

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

DELIVERING IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN, INFORMED BY THE CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE REVIEW

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the strategy in place and the additional capacity required to deliver improved outcomes for children in need, at risk of significant harm or who have experienced significant harm. The major drivers are the findings of careful scrutiny of our own services following Baby P; the requirements set out in the Children and Young Person's Act 2008, the Children and Young People's Plan, Local Area Agreement and the Council's Corporate Plan. This report seeks Cabinet's approval to implement the following changes from agreed budget growth of £690,000.

1 Background

- 1.1 The Children and Young Peoples Department has previously reported to Cabinet its progress since 2006 (Value for Money report 7TH February 2008) and also provided a verbal report to Cabinet on 10th December 2008 outlining the immediate actions taken to review our work in safeguarding children in response to the Baby P case. In addition, in the light of the Ofsted Annual Performance Assessment which was reported in December, officers have been reviewing what measures need to be in place to improve our Staying Safe grade from adequate and ensure sustainability of our services for children. The department is also mindful that the inspection regime is likely to change from April, with quarterly performance reporting being introduced and unannounced inspections.

2 Local action taken in response to Baby P

- 2.1 The Director reported on the six actions being taken locally in response to Baby P at Cabinet on 10th December 2008. These are outlined below:
- 2.2 Actions led by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board for all statutory partners to refresh the 2003 Victoria Climbié audit; undertake a rapid appraisal of all children subject to a Child Protection plan; to review staffing levels to confirm stability of front line capacity to respond, and finally undertake an audit of supervision and management oversight. Each agency will produce an action plan to address any improvements required.
- 2.3 A meeting between Senior Officers from the Youth Offending Service (YOS), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Police and Social Care with the Director of Children's Services to identify young people who posed the greatest risk, with a view to auditing the current plans for each young person and identifying improved ways of jointly meeting their needs and more safely managing the risks.
- 2.4 A review of Police, Social Care and Health joint working procedures and protocols, through the random identification of children within certain categories of referral to Social Care by the Police.

- 2.5 A review of Health procedures / practices in terms of meeting the requirements to safeguard children. Meeting with a full range of Health professionals; the focus for discussion with the Director of Children's Services was how we could ensure a robust local response to learning lessons from the Baby P case.
- 2.6 The review of Local Safeguarding Children's Board arrangements, with a particular emphasis upon the likely legislative requirement to recruit an independent Chair.
- 2.7 The review of Social Care practice and capacity to fulfil legislative requirements to meet the needs of children who require safeguarding. Within Social Care, the following actions have been taken to audit practice, the findings inform the recommendations contained within the second part of this report:
- Meetings in November 2008, by the Head of Branch Social Care with social workers in all Fieldwork Teams, immediately after the publication of the Baby P report and ensuing actions in Haringey;
 - A review of case files by District Managers of all children subject to a child protection plan;
 - A review of a random sample of 20 case files, by the Quality Assurance Unit, of children subject to a child protection plan, to assess the quality of the plan, and the impact of the plan through speaking to the children concerned;
 - Development of an improved case file auditing tool;
 - A review of staffing capacity and caseloads, resulting in additional agency social workers being deployed in 6 social work teams;
 - A review of the 46 Lord Laming actions for Social Care from 2003.

2.8 This report draws on the outcomes of the review of social care practice described in paragraph 2.7. The review identified many areas of improvement across Wirral services that have been put into place since 2006. It also identified areas of very good practice that have been introduced on a pilot basis and where there is now a need to extend the practice across Wirral and to embed it into our establishment.

These include:

- The remodelling social delivery work pilot supported by the Children's Workforce Development Council in Rockferry / Tranmere.
- The full time deployment of an Area Team Leader supported by Tranmere Together in Tranmere.
- The work on permanency by the Children in Care project team.
- The first contact service provided by the Central Advice and Duty Team.

The review also identified a number of areas where demand for services exceeds our capacity to respond in a sufficient and timely way. This has placed demands on middle managers which has affected our ability to recruit and retain these crucial colleagues. The next sections outline a proposed response to these issues.

3 Service Design

3.1 This report outlines 9 areas in service delivery and makes recommendations in each area. Each area is part of continuum of service for children and young people across different levels of need from the children with additional needs who require co-

ordinated support, to children in need of safeguarding, children in care and children who need permanent new placements. The 9 areas are as follows:

- Integrated preventative services
- Access to social care
- Social worker establishment – Assessment
- Social worker establishment – Care Management
- Leaving Care
- Systems support
- Management and supervision of practice
- Safeguarding, quality and review
- Workforce development

4 Integrated preventative services

- 4.1 Area Teams provide a vital function in responding to children with additional needs, through a co-ordinated approach in the community within which they live. The requirement to develop integrated approaches to children through the use of the common assessment framework is enshrined in the Children Act 2004. Increased and improved levels of co-operation and co-ordination of services by Health, Education, Social Care and other “mainstream agencies” has led to an increased ability of all services to assess and meet children’s needs leading to reduced levels of unnecessary child protection investigation.
- 4.2 11 Area Teams are each currently led by a 0.5 full time equivalent (fte) Area Team Leader, who is seconded from their substantive post. A review of Area Teams was undertaken in 2007 and the recommendations from that review have been considered and piloted as part of a re-modelling social work pilot funded by the Children’s Workforce Development Council (CWDC).
- 4.3 The pilot has confirmed the findings of the 2007 review that the Area Team Leader post should be placed on a more permanent basis, and the benefits in areas of complex and diverse need of having a full-time post. The pilot has also confirmed the importance to planning services by having a robust and co-ordinated administration processes to collect data which can then inform local delivery of services and future commissioning. Partners are firmly committed to the model of integrated working and undertake Common Assessments and arrange meetings to meet the needs of children, but find the administrative demands heavy and complex.
- 4.4 It is proposed that the Area Team delivery model is consolidated through the establishment of 7.5 fte Area Team leaders but still covering the 11 Areas. Areas experiencing the highest of level of social stress would have a full time ATL whilst where demand is lower would remain at 0.5 fte. Currently there is £255,000 funding for 11 part time Area Team Leaders (5.5 fte), the proposal above increases this capacity up to 7.5 fte which will be funded through £100,000 of Area Based Grant (SDG ex BIP).
- 4.5 Additionally, it is proposed that each Area Team will be supported by an Information Sharing Co-ordinator, responsible for developing information systems so that at any point in time there was a clear understanding about which children and families are subject to a Common Assessment (CAF), and which of those children are being supported through the Team around the Child model. It is vital that this information about children is known and recorded. The Area Team must be in a position to

provide oversight of all CAF activity, intervening where appropriate and providing support to set up each initial Team around the Child meeting.

- 4.6 It is expected that these posts would need to be graded at Band E, the following costs would apply: 7.5 fte x £18,882 + pay award + on costs = £182,000. It is proposed that these costs will be met through the Area Based Grant (SDG). The Information Sharing Co-ordinator would sit alongside the Area Team Leader and work with and to them directly. The Area Team Leaders each have a role in co-ordinating and delivering training, which will be strengthened by the approach outlined above.
- 4.7 The configuration of Area Team leaders and the Information Sharing co-ordinator is outlined in Appendix 1.

District/Area	Post	Grade (subject to evaluation)	FTE	Cost	Comment
Area Teams	Team Leaders	PO8	2	£100,000	Met by ABG (SDG ex BIP)
Area Team	Information Sharing Coordinators	Band E	7.5	£182,000	Met from ABG (SDG).

5 Access to social care

- 5.1 Since the review of our access to social care undertaken by Professor David Thorpe, we have managed our Central Advice and Duty Team (CADT) for children by having a rota of social workers from each Assessment Team providing consultation and advice, as well as accepting referrals. Management cover has also been provided on a rota basis by the Assessment Team Managers.
- 5.2 This pilot has now run since September 2007. It has evidenced its intended outcomes – professionals can now get quick advice directly from a social worker, which is highly valued and the number of inappropriate referrals has now dropped significantly. In line with the development of Area Teams co-ordinating services for children with additional needs, referrals now made to children’s social care are more appropriate but also deal with children with more complex needs who may not yet be in need of safeguarding but require a specialised service from a social worker to support them and their families to prevent this need or a need to become looked after arising. As a result, the number of child in need cases being managed by children’s social care requiring an assessment and ongoing service has increased. Children are being supported earlier and are therefore safer.
- 5.3 This direction of travel is absolutely correct; if we can support children and families earlier and more appropriately, we can safeguard children more effectively and improve outcomes for some of our most vulnerable children.
- 5.4 Subsequent sections of this report address the impact this has on services and the pressure this has brought in delivering our model of service at CADT. Currently, Team Managers provide one week in four rotational management cover to the CADT; this is stretching capacity in the Assessment Teams where an on site manager is required at all times.
- 5.5 It is proposed that a Principal Team Manager (Access) post is established in order to carry forward the changes both with CADT, but also within the Emergency Duty Team

(which we are currently reviewing with colleagues in DASS) and access arrangements as a whole for Children's Social Care. This post will require additional funding. They would directly line manage the CADT Manager as well as providing support to the Strategic Service Manager – Children and Families, in taking on some direct reports that this post has acquired since its creation.

- 5.6 To ensure that CADT operates effectively and provides a consistent response, it is proposed that that a dedicated CADT Team Manager (Practice Manager), based full time at CADT, is required. This post holder will manage the rota, but also set clear standards and systems for recording, reporting and responding to requests for a service for children and prompt allocation of referrals where there are safeguarding issues. This post will be funded via the Care Matters element of the Area Based Grant.

District/Area	Post	Grade (subject to evaluation)	FTE	Cost	Comment
CADT	Team Manager	PO8	1	£46,070	Met from Care Matters ABG
CADT	Principal Manager	PO12	1	£50,560	Requires additional funding

6 Social Worker establishment

- 6.1 This section makes a number of recommendations to increase the social work establishment. Over the last 3 years, we have successfully recruited and retained social work staff to the level where in September 2009 we became fully staffed, against the current establishment.

6.2 Assessment

- 6.2.1 As outlined above social workers from the 4 Assessment Teams provide cover on a weekly basis at CADT. However, given the increase in complexity of work, this has had an impact on the social workers' capacity to complete assessments and close/transfer cases in a timely manner which can cause delay for children and families but also impacts on accurate and timely reporting of performance, when they also provide cover at CADT. Each Assessment team establishment is 5 social workers, a senior practitioner and a Team Manager. The 2 Assessment Teams in Birkenhead and the Assessment Team in Wallasey have experienced workload pressures.

- 6.2.2 It is therefore proposed that in 3 of the Assessment Teams (2 in Birkenhead and 1 in Wallasey), each team will have an additional social work post established. In South/West District, the volume of work has not increased and so no increase in establishment is proposed for that District's Assessment Team. The effect of this proposal is to consolidate into the establishment, the successful CADT pilot.

District/Area	Post	Grade (subject to evaluation)	FTE	Cost	Comment
Assessment	Social Workers	Scp 26 - 36	3	£114,230	Requires additional funding

6.3 Care Management

6.3.1 These teams provide services for children in need, children in need of protection and children in care. As outlined above, we are providing increasing services for children in need. We have reduced the number of children who require a formal child protection plan but still have higher number of children in care than our comparators. Safely reducing the number of children in care is a key council priority where we have achieved some success, but requires specific and focused attention to the planning for these children.

6.3.2 The Children in Care Project Team comprising four social workers has been in place since January 2006. The Team have been particularly effective in securing Special Guardianship Orders for children, Assisted Residence Orders and also to a lesser extent, in working to discharge Care Orders where Children are placed with their parents, and where it is assessed that an order is no longer required. The number of children subject to Special Guardianship Orders in Wirral is now 51 (this legislation was introduced on 1st January 2006). Children subject to Special Guardianship Orders are entitled to the same post Order support as children who have been adopted. This level of support is legislatively required and is vital to prevent children secured with carers, (many of whom have experienced damaging experiences within their families), from experiencing further placement disruption and needing to be looked after again at some time during the remainder of their childhood. It is therefore proposed that three social workers and one senior practitioner post is established and funded from the Care Matters element of the Area Based Grant. The Team should focus on post adoption and Special Guardianship support as well as assessing children and progressing the plan where Special Guardianship is required to meet the children's needs. Three of the four current post holders are seconded from the Care Management Teams and these posts will be released back into those Teams.

District/Area	Post	Grade (subject to evaluation)	FTE	Cost	Comment
CiC Team	Social Worker	Scp 26 - 36	3	£114,230	Met from Care Matters ABG
CiC Team	Senior Practitioner	PO4	1	£41,610	Met from Care Matters ABG

6.3.3 In addition it is proposed that a further 3 social worker posts be established in the Care Management Teams, which will require additional funding. The aim is to ensure that the Care Management teams have sufficient resources to work with children and families on a medium to long term basis and be able to undertake detailed and focused work with these cases to ensure children's outcomes are improved and we, in partnership with other agencies support children and families effectively. The strength of these Teams will be subject to further review as it becomes possible to safely reduce the number of children in care.

District/Area	Post	Grade (subject to evaluation)	FTE	Cost	Comment
Care Management	Social Worker	Scp 26 - 36	3	£114,230	Requires additional funding

6.3.4 There is likely to be a lead in time in order to fill these social worker posts. Although a full year cost is shown above, permanent appointments may not be achieved for a few

months. These are critical positions, which should be filled as soon as possible. Approval is requested for agency staff to continue in 2009-10 until appointments are made. The additional cost for 4 months is estimated to be £50,000.

6.3.5 The review of case files has identified a need for additional administrative support in the short term to bring file records up to date and for archiving. Five temporary administrative posts have been recruited. It is proposed to continue these appointments until July 2009.

6.3.6 The additional cost of agency social workers and administrative staff are estimated to be £80,000. It is proposed that unspent School Development Grant (Area Based Grant) in 2008-09 is rolled into 2009-10 to fund this.

7 Leaving Care

7.1 Wirral has increasing numbers of children supported through the Leaving Care Service. Each young person should, by statute, have a personal advisor allocated and a pathway plan. Where young people are in care under 18 years of age, they must be allocated to a qualified social worker. There are different criteria under the Leaving Care Act for whom we should be providing support – eligible children who were in care on their 15th birthday and were in care for 12 months before that date; relevant children who were in care on or after their 15th birthday and formally relevant children. In summary we should be providing a pathway adviser and support until 21 years old (25 if in education or have a learning disability) and we have not been able to provide this service to every care leaver. The above criteria are to be changed following changes in the law, through the Children and Young Person’s Act 2008. This places increased focus on support for care leavers. These are some of our most vulnerable young people who also show in our NEET figures and are at higher risk of poor outcomes as young adults.

7.2 Therefore it is recommended the 2 additional social workers temporarily placed in the Leaving Care Service, which are improving support to this group of young people, are established on a permanent basis and the funding is provided by the Care Matters element of the Area Based Grant.

District/Area	Post	Grade (subject to evaluation)	FTE	Cost	Comment
Leaving Care	Social Worker	Scp 26 - 36	2	£76,150	Met from Care Matters ABG

8 Systems Support

8.1 The Integrated Children’s System (ICS) has been developed to improve outcomes for children defined as being in need, under the Children Act 1989. It provides a conceptual framework, a method of practice and a business process to support practitioners and managers in undertaking the key tasks of assessment, planning, intervention and review. Because the work with children in need requires skilled use of detailed and complex information, ICS is designed to be supported by an electronic case record system. A key aim of ICS is to provide front line staff and their managers with the necessary help, through information communication technology (ICT) to record, collate, analyse and output the information required.

- 8.2 The implementation of the Integrated Children's System (ICS) received considerable coverage in the national press through the reporting of Baby P, where it was reported as being time consuming and problematic. In order to implement the system effectively in Wirral a Project Manager is urgently required. The post holder will work directly with the technical staff implementing the systems; will have a key role in working with practitioners and trainers to ensure that the system is adapted where feasible to support the delivery of best social work practice and that the training delivered supports practitioner to use the system in an effective way. A project management approach is required with clear milestones and targets to work towards. A Project Manager is required for a twelve month period initially. The Project Manager will work directly to the Strategic Service Manager Children and Families.
- 8.3 In addition to the above ICS phase 1C capital funding for 2008-09 has just been announced. The approval is £36,979 and will include improvements to make the system easier to use. However the necessary software to implement this will not become available until later in 2009. Therefore, in the short term the grant will be used to offset staffing costs for the ICS system administration and training teams in 2008-09. The software costs will require funding in 2009-10.
- 8.4 To fund this and support the compliance with accurate performance reporting, embedding ICS at a local level, and in anticipation of quarterly performance monitoring commencing in April 2009, it is proposed that unspent Care Matters Grant from 2008/09 be rolled into 2009/10. This will fund software and the recruitment of a Project Manager and 4 Data Officers, one of whom will be located in each District. The Data Officer would be responsible for training, support and setting standards for recording systems in each District, both electronic and paper based. The focus will be on the recording of children's information in ICS and paper based records and ensuring that accurate performance reporting is enhanced. It is recommended that these posts be established on a time limited basis for 12 months to embed the transition to electronic recording and file management.

District/Area	Post	Grade (subject to evaluation)	FTE	Cost	Comment
ICS	Project Manager	PO8	1	£46,070	Care Matters ABG (2008/09)
ICS	Data Officers	Band E	4	£97,070	Care Matters ABG (2008/09)
ICS Software	-	-	-	£36,879	Care Matters ABG (2008/09)

9 Management and Supervision of Practice

- 9.1 Since 2006 there have been incremental management changes within the Children's Social Care Branch. Four District Manager positions were established in 2006 and in 2007 two Strategic Service Manager positions were established and appointments made. In 2008 the Social Inclusion and Family Support Service was disaggregated into the Four Districts. The proposals below, relate to the generic fieldwork service for children and families. The management of specialist services for children, young people and families will be subject to a separate review.
- 9.2 The requirements upon front line Team Managers have increased, managing in a complex environment where their capacity to quality assure, audit, provide oversight

of the judgements being made by individual social workers have been starkly highlighted through the case of Baby P. The audit of Wirral's Social Care practice against Lord Lamings standards highlighted a number of areas of inconsistency, such as case file auditing, full case chronologies on every child's case file, and effective workload allocation and management systems.

- 9.3 A full complement of first line managers is required, with appropriate training, skills and clear expectations, to deliver consistent practice across the service. During the past three years we have recruited two external Team Managers, both of whom have now left the employment of Wirral, and there has been very little internal interest in applying for these positions. We currently have 4 Team Manager vacancies; 2 of which have been covered by agency workers, for almost 3 years in one case, and 12 months in another. We know from our workforce analysis that this situation will become even more difficult in the future. This is an area where the Authority is especially vulnerable. The key factor in retaining social workers is the quality of support and supervision they receive from their immediate line manager. The key factor in supporting safe practice for children and families is the quality of leadership and support by the front line team managers. Regarding fieldwork Team Managers the pay in Wirral is significantly lower than our immediate neighbouring authorities and this, along with the expectations placed upon first line Team Managers, has had a serious impact upon our capacity to recruit.
- 9.4 The following revised structure is proposed to achieve 3 outcomes. Firstly, it improves and provides the capacity to drive forward improved performance and professional practice at a team level which we need, secondly, it introduces a career structure for social workers, to ensure we retain our best staff at the front-line and thirdly, to attract candidates to management positions,
- 9.5 It is proposed that the post of Principal Team Manager is introduced and that existing Team Manager posts are re-designated as Practice Managers. The new post of Principal Team Manager will be responsible for the supervision of the Practice Managers. The Principal Team Manager will deal with workload management and allocation across the Team. The Principal Team Manager will have a critical leadership role in establishing a virtuous performance cycle, ensuring that performance data is provided and complied with, that performance targets are met for key performance indicators and sets a culture which continues to develop the professional practice within the Teams. The Principal Team Manager will support the District Manager in the day to day monitoring of Social Care within each District, and will work within a clear scheme of delegated decision making.
- 9.6 The Practice Manager will be responsible for the oversight and direction of case planning and compliance within the Team. This will entail chairing meetings for Children in Need, Child Protection, Children in Care and care planning meetings for children whose cases are before the Court. The Practice Manager will have a revised range of delegated decision making and will be responsible for managing and tracking cases in terms of outcomes and progress. The Practice Manager, will deputise in the Principal Team Manager's absence, and provide supervision to social workers
- 9.7 With respect to the Senior Practitioner position, post holders currently maintain a caseload as well as having responsibility for supervising some social workers in their Team. However, due to carrying a relatively high caseload it has often meant that caseload issues have precluded their role in promoting effective professional development and supervision. It is proposed that the role is clarified as being, the lead, experienced social worker within the Team responsible for the development of

professional practice, particularly students, newly qualified, and Level 2 social workers. The post holders will have a reduced caseload of complex cases. Their role will also be to mentor staff and also to co-work with Level 2 and Level 3 social workers. The focus of this social work role will be leading and developing professional practice.

- 9.8 These positions need to have revised job descriptions and be submitted for grade evaluation. However, the indicative grade we would be looking for would be PO12 for Principal Team Manager and PO8 for the Practice Manager. The Senior Practitioner grade would remain as PO4 but there will need to be revision of the job description. This revision will focus on a role involving leading excellent professional practice supporting newly qualified social workers and trainees.
- 9.9 In order to resolve workload and allocation issues specifically experienced within the Birkenhead District it has been decided that two District Managers out of the compliment of four will be placed in the Birkenhead District and the District be split into two parts, North and South. It is proposed that each District Manager in Birkenhead will manage two Principal Team Managers, one for Assessment and the other Care Management. In addition it is proposed to create an additional Team Manager (Practice Manager) post and uplift a Social Work post to Senior Practitioner level in order that in both Birkenhead North and South, where the workloads and pressures are similar, each has an equal number of Practice Managers and Senior Practitioners. This is to ensure additional capacity to track and monitor children's cases to achieve improved outcomes.

District/Area	Post	Grade (subject to evaluation)	FTE	Cost	Comment
Birkenhead (North)	Principal Manager	PO12	2	£101,130	New Post, requires additional funding
Birkenhead (North)	Care Management Team Manager	PO8	1	£46,070	New Post, requires additional funding
Birkenhead (North)	Senior Practitioner	PO4	1	£3,540	Uplift from SW, requires additional funding
Birkenhead (South)	Principal Manager	PO12	2	£101,130	New Post, requires additional funding
Wallasey	Principal Manager	PO12	2	£101,130	New Post, requires additional funding
South & West	Principal Manager	PO12	1	£50,560	New Post, requires additional funding

10 Safeguarding, Quality and Review

- 10.1 The expectations and requirements upon the Safeguarding service have increased significantly. Further requirements have been made upon the service in the immediate aftermath of Baby P, and more expectations are likely, following Lord Laming's Review.
- 10.2 Since 2006 the service has assumed responsibility for the development of the Child Death Overview Panel which became operational in April 2008, the authority was required to recruit a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to investigate allegations against professionals, have systems in place to consider licensing

applications, plus a requirement to implement vetting and barring procedures across the authority. Expectations placed upon the Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (established in April 2006) have increased, and there is likely to be guidance requiring increased independence of the Board through the appointment of an independent chair. The proposals below, will bring the authority in line with other LSCB's in the region. The LSCB receives funding from all statutory partner agencies, there is no funding formula currently and contributions are subject to local determination.

- 10.3 It is proposed that the Principal Safeguarding Manager is re-designated as Strategic Service Manager Safeguarding, a third tier post, and that the officer will become a member of the Departmental Management Team. It is also proposed that a new post of Local Safeguarding Children's Board Manager is established. The Board Manager will have line management responsibilities, for example for the LSCB Training Officer, the LADO, the Child Death Overview Panel administration and the CAF / Quality Assurance Officer; they will also service all the LSCB sub groups – ensuring they have appropriate project plans which track outcomes to ensure they are achieved.
- 10.4 Regarding the Quality Assurance and Review service it is proposed that a Child in Need Reviewing Officer is established to provide systematic overview mechanisms for these children; chairing the reviews of the most complex cases. It is further proposed that the complaints and children's involvement service are consolidated under separate managers drawn from within the service. It is proposed that the post of Professional Practice Officer is established to ensure that policies and procedures are both accessible and provide an effective framework for quality work.
- 10.5 It is proposed that the LSCB, made up of all statutory and voluntary sector partners should contribute to funding the LSCB Manager, and that the Local Authority contribution to the LSCB should fund the re-grading of the Principal Safeguarding Manager.

District/Area	Post	Grade (subject to evaluation)	FTE	Cost	Comment
Safeguarding	Strategic Service Manager	EPO21	1	£16,100	Uplift from EPO6, funded from Local Authority contribution to the LSCB
Safeguarding	LSCB Manager	PO14	1	£52,800	Funded from LSCB
Quality Assurance	CIN Reviewing Officer	PO8	1	£46,070	Met from Care Matters ABG
Quality Assurance	Complaints Manager	PO8	1	£2,240	Uplift from PO6, requires additional funding
Quality Assurance	Children's Involvement Manager	PO8	1	£4,460	Uplift from PO4, requires additional funding
Quality Assurance	Professional Practice Officer	PO4	1	£42,850	Met from Care Matters ABG

11 Workforce development

- 11.1 The establishment of the above posts contained within this report has implications for workforce development. From the point of entry into the service, if the above measures are implemented there is a clear career pathway for social workers, from entry to the service as a Level 2 social worker, through career grades of practicing social worker up to Senior Practitioner (Level 4), and then Practice Manager, Principal Manager to District Manager and above into more Senior Management positions. The Workforce Development Team will need to develop a clear training plan to support practitioners and managers at every step of the journey, commencing with NVQ L3 for residential and foster carers. To provide additional capacity to do this it is proposed to establish a Social Work development officer, to support the standards being piloted through the Children's Workforce Development Council. There is much to learn from the career development pathways established for Teachers and the Workforce Development Team, located within the Learning and Achievement Branch is ideally positioned to develop improved training pathways for all within Social Care.

District/Area	Post	Grade (subject to evaluation)	FTE	Cost	Comment
Work Force Development	Staff Development Officer	PO2	1	£40,300	Met from CWDC Grant

12 Implications for Legal Services

- 12.1 The provision of legal advice and assistance to Children's Services is an integral part of the overall strategy to protect children at risk of significant harm and improve outcomes for looked after children.
- 12.2 The Serious Case Review Executive Summary Report prepared by Haringey Local Safeguarding Children Board into the death of Baby P makes it clear that the provision of appropriate and timely legal advice was a material issue in the case and a series of recommendations were made about the provision of legal advice including:

'All staff in Legal should be reminded of the need to comply with case management and performance standards at all times including accurate recording, filing and adherence to agreed timescales.'

'Pending a strategic review, Legal Services should ensure that sufficient numbers of lawyers with strong experience of acting for a local authority in childcare proceedings are recruited or alternative methods of service provision are explored.'

- 12.3 Guidance issued by the Law Society recognises that the steps involved in the decision whether or not a child should be made the subject of care proceedings will inevitably be a complex process, requiring in-depth and regular consultation and discussion between lawyer and social worker. The Council's Legal Services Child Care team currently comprises three child care solicitors, managed by a Group Solicitor (who also holds responsibility for education and Adult Social Services). Further study is required of the caseloads carried by these colleagues and the likely impact of the changes proposed in this report.

12.4 One of the Council's aims underpinning its strategic objective of raising the aspirations of young people is safely to reduce the number of looked after children. Following Baby P it is likely and understandable that both individuals and agencies will become more risk averse in child care matters and this will create significant service pressures. The proposals contained in this report seek to manage these pressures proactively within CYPD. However, if the number of looked after children is to be safely reduced, this will require further changes in Legal Services.

12.5 Presently, given its very limited resources, the Child Care Team in Legal Services must give priority to cases where children are actively at risk. This means that work on discharging Care Orders (where it is safe and appropriate to do so) cannot be prioritised. This could lead to some children remaining in the looked after category longer than is reasonably necessary. Additional legal capacity could support CYPD in safely managing down the number of looked after children and ensure that lawyers are available sooner to attend gatekeeping meetings with social workers to review cases where discharging proceedings may be appropriate. In turn, by providing 'critical challenge' in such meetings the quality of the Council's Court applications for discharge orders will be improved,

13 Financial implications

13.1 The costs of all posts and sources of funding are detailed in the table below.

District/Area	Post	Grade (subject to evaluation)	FTE	Cost	Comment
Area Teams	Team Leaders	PO8	2.5	£100,000	Met by ABG (SDG ex BIP)
Area Team	Information Sharing Coordinators	B and E	7.5	£182,000	Met from ABG (SDG).
CADT	Team Manager	PO8	1	£46,070	Met from Care Matters ABG
Assessment	Social Workers	Scp 26-36	3	£114,230	Requires additional funding
CADT	Principal Manager	PO12	1	£50,560	Requires additional funding
Care Management	Social Worker	Scp 26 - 36	3	£114,230	Requires additional funding
Leaving Care	Social Worker	Scp 26 -36	2	£76,150	Met from Care Matters ABG
CiC Team	Social Worker	Scp 26-36	3	£114,230	Met from Care Matters ABG
CiC Team	Senior Practitioner	PO4	1	£41,610	Met from Care Matters ABG
	Agency Social workers and Admin support			£80,000	School Development Grant ABG (2008-09)
ICS	Project Manager	PO8	1	£46,070	Care Matters ABG (2008/09)
ICS	Data Officers	Band E	4	£97,070	Care Matters ABG (2008/09)
ICS software	-	-	-	£37,000	Care Matters ABG (2008/09)

Birkenhead (North)	Principal Manager	PO12	2	£101,130	New Post, requires additional funding
Birkenhead (North)	Care Management Team Manager	PO8	1	£46,070	New Post, requires additional funding
Birkenhead (North)	Senior Practitioner	PO4	1	£3,540	Uplift from SW, requires additional funding
Birkenhead (South)	Principal Manager	PO12	2	£101,130	New Post, requires additional funding
Wallasey	Principal Manager	PO12	2	£101,130	New Post, requires additional funding
South & West	Principal Manager	PO12	1	£50,560	New Post, requires additional funding
Safeguarding	Strategic Service Manager	EPO21	1	£16,100	Uplift from EPO6, funded from LSCB
Safeguarding	LSCB Manager	PO14	1	£52,800	Funded from LSCB
Quality Assurance	CIN Reviewing Officer	PO8	1	£46,070	Met from Care Matters ABG
Quality Assurance	Complaints Manager	PO8	1	£2,240	Uplift from PO6, requires additional funding
Quality Assurance	Children's Involvement Manager	PO8	1	£4,460	Uplift from PO4, requires additional funding
Quality Assurance	Professional Practice Officer	PO4	1	£42,850	Met from Care Matters ABG
Work Force Development	Staff Development Officer	PO2	1	£40,300	Met from CWDC Grant
Total				£1,707,600	

The sources of funding for a full year are:-

ABG (SDG ex BIP)	= £100,000
ABG (SDG)	= £182,000
ABG (Care Matters)	= £367,000
LSCB funding	= £68,900
ABG Care Matters (2008/09)	= £180,100
ABG School Development Grant (2008/09)	= £80,000
CWDC Grant	= £40,300
Budget Growth	= £689,300
Total	= £1,707,600

14 Staffing implications

14.1 The following posts are grant funded it is therefore proposed to establish these post as time limited appointments.

Post	Grade (subject to evaluation)	FTE	Comment
Area Team Leaders	PO8	2.5	ABG (BIP)
Information Sharing Coordinators	Band E	7.5	ABG (SDG)
CADT Team Manager	PO8	1	ABG (Care Matters)
Social Worker (CiC & Leaving Care)	Scp 26 - 36	5	ABG (Care Matters)
CiC Senior Practitioner	PO4	1	ABG (Care Matters)
ICS Project Manager	PO8	1	ABG (2008/09 – Care Matters)
ICS Data Officers	Band E	4	ABG (2008/09 – Care Matters)
CIN Reviewing Officer	PO8	1	ABG (Care Matters)
Professional Practice Officer	PO4	1	ABG (Care Matters)
Staff Development Officer	PO2	1	CWDC Grant

14.2 The post detailed below would be offered as permanent appointments.

Post	Grade (subject to evaluation)	FTE
Social Worker (Assessment & Care Management)	Scp 26 -36	6
Care Management Team Manager	PO8	1
Senior Practitioner	PO4	1
Principal Manager	PO12	8
Complaints Manager	PO8	1
Children's Involvement Manager	PO8	1
Strategic Service Manager (Safeguarding)	EPO21	1
LSCB Manager	PO14	1

15 Equal opportunities implications

15.1 Equality Impact Assessments have been undertaken on the recruitment processes to be used and points raised within them have been addressed within the action plan.

16 Community safety implications

16.1 There are no implications under this heading.

17 Local Agenda 21 implications

17.1 The emotional and educational support put in place for children in care and care leavers in preparing young them for adulthood, which includes participating both socially and economically in society, will benefit the local community, reducing long term unemployment and the negative impact on young people's lives associated with unemployment.

18 Planning implications

18.1 There are no implications under this heading

19 Anti-poverty implications

- 19.1 The focus on improving outcomes for children in care and care leavers and working with partner agencies including Connexions through Wirral's Employment, Education and Training Strategy will enable more children and care leavers to find employment, training and education and reduce the number who are NEET at age 19.

20 Social inclusion implications

- 20.1 The proposals outlined above support children and care leavers and promote social inclusion and community cohesion.

21 Local Member Support implications

- 21.1 The proposals put forward effect services to vulnerable children all wards within the Borough.

22 Background papers

The Children and Young Persons Act 2008

- Care Matters: Time for Change White Paper, DCFS June 2007.
- Wirral 14-19 Joint Agency Employment, Education and Training Strategy.
- Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 and associated Regulations

23 RECOMMENDATIONS

That

- (1) That Cabinet formally approve the strategy set out in the report
- (2) That uncommitted 2008/09 ABG (up to £260,100) be carried forward in to 2009/10
- (3) The report be referred to Employment & Appointments Committee.
- (4) That the Director of Children's Services and the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management prepare a further report for Cabinet setting out proposed remodelling of legal support for children, in the light of changed circumstances.

Howard Cooper
Director of Children's Services

Appendix 1

Area Team Leader posts

District	Area	FTE
South	Clatterbridge and Bebington	0.5
	Bromborough/ Eastham	0.5
Birkenhead	Bidston & St James/ Claughton	1
	Prenton/Oxton	0.5
	Birkenhead and Tranmere/ Rock Ferry	1
Wallasey	Liscard/ Seacombe	1
	New Brighton/Wallasey	0.5
	Leasowe/ Moreton East & West/ Saughall Massie	0.5
West	Pensby and Thingwall/ Heswall	0.5
	Hoylake/Meols/ West Kirby/ Thurstaston	0.5
	Greasby/ Frankby/ Irby	1
Total Number		7.5