a copy by email. It was also posted on the intranet, together with the full Chief Executive's report that went to the Executive on 13 December.
- 3.8 All other staff were informed of the proposals in January via Brent Now, and a feature on the role of the new Assistant Director Children's Strategy and Partnerships appeared in the December/January edition of INSIGHT the newsletter for all council staff. The January issue of The Brent Magazine, the council's residents' publication, carried a short news item.
- 3.9 In January special briefings were held with EAL and Social Services staff at which approximately 300 staff attended. Also in January, a Children's Services Away day was held with approximately 265 Social Services EAL and PCT staff attending.
- 4.0 **Staff Consultation to date: A summary of results**
- 4.1 The objectives of initial staff consultation were
- (i) To focus on awareness-raising
 - (ii) To communicate the statutory requirements of the Children Act
 - (iii) To communicate how the Council proposes to implement these statutory requirements
 - (iv) To communicate clearly the vision behind the proposed establishment of the Children and Families department.
 - (v) To discuss with staff any questions they had, or any issues they wished to raise.

Consultation so far has taken the form of information sessions presented by senior Social Services and EAL managers. Because of the number of people attending, another session is planned. These sessions took place at the following locations:

- Douglas Avenue – 6th Jan (Looked after Children Staff and nursery workers)
 - Brent House Annexe – 10th Jan (Children's Social Services Staff)
 - Centre for Staff Development – 11th Jan (EAL Staff)
 - Brent House Annexe – 12th Jan (Children's Social Services Staff)
 - A Children's Services Away day was held with Social Services EAL and Primary Care Trust staff
- 4.2 The key messages being disseminated to staff involved or affected by the changes were:

- The new Children's and families department will ensure that children are safer and better supported by putting their needs first
 - Staff are valued and will play a crucial role in making the changes work
 - Staff will be kept informed regularly and their views will be listened to
 - It is not about cutting costs, it is about finding innovative and effective ways of providing child-centred services
 - Existing good practice will be built on and effective partnerships will be forged to ensure joined up working
 - Change will not be immediate, it will be a medium to long term strategy
- 4.3 Presentations gave an overview of the Children Act and stressed that the changes proposed for Brent involve reorganising services around the identified needs of children and families, and delivering services in a fundamentally new way. This requires a shift in thinking away from traditional service based organisation, towards more integrated, cross professional and multi agency forms of working. Partnership working is a key theme within this, and the arrangements for partnership working as they stand to date, were explained. The benefits of the statutory 'duty to cooperate' on partner agencies was explained to illustrate the broader remit and leverage that the Council now has in working with its partners.
- 4.4 The Children Act five key themes to 'improve outcomes for all children' were discussed – as was how Brent Council and partners would set about achieving these. Brent is developing performance indicators around these outcomes and these will shape new services developed. Restructuring would seek to 'maximise opportunity whilst minimising risk'. I.e. it would be genuine in its attempt to pursue more integrated working, but would be mindful of maintaining a focus on delivering core business during the changes.
- 4.5 The changes were also highlighted as an opportunity for staff, at all levels, to explore the development of new skills and training. Staff were assured that they would be consulted and as fully involved as possible in piloting new and more integrated ways of working. Key services which have already been identified as potentially able to integrate were discussed.
- 4.6 Staff were informed that further reports would be presented to future meetings of the Executive to deal with services unlikely to be included in the proposed Children and Families Department. It was reiterated that these staff would be a valuable and vital part of whichever department they were to be a part of.
- 4.7 These sessions were very well attended by Council staff, and at the away day, PCT staff. There was a high level of interest and discussion around the proposed changes. There was broad acceptance of the key proposals for a new department, and no negative feedback, on the proposal for a new department. Questions asked related more to operational issues, and the new ways of working, than to proposals about new structural arrangements. There was particular interest in the

role of the Lead Member for Children and Families; how the Council would market the benefits of new arrangements to residents and schools in the community; and more detailed operational arrangements such as potential locations for the new department, and staff within it.

4.8 Questions and feedback from staff

4.9 Staff asked about possible redundancies, and were assured that redundancies are not envisaged as part of the reorganisation, nor are they the key driver behind the changes. Most structural change would take place at the top of the organisation, and in fact reorganisation was more likely to provide 'growth opportunities'.

4.10 Staff asked about the role of the Lead Member. It was explained that there would need to be a 'Lead Member' for the new directorate and that some current political portfolios would change. The status and role of the lead member was explained to highlight the increased accountability the role carries.

4.11 Staff asked about national and local priorities. It was explained that local priorities did need to reflect national priorities, in terms of the 5 outcomes, but that there were opportunities to develop local performance indicators that genuinely reflected local needs and priorities. In fact the ability to identify local priorities will be part of the new inspection regime. Some staff questioned why Children with disabilities are a national priority, but were not identified on the list for immediate integration within the new structure. It was explained that there are definitive plans for integrating these services; particularly as tripartite funding arrangements already exist, making it a good starting point. It was explained that improving Preventative Services was an important aspect of the reorganisation, and that schools were seen as the focus of extended services.

4.12 Future plans for further consultation with staff were outlined, but also with children and families, as required by the legislation. Proposals to develop a more coordinated and sustainable approach to this type of consultation, are being developed.
'Reference Groups' may be set up as a consultation mechanism.
Staff consultation, (short of formal Trade Union consultation), looking at issues such as reconfiguring and changes to frontline services and so on, would take place over the next 18 months.

4.13 Staff asked about what new services would look like, and commented that for Joint Teams – location would be important if it were to make sense to the service user. Staff questioned just how integrated services would be located? Would integrated services still operate across different buildings, or would staff from different service areas be physically located together? Were there any plans for new accommodation? In answer to these questions staff were told that some potential locations were under investigation, and that the ideal would be to locate integrated services together, however there might be other teams who worked together on an allocation basis for a few

days a week. Much work remained to be done developing these ideas, but staff would be involved in these discussions.

- 4.14 Staff proposed the idea of the Council providing nursery places for the children of staff members, and how this would impact positively on their working conditions, and recruitment and retention. Particularly as nurseries and childcare provision are high on the government agenda at present.
- 4.15 Staff asked about potential problems in amalgamating and coordinating existing accounting and ICT systems. They were informed that meetings were underway to discuss these issues.
- 4.16 Staff questioned whether multi agency training was envisaged, (unknown at this stage) and were concerned that training needs to be resourced, and that this should be brought to the attention of 'Members'.
- 4.17 Staff were concerned that extensive 'marketing' would need to be used to 'sell' the benefits of the new arrangements to members of the public. They felt that the public were likely to ask – 'What's in it for me as a parent'? It was important that new arrangements are not perceived as just another layer of bureaucracy.
- 4.19 In general there was a broad acceptance of the logic and rationale for the new proposed department even though staff were aware that neighbouring authorities may be pursuing different options to Brent. Staff appeared to have clarity about the rationale for proposals. Questions focused much more on the operational issues involved, already outlined above, and the importance of assuring staff that they will be fully involved and consulted on new arrangements for working, as they are developed.
The fact that staff asked such detailed and broad ranging questions indicated a high level of interest in being involved in future developments.
- 4.20 Feedback from staff who attended the Children's Services away day was positive. Council staff and PCT staff welcomed the opportunity to meet and discuss issues together around the Children Act, and feedback expressed that they enjoyed being together for the away day.

5.0 Plans for Future communication

- 5.1 A communication and consultation strategy for the implementation of the Children Act in Brent is being developed. This will link to key events and planned actions. The strategy will identify key messages, the target audiences, set objectives and have an action plan.
- 5.2 The overall aim is to ensure that all key stakeholders are fully informed of the proposed changes, and that they understand why the changes are necessary, know the timetable for change and possible implications

for them, and to give them an opportunity to help shape the future delivery of services.

- 5.3 There will also be a need for specific meetings with individual members of staff directly affected by proposals, and road shows for all staff alongside an internal awareness raising campaign.

5.4 The timetable of key events for further communication is outlined below:

April	Annual Performance Assessment
	Consultation with children and young people
May	Appointment of Director of Children Services
	Appointment of Lead Member
End of July	Draft structure of the new department is in place
November	Setting up of Children's Local Strategic Safeguarding Board

6.0 Communication with partner agencies.

- 6.1 Communicating the proposed changes with the Councils partner agencies has been lead by the new Assistant Director for Strategy and Partnerships. The report from the Chief Executive outlining the proposals has been circulated amongst the PCT, Acute Hospital's Trust, Mental Health Trust, Probation Service, Police and Learning and Skills Council. It has also been presented to theme groups from the Children's Fund, which have representation of the Voluntary Sector

- 6.2 The Children's Strategic Partnership Board, which will be the key mechanism for partnership working around the Children Act, is set to meet for the first time on the 28th February 2005. Whilst most of those present will be familiar with proposed arrangements for Brent, there will be discussions around how the agencies will work together within the new framework of the partnership. The aims and vision of the board will be explored alongside the support required from partner agencies. All partners will share a role in developing further the terms of reference, with the aim that agencies will be able to sign up to these principles quickly. The process for Joint Area Reviews, which require analysis of partnership working will also be explored and explained.

7.0 Communication with Central Government

- 7.1 An Initial Conversation meeting with Department for Education and Skills, the Commission for Social Care Inspectorate, Government Office for London, the Directors and Assistant Director of EAL, Social Services and the Chief Executive has been extremely positive. The underlying purpose of these meetings is around information sharing and support for Councils with a view to setting clear priorities for delivering Children's Services in Brent. The Chief Executives first

report on the new proposals was very well received, and the analysis of various possible models and options and clarity over new arrangements was considered very helpful.

7.2 Brent is viewed within the context of these proposals, to be considerably ahead of other boroughs, many of whom are still undecided as to final structures and relationships. The fact that Brent is adopting a holistic approach to the integration of services, demonstrates a clear commitment to the principles of the Children Act. While some authorities have chosen a narrow scope for service integration, Brent has sought to involve all Council staff in the proposals.

8.0 **Conclusion**

8.1 The results of consultation with staff have been positive with broad acceptance of the rationale and logic behind the new proposals. Staff have asked detailed questions which have indicated their positive concern that the new arrangements work as well as possible, both for Children and Families, but also for the staff themselves. They have also made some early suggestions for improvements in marketing, training and working conditions which demonstrates a positive concern that the new arrangements work well. Partner agencies have received the communications about new arrangements, and further detailed discussions and consultations around partnership working are planned at the Children's Strategic Partnership Board. The DfES, GOL and CSCI have commented very positively on the new proposals. In the light of the positive results of consultation to date the Chief Executive commends the agreement of the recommendations laid out in section 2.0 of this report to the Executive.

9.0 **Financial Implications**

9.1 Since the report in December there is more clarity regarding the financial position. However, further detailed work needs to be done to fully cost both the transitional period and any additional requirements of the new department.

9.2 In the 2005/2006 Budget report on tonight's agenda 2 specific provisions are proposed relating to this report. These will be considered by Full Council on 28th February. The first amount relates to specific one-off costs of establishing the new Department and consequential changes elsewhere in the council. These will primarily be co-location expenses and the integration of IT system where currently different products are utilised. A provision of £400k is recommended for these costs.

9.3 The second budget is for the additional costs associated with the service improvements linked to the implementation of the Act. The following table summarises this growth proposal in 2004/2005 and 2005/2006.

		2004/5	2005/6
1	AD Children's Partnerships (part funded from EAL).	20	40
2	Commissioning Manager (3 rd tier post) from June 2005.	35	50
3	Information sharing and assessment – co-ordination and training.	30	50
4	Needs analysis/data requirements.	15	15
5	Joint commissioning Manager (50% Council funded, 50% PCT funded).	20	30
6	Finance Officer (including pooled budget arrangements) from June 2005.	-	40
7	Administrative support (2 posts) (1 post from April 2005, second post from June 2005).	-	55
8	Training, communications, publicity.	-	60
9	Workforce reforms, HR/Legal costs	-	40
10	Local Safeguarding Board.	-	60
11	Consultation.	-	30
12	Extended schools clusters	-	132
13	IT/database requirements (estimate – needs full review).	-	150
	TOTAL	120	752
	Funding already agreed		
	Capital Grant	-	123
	Council growth in base	100	100
	Change fund Government Grant	20	80
	Additional growth required.	-	449

9.4 The full original budget included in the First Reading report to Full Council was £600k. This requirement has now reduced to £449k.

9.5 If these budgets are not sufficient any additional requirement will need to be met from existing budgets created from the new Department.

10.0 Legal Implications

- 10.1 The Children Act received Royal Assent in November 2004. The Council will from the appointed date (probably 1st April 2005) be required to appoint a statutory Director of Children's Services and a Lead Member for Children's Services. It will also be required to appoint a Director of Adult Social Services and may wish to appoint a Lead Member for Adult Social Services. It is important to consider the impact of the proposals on staff, both those who will move into the new department, and those who will not. It is therefore important to take into account the response to consultation as set out in this report before finally deciding which approach to take
- 10.2 The appointment of a Director of Children's Services does not necessarily require a structural change to the organisation of the Council, but there is a risk that a less radical approach may not be as effective, and the Council would encounter criticism if a less radical approach fails to deliver what is required by the legislation and guidance. The establishment of a Children and Families Department under a Director of Children and Families provides clarity to members, staff, service users and our partner agencies. It may also assist generally in implementing other changes that will be required under the Act.
- 10.3 The new post cannot be created without first considering the job description and person specification for the post, together with the reasons for the creation of the post, as set out herein. The job description and person specification will be circulated in due course,
- 10.4 Once created the post will be graded in accordance with the Hay pay structure unless for some reason it does not lend itself to that structure. The appointment to the new post will then be made by the Appointments Sub-Committee and will be subject to the special rules that apply to senior appointments as set out in staff standing orders and the statutory guidance issued pursuant to the Act which is still awaited. It would be sensible for the appointment to take place at the same time as the appointment to the new Director of Adult Social Services post that will also need to be created since the existing statutory posts can then be deleted at the same time as the new ones take effect. It is important that there is absolute clarity of roles before, during and after the transitional period.
- 10.5 The Constitution will need to be amended to reflect the structural changes, both on the officer side and the member side, and to include new delegations and officer authorisations. The Constitutional changes will need to be approved by Full Council in due course once other structural changes have been agreed.
- 10.6 One of the options cited in the previous report was a Children's Trust. This could in fact have taken a number of forms although, perhaps surprisingly given the title, it would be unlikely to take the form of a

separate legal entity. It would be more likely to be an informal partnership in which the respective partners would work together to achieve the desired outcomes for children and young people. It would probably have some form of management board which would steer the partnership and might be underpinned by a series of pooled budget agreements or similar. Although officers are not recommending setting up a formal Children's Trust there will in fact be a multi-agency Children's Strategic Partnership Board which will fulfil a similar role. It will be an all embracing partnership which will involve all the major stakeholders. In time this could evolve into a more formal Children's Trust if necessary.

- 10.7 What is more important than the structure of the 'trust' or 'partnership' is to actually make sure that the various agencies are all working together to deliver the desired outcomes. There will need to be a clear plan for integrating services over time, and this plan should be reported to members in due course.

11.0 Staffing and Accommodation Implications

- 11.1 There will be significant staffing and accommodation implications as a result of the proposals. It is likely that there will be accommodation issues for staff around relocation. Staff likely to be affected are mainly although not exclusively, based within Social Services and Education, Arts and Libraries. The extent of the impact will vary, but may in some instances, include the introduction of new roles, changed work content, different reporting lines, change of work base, etc. The detail of this will be addressed in future reports to the Executive
- 11.2 Redundancies will be kept to an absolute minimum, and it is hoped that no enforced redundancies will be necessary. A Human Resources paper detailing how the organisation wide restructure will be managed is currently being developed. The restructure is not intended as a savings exercise, and the process followed will be as outlined within the redundancies and reorganisation policy. This means that where possible whole functions will be moved and individuals matched to posts and consultation with staff and their Trade Unions will be ongoing throughout the process. Where posts are redundant affected staff will be subject to the council's policies and procedures on redundancies and redeployment.
- 11.3 The Director of Human Resources and Diversity and the Director of Communications and Consultation are working closely together to ensure there is a co-ordinated approach to communication and consultation with staff. This work will range from broader awareness raising which the Director of Communications and Consultation will lead on through to the more formal consultation process with staff and their recognised Trade Union representatives which the Director of Human Resources and Diversity will lead on. Further detail and updates will be given in future reports to the Executive.

12.0 Diversity Implications

12.1 Officers have undertaken a preliminary assessment of the diversity implications of setting up a new Children and Families department. Given the boroughs demographic profile, with some 70% of children in our schools being of BME origin, it is anticipated that the new Department will give a stronger focus to the needs of such children and their families. The new Department's focus on integrated services to children and families will be of benefit to vulnerable children of all backgrounds and will give a sharper definition to their needs. By bringing resources into a single professional and managerial framework, the Council will be able to target vulnerable children and households more clearly and develop more 'joined up' and multi-disciplinary approaches to meeting their needs. More detailed diversity information and assessments will be given in future reports to the Executive as specific operational arrangements are progressed.

Background Papers

- Every Child Matters Report to CMT – 12th February 2004
- Report to and Minutes of the Executive Meeting 26 April 2004
- Project Plan
- Children Act
- Services for Children and Young People in Brent Arrangements for Partnership Working – DRAFT
- Establishing a Children and Families Department in Brent. Report to the Executive 12th December 2004

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Every Child Matters

Supporting Children and Families in Brent



A BRENT STAFF BULLETIN

No.1 December 2004

Introducing the Children Act in Brent

Dear Colleague,

The introduction of the new Children Act represents the biggest reorganisation of children's services in England for 30 years. Ultimately, its aim is to ensure that children are safer and better supported than they have been in the past.

Brent Council's Chief Executive, Gareth Daniel, will be making a number of recommendations to the Executive on 13th December with regard to the new Act, and will outline changes that can help the council to ensure it fully delivers its aims. A full copy of the report is available on the front page of the council's Intranet.

This is the first in a series of Bulletins to keep you up to date with the proposed changes, and to answer questions staff may have about how working practices could be affected.

What will the Children Act mean for Brent Council?

It is now a statutory requirement for all councils to appoint a Director of Children's Services. We will aim to make an appointment by summer 2005. In addition, Brent proposes to set up a new Children and Families department with responsibility for services provided by the council for children and their families. Staff employed to provide these services will be located within this department.

We will work closely with our partner organisations, such as schools, the Primary Care Trust and the voluntary sector and propose to establish a Children's Strategic Partnership Board to ensure that services are designed and delivered around the needs of children and families.

How will the new department differ from what's currently in place?

The proposed new department will aim to provide better, more comprehensive services for children and young people, their families, and other professionals working in this area. This will build on existing excellent joint working relationships.

To do this will require more than just a merger of the relevant parts of the Education, Arts and Libraries and

Social Services departments. The proposed new department will need to listen and work with children and families to design services which best meet their needs. It will mean developing and adopting innovative approaches as different professionals are brought together to deliver these services. Some of the benefits of this new approach would be the removal of duplication of effort, a reduction in bureaucracy and better sharing of information which should enable limited resources to go further.

What will be the structure of the Children and Families department?

It is estimated that about 635 staff would be part of the new department and the proposal is to organise it into four Divisions:

Achievement and Inclusion – bringing together school improvement services with services for children and young people with additional needs, including special educational needs.

Family Support – this is the existing Children's Services division, currently part of the Social Services Department. It will include child protection services and services for children in need, along with services for Looked After Children, young people leaving care and the Youth Offending Team.

Strategy and Partnerships – integrating the strategic planning and commissioning functions across the whole department.

Finance and Performance – integrating these two functions across the whole department.

Will there be any staff redundancies as a result of these changes?

The establishment of a Children and Families department is not a cost saving exercise and it is not envisaged at this stage that these organisational changes will result in staff redundancies. It may involve some changed responsibilities and new ways of working for staff to reflect changes in the provision of services to children

every child matters

and families. Also staff may find themselves reporting to a different manager in the future or working at a different work location within Brent. The reorganisation will be conducted in accordance with the council's normal procedures.

What will happen to current services in the existing departments that provide services for adults or to adults/children?

There are a number of services including Community Care, Libraries, BACES (Brent Adult & Community Education Service), Voluntary Sector Support Service, Cultural & Heritage Services and Support & Finance functions, which fall into this category. The Chief Executive will be reviewing the best organisational structure that will support the delivery of these services in the future, and is due to make recommendations to the Executive about this in February 2005.

Where will the new department be based?

This is currently being reviewed. One option is to refurbish the 5th and 6th floors of Chesterfield House for closer integration of services. Additional possibilities are the development of neighbourhood multi-agency bases in Children's Centres, Extended Schools, health facilities and, in the longer term, the proposed new Civic Centre. However, we are not anticipating any large scale moves and will take time to look at the best options for services and staff.

Will we get a chance to have our say on the proposed changes?

Yes. Affected staff will be consulted with regard to the changes. The Director of Social Services and the Director of Education, Arts and Libraries will be organising initial meetings with staff to describe the overall proposals for the new department.

Views expressed will be reflected in the follow up report proposed by the Chief Executive for the Executive meeting in February 2005. Ongoing formal consultation with staff and their representatives will continue beyond this period. Over the next 12 months, staff will have the opportunity to help shape the way services are planned and delivered to best meet the needs of children and families in Brent, and will be involved in decisions about integration at team level.

12.04.BDU.4687

Proposed timetable for change

December 2004

Gareth Daniel recommends to councillors that they agree in principle to proceed with the proposal to establish a Children and Families department in Brent.

January 2005

- Meetings will be held with staff and unions in Education, Arts & Libraries and Social Services departments.
- First meeting of the Children's Strategic Partnership Board to be held

February 2005

- Key outcomes from the meeting with staff and their representatives will be fed back to the Executive.
- Proposals to Executive on future organisation of services which are primarily for adults or have a dual children and adult customer base.

May 2005

Director of Children and Families is appointed and Lead Member for Children and Families agreed.

June 2005 - April 2006

Key elements of the new department evolve and become operational as we continue our dialogue with partners.

How can I find out more?

The full report is going to the Executive on 13 December 2004 and is available on the Extranet (for schools) and the front page of the council's Intranet.

If you have any further questions, you should contact your line manager in the first instance. You will also have an opportunity to raise questions at meetings planned in the New Year. Any comments or queries about issues raised in this Bulletin or the full report can also be sent to:

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