
Sutton Children's Workforce Strategy 2006-2009



**Sutton Children
and Young People's
Partnership**



Executive Summary

The Government's vision is to develop a world -class children's workforce as part of the Every Child Matters: Change for Children Programme. As one of the country's top performing 4 star councils and top performing children's services we are well placed to develop the workforce that supports our children and young people.

This journey has started locally led often by creative and innovative practitioners and managers who have worked together across agencies to develop and deliver services. The aim of developing a local Children's Workforce Strategy is to bring together into a strategic framework workforce planning and development across all agencies working with children. This links into the Sutton Children and Young People's Plan 2006-09 as part of our Children's Trust arrangements to ensure we have the right workforce to meet our priorities.

The success of the Workforce Strategy is therefore dependent on effective partnerships and services with committed, trained and supported practitioners and managers who have the capacity, knowledge and skills to deliver high quality child centred services within available resources.

Developing a local Strategy across all children's services is a huge challenge not least because the workforce numbers over 5,500 and will require a significant culture shift and willingness to do things differently. Current workforce planning and development including the collection of information management, human resource practices, commissioning arrangements, funding streams, professional terms and conditions are different in different agencies and within the Council for those working with children. Developing a more integrated approach addressing all areas will take longer than the life of this Strategy.

A systematic approach to workforce planning using the London Council's Steps to Excellence Model has helped establish a baseline for self-assessment to monitor progress across the life of the Strategy and beyond.

Our initial focus in developing this strategy has been on Education Support Services including schools remodelling, Social Care and Youth Offending, Early Years and Extended Services, the Primary Care Trust, the Voluntary and Community sector and School Governors.

Common themes have been identified through the gap analysis and are focused around better management information for a more comprehensive picture of the children's workforce, culture change, recruitment and retention, resources, new ways of working, maximising the skill mix and developing leaders and managers.

Effectively involving and communicating with workers and young people and their families about workforce development is an ongoing challenge.

Improvements for 2007-08 to begin to address the Strategic Objectives are set in a separate annual Action Plan.



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1. Introduction

Sutton has a committed workforce working with children, young people and their families. This is the first time as part of the Every Child Matters: Change for Children programme there has been a more integrated approach to agree workforce priorities within a Children's Services Workforce Strategy across agencies. This will ensure a higher degree of integration in workforce planning and promote diversity through good human resource practices to reduce inequalities to ensure a safe, well-led, competent and confident children's workforce. This will meet the national standards to develop a workforce 'that people want to belong to and that will achieve the best possible outcomes for all children and young people, reduce the gap for the most disadvantaged and develop a workforce that parents, children and young people trust and respect'¹.

Workforce reform is a key priority to support the implementation of the Sutton Children and Young People's Plan (2006-09), which aims to meet the needs of local children and their families. This will ensure workforce developments are focused around the needs of children and young people to make best use of available resources and lead to better outcomes measured through the five Every Child Matters outcomes:

- Be Healthy
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy and Achieve
- Make a Positive Contribution
- Achieve Economic Well being

This Strategy will meet requirements under the Children Act 2004 and the Child Care Act 2006 and links closely to the Commissioning Strategy and other relevant strategies including the Council's Sutton's Workforce Plan, Sutton Schools Workforce Development Strategy, the Adult Social Services and Housing Workforce Plan. The Strategy will contribute to meeting the Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets in relation to children and young people and the National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services² and Options for Excellence: building the Social Care Workforce of the Future³.

Local workforce reform and professional development is systematically building on the work undertaken in Health through the Agenda for Change and in education through the schools Workforce Remodelling, the multi-agency Youth Offending Team and the Disability Partnership for Children and Young People (formerly a Pathfinder Children's Trust), to enable those primarily in the children's workforce, as well as those working with their parents/carers to work more effectively across traditional agency and professional boundaries around the needs of children and young people.

A systematic approach using the London Council's Workforce Model Steps for Excellence for our self-assessment across the children's workforce has been taken. While at the same time focusing more on Early Years developments and the use of the Transformation Fund and developing the workforce to meet one key cross cutting priority for developing parenting services⁴.

¹Guidance for local authorities: the links, overlaps and differences between the local government pay and workforce strategy and the children's workforce strategy (Improvement and Development Agency May 2006)

²National Service Framework for Children Young People and Maternity Services (DOH) 2004

³Options for Excellence: Building the Social Care Workforce of the Future (October 2006)

⁴Sutton Children and Young People's Plan 2006-09

2. Statement of Objectives

Four broad strategic objectives for children's services are presented in the Government's workforce reform strategy, which strives to achieve the best possible outcomes for all children and young people⁵ and provides the strategic framework to local workforce development.

- To recruit the right people with the right skills into the Children's Workforce, ensure the work is attractive and promotes more flexible entry routes;
- To develop and retain more people with the right skills within the Children's Workforce, improving their skills, building on opportunity differentiated common core of skills and knowledge and creating a single qualifications framework;
- To strengthen inter-agency and multi-disciplinary working and develop new workforce roles; and
- To promote stronger leadership, management and supervision.

To this we would add the requirement to ensure that staff skills match the current and emerging needs of children, young people and their families. This is a key consideration in transforming the children's workforce, ensuring that the focus is on ensuring fitness for purpose. The priorities set out in our Children & Young People's Plan establish a framework against which the development needs of the workforce can be properly assessed and taken forward.

⁵Children's Workforce Strategy - building a world-class workforce for Children, Young People and Families (DfES 2006)

3. Local Vision

The Government's vision is:

To develop a world-class children's workforce as part of the Every Child Matters: Change for Children Programme.

In Sutton, to achieve this Children's Services have agreed the three key high-level over-arching priorities which cut across all agencies⁶ they ensure that while recognising and responding to the needs of all children and young people, we will:

- Extend and further develop our preventative and early intervention strategies and services;
- Ensure that the most vulnerable, challenging or disadvantaged children and young people are given every opportunity to succeed;
- Develop still more integrated and secure approaches to safeguarding and protecting children and promoting their welfare.

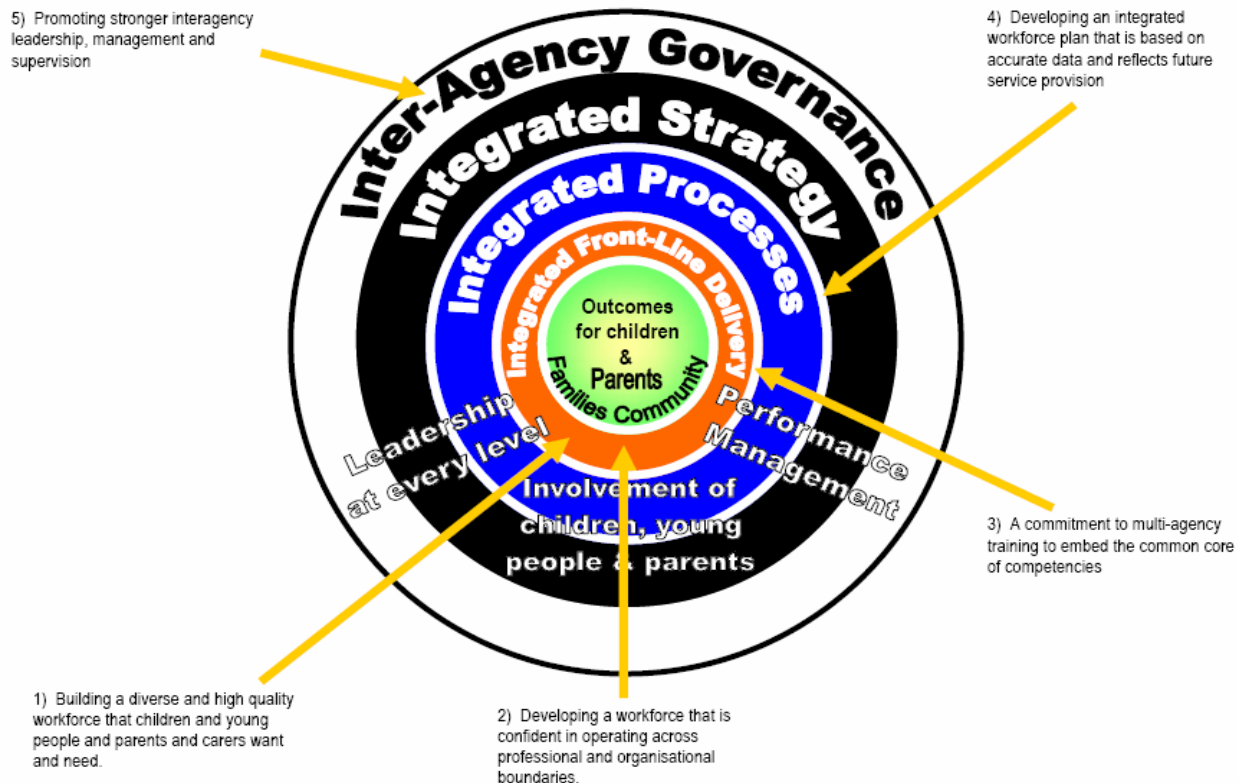
To meet the needs of local children and their families and make the best use of available resources, as outlined in the Sutton Children and Young People's plan we will:

- Improve the knowledge, skills, confidence and competence of people working with children and young people to ensure a high quality workforce which meets the needs of children, young people and their families;
- Encourage the joining up of services around the needs of children and young people developing the Common Assessment Framework and common language;
- Support the focus on early identification and prevention, while strengthening protection for vulnerable children and young people all within the Sutton model of the Child Concern Framework.

⁶Sutton Children and Young People's Plan 2006-09

Delivering the Vision

THE MODEL FOR AN INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S SERVICE

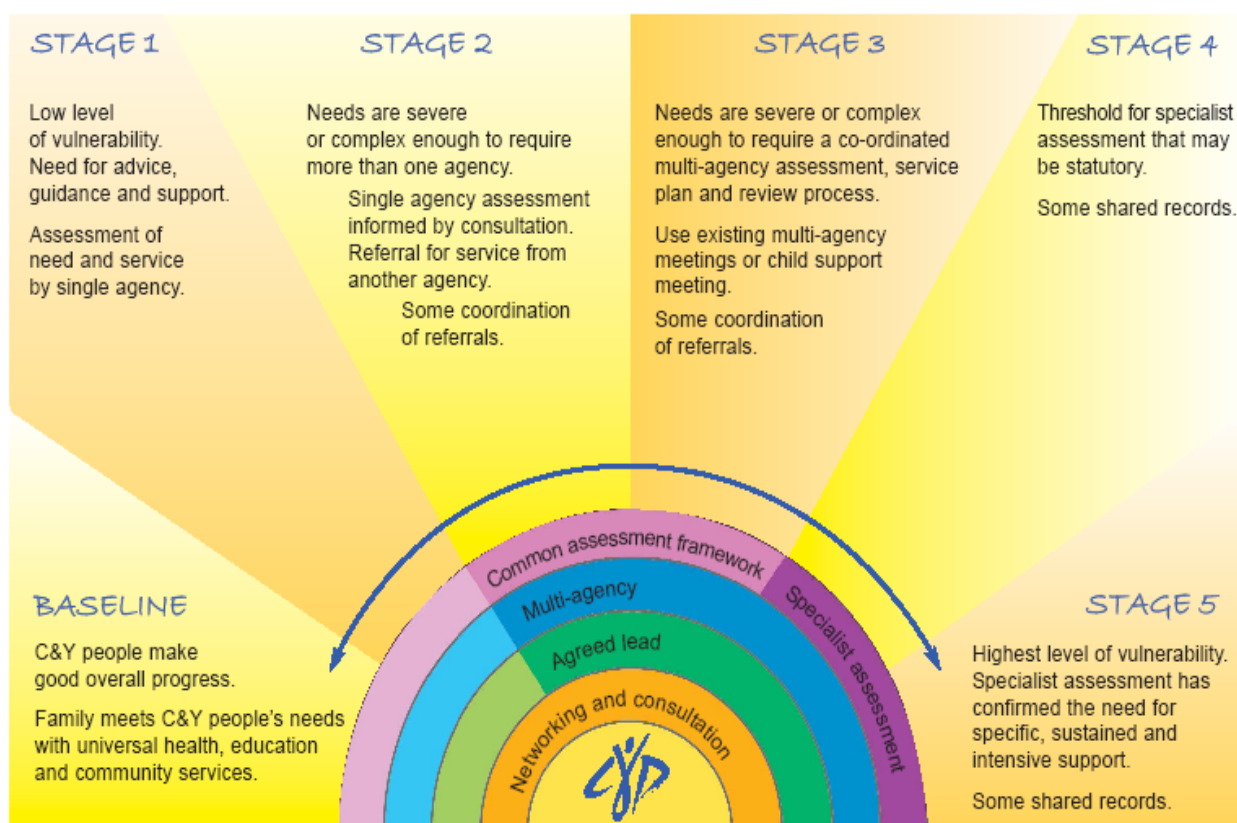


The inter-agency model describes the national vision for the new ways of working, changing professional and non-professional roles to develop more flexible approaches organised around the needs of children, their families and communities, rather than traditional professional silos.

Integrated front-line delivery will bring services together to address children's individual needs using the Common Assessment Framework and Lead Professional role supported by a common core of skills and knowledge.

CHILD CONCERN

A FRAMEWORK FOR INFORMATION SHARING, ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT



SUTTON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTNERSHIP

The Child Concern Framework provides the local means through which the national vision and locally agreed priorities will be delivered by the children's workforce providing effective information sharing, assessment and a shared understanding of children's needs and how best to meet them across the whole continuum of need. This Framework provides a model to assist the mapping of the children's workforce skills and services against the different stages of the Framework to identify and address skills and capacity gaps to develop the workforce and remodel services around the needs of children.

Good practice example:

The Children and Young People Inclusion Support Panels (CYPISP) have developed to strengthen multi-agency problem solving around the needs of children across the continuum of need. They provide a forum for providing a range of additional support to improve outcomes for vulnerable children aged 8-19. This is an example of the Child Concern Framework in practice. This year the Early Intervention and Prevention Panel has developed further to include the work with young people at risk of or receiving low level intervention in the youth justice system and their siblings.

4. Methodology

4.1 Why this strategy is important

Workforce planning is vital in helping Children's Trust develop the workforce and remodel service provision. It should be seen as an integrated approach to business planning rather than a separate activity. The London Council's '**Steps to Excellence Model**' (**Appendix 2**) has six stages which are discussed throughout the Strategy. Sutton has used this model to self evaluate our position regarding workforce planning and to plan a systematic approach to continual improvement for the developing a children's workforce as proposed under Every Child Matters. This model will be used annually in order to demonstrate progress made towards the development of the children's workforce.

The first step 'Planning' using this model has been primarily undertaken by the multi-agency Workforce Development Steering Group who have met monthly to develop the strategic framework and reports to the Sutton Children and Young People's Partnership.

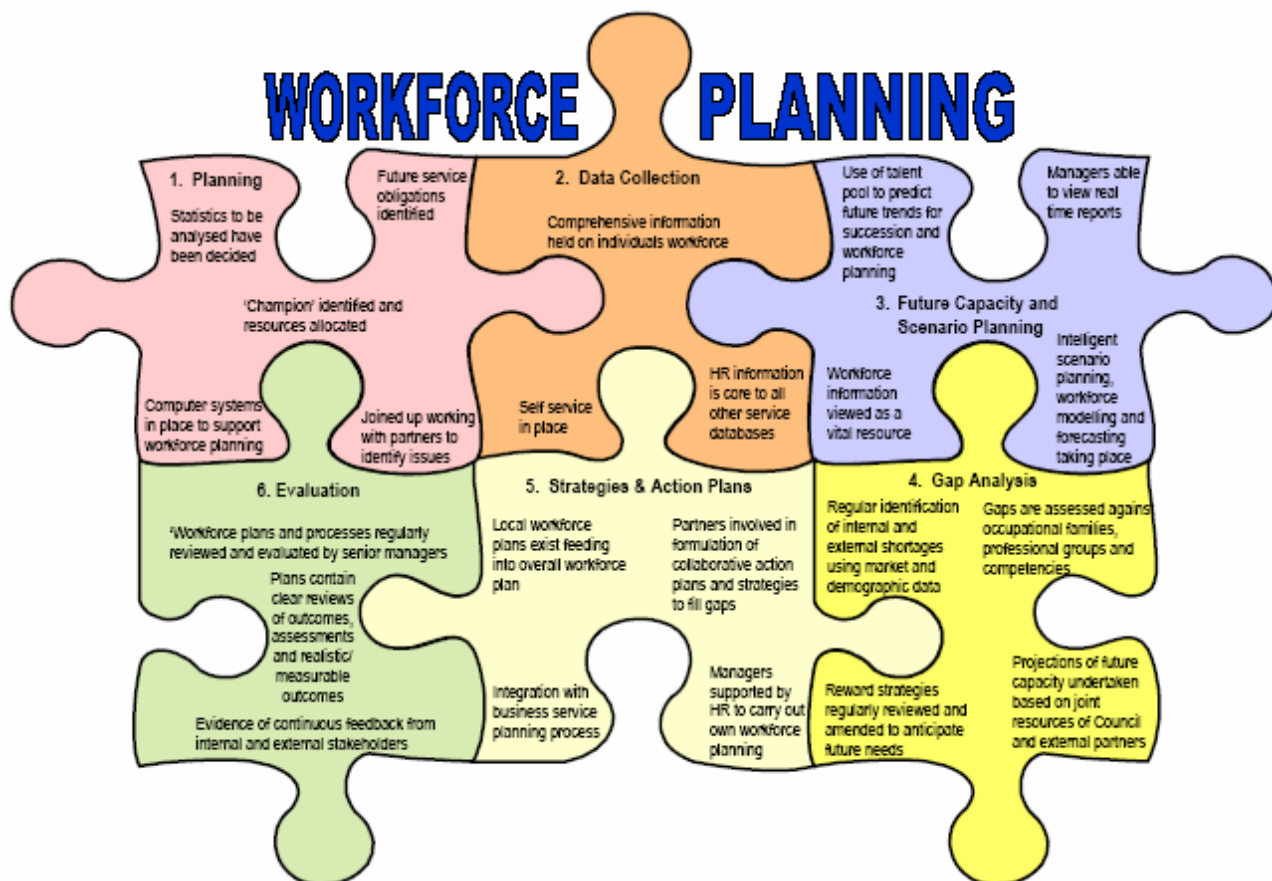
Current membership includes representatives from Human Resources and Senior Management across the Primary Care Trust, the Local Education Authority including schools workforce, Children's Social Care, Early Years and Extended Services and the Voluntary Sector.

This is an initial self-assessment which we plan to review in 2007/8. We have used this model which normally focuses on a single agency to look across all agencies working with children. The self-assessment therefore is not a comment on the performance of an individual agency.

The other five steps are identified at relevant points throughout this document.

Priority for 2007-08

- To extend membership to include all key partners on the Children's Workforce Strategy Group



5. Workforce planning – equalities and diversity of the workforce

5.1 Age, eco-social characteristics, employment, occupations, qualifications and skills of local population

The revised mid year 2006 population estimates for Sutton is 184,400 of which 48.8% are male and 51.2% are female⁷. A greater proportion of Sutton's population is contained in the age groups from 25 to 44, in summary this means that Sutton has a younger population than is seen in England and Wales but older than London.

Earlier census information indicates that Sutton has an unemployment rate of 5.1% considerably lower than London as a whole, although slightly higher than the England and Wales average. 78.7% (90,400) of Sutton's working age residents are in employment. The professions into which local residents are employed differ to that of London as a whole with lower proportions in traditionally higher paid roles such as Professional Occupations and Managerial Senior Roles. A significantly higher proportion is employed in Sutton in Administrative Secretarial and Personal/Service Occupations than is the case in London.

6.7% (7,700) of working age residents, a relatively high percentage of residents who are currently inactive would like a job including some who have taken early retirement, or who may have non transferable skills or are long term unemployed. The levels of qualifications of Sutton residents are quite different from those seen in London with Sutton having a higher proportion at least a NVQ1 level qualification. Sutton has less of the higher levels NVQ3 and NVQ4 than is the case in London.

⁷Source: 2006 Mid Year Population Estimates London Borough of Sutton

The recent economic profile identifies Sutton as a high level of economic activity and employment. However there is still scope to increase this through addressing barriers to entry for those who are economically inactive and wanting a job and meetings skills gaps and other barriers, to target recruitment from the local communities and promote diversity in the children's workforce.

Projects through the Care Ambassadors and 14-19 Diploma are in place to help attract a younger workforce into the care profession in Sutton through the Sutton Joint Care Assessment Centre.

5.2 Key facts involving Sutton's children and young people

Demographic changes outlined below will have implications both for the design of services and the skills needed within the children's workforce.

The 2006 mid year population estimates concludes Sutton has 46,000 children and young people aged 0-19 years old, the largest age group represented being 10-14 years. Sutton's birth rate is falling leading to falling primary rolls. This has been addressed by removing surplus places in schools.

The 2001 census demonstrates the diverse population is reflected in the make of the children and young people's population ages 0-19. 82% of those aged 0-19 are white British, 2.4% are Asian or Asian British Indian, 2.35% are white other. Other ethnic groups are represented in lower percentages.

Most children grow up in economically secure circumstances and economic disadvantage is geographically concentrated. Sutton is perceived as an affluent area with small pockets of deprivation and is one of the lowest funded Councils in London.

There are demographic changes to consider. In Sutton, as elsewhere, medical advances are leading to children with very complex health needs living longer. More children are being identified as having Autistic Spectrum Disorders, a trend, which is particularly marked in Sutton. At the same time, there has been a reduction in the proportion of disabled children reported as having moderate learning disabilities.

Performance across all key stages is above the national average. At secondary education stage, Sutton has a system comprising 5 grammar schools, 2 voluntary aided Catholic schools and 7 comprehensive schools. Within this provision there are 10 single gender schools (6 boys and 4 girls) and 4 mixed. Due to selection by ability by the 5 grammar schools and selection on religious criteria by the 2 voluntary aided Catholic schools, there are high volumes of pupils coming from outside the borough.

The number of young people Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET) is 4.8% significantly below the London and national average.

Sutton has one of the highest levels of fear of crime in London, which is disproportionate to the amount of actual crime, which is one of the lowest levels in London.

Although levels of homelessness are low in relative terms there has been a small increase in the number of homeless 16-17 year olds.

Workforce Data

Data collection and assessment of current position form the second step in the 'Steps for Excellence Model'.

Mapping the children's workforce and understanding the impact of the wider issues related to the Sutton population and workforce described above is crucial to the successful implementation of the children's workforce strategy.

Mapping the workforce and auditing skills will establish capacity and skills deficits and through the gap analysis⁸ identify and agree how best to develop the workforce to meet children's needs and promotes diversity. This analysis will inform recruitment and retention campaigns to identify the real hot spots and pick up vacancy trends in services and agencies.

The initial audit to map the children's workforce focus in 2006-07 where data was more easily available and provided a snapshot of the local position. Data was included from Children Young People and Learning Services (Education, Social Care, Youth Offending Team, Youth Service), Leisure and Libraries, Connexions (including Prospects), foster carers, Primary, Secondary and special schools, 2 nurseries and 2 pupil referral units and further education colleges, PCT, and the voluntary sector.

This has identified the need to collect and analyse data more systematically across children's services. This year the data has to be treated with caution as some information has been counted differently in agencies.

The data analysis this year has already identified common trends across children's services (*this forms part of our Gap analysis Step 4 of the Steps for Excellence Model*):

- Approximately 5% of the workforce is known to have a disability, this is particularly low in the schools workforce
- The overwhelming majority of the children's workforce is female
- There is an ageing workforce with few younger employees, except in the early years and youth sectors
- The majority of the workforce is White British
- There is a fairly even split between full time and part time workers
- The majority of the children's workforce is school based (over 77% from current audit)

Priorities for 2007-08

- Targeting recruitment at specific groups and promoting diversity to increase the number of men, younger workers, those with a disability and black and minority ethnic communities for the children's workforce; and
- Building a more accurate picture of the children's workforce in Sutton.

⁸London Council's Steps to Excellence Model Appendix 2

6. Assessment of current position

(This forms with data collection part of step 2 in the 'Steps to Excellence Model')

Various contributors have been asked to provide information about the current position regarding their workforce for children and to respond to the following two questions:-

- What are the main challenges for the children's workforce in your area now and in the future?
- Are there issues around the capacity in Sutton to manage and respond to these challenges?

The responses received from the various agencies and service areas are detailed below.

6.1 Schools

In the last three years schools have undergone a process of workforce remodelling. There have been contractual changes for teachers, and this has led to greater specialisation of role with teachers focussed on teaching and support staff carrying out a range of classroom support, management and administrative activities.

The potential roles of classroom support staff have in particular been expanded and schools are responding to these changes in a variety of ways. These changes have identified the need for a more inclusive approach to school workforce development, which has been agreed through the Sutton Schools Workforce Development Strategy. The Schools Workforce Development Strategy covers many issues for the schools workforce, including:

- Details of the specific school workforce development team I Sutton that has a budget from the TDA. This team has developed the schools workforce development website to support the schools workforce.
- Details of the network of school workforce development leaders within schools.
- The introduction of a new performance management system from September 2007 for teachers. The TDA have also indicated they will be developing performance management systems for non-teaching staff in the future.
- There is an anticipated national shortage of headteachers and funding to address this issue is available through NCSL.

Within schools, teachers have their own statutory terms and conditions of employment which are different to other staff. The School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document are updated annually. Issues related to support staff pay and conditions, job descriptions and career structure are being addressed via the Single Status Programme. Although staff are employed under different terms and conditions, schools have staffing structures that include the whole workforce, and in autumn 2005 all schools were required to undertake a review of their staffing structure.

6.2 Extended services (Extended Schools and Children's Centres)

The Extended Services programme within Sutton joins up the national Extended Schools and Children's Centres initiatives.

Schools and other agencies will now be involved in ensuring that children, their parents and carers and the community as a whole have access to a range of services that extend beyond the traditional provision of education. These may be provided on or off the school site building on existing services already being offered by the school and may be delivered in partnership with other organisations. Where Children's Centres are co-located on a school site it is anticipated an appropriate support organisation is defined to support/deliver services to children from birth to 5, some of who may not be school pupils.

The Extended Schools programme is co-ordinated and delivered as part of the Extended Services Early Years Team (ESEY) working with other local authority partners. This is to ensure that all schools have the capacity to provide extended services on a school site or signpost children, their families and the wider community to help them access services elsewhere if these are needed.

Schools (or other lead agencies) will be working with a greater variety of professionals for example from health (and in some cases employing them) as well as providing a greater range of activities. Extended Schools and Children's Centres will lead to a greater emphasis on developing the skills of professionals to deliver and lead across the multi-agency agenda. This will include the creation of a new kind of worker meeting the core skills⁹ and for grass root workers common competencies¹⁰. In addition leaders of Children's Centres need to be well placed to take up the NQIPL (National Qualification for Integrated Professional Leadership).

6.3 Early Years and Childcare (Part of the ESEY Team)

Sutton has approximately 750 providers of childcare, education and play settings in the private voluntary and independent sector as well as in the maintained sector. This figure includes child minders, group care providers such as pre schools and nursery schools and also holiday schemes, breakfast clubs and after school clubs. All eligible settings receive a range of support in line with national and local policy and procedure. The local authority also delivers direct services including play and childcare, day nurseries and Children's Centre services. There are two Phase 1 Children's Centres currently delivering a range of multi-agency services to local communities.

The expectation from central government is that by 2015 (2010 for 30% of Children's Centres) every group care setting will have an Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) person leading on the Foundation stage within settings to meet the government agenda. Entry requirements for the EYPS training courses require workers to have a Foundation Degree or a full Degree along with English and Maths at GCSE grades A – C. Sutton currently has a very small pool of workers who meet these entry requirements.

One local College and three local training organisations currently offer the very popular Early Years Sector Endorsed Foundation Degree. There are a limited number of EYPS training places. It is currently not an Ofsted requirement for a setting to have an EYPS and some settings will need support from the Extended Services and Early Years Team to achieve their goal in gaining an Early Years Professional Status Professional.

⁹Championing Children A shared set of skills, knowledge and behaviours for those leading and managing integrated children's services (DfES 2005)

¹⁰Common Core of Skills and Knowledge (Dfes 2006)

Early Years is undergoing important changes from central government and one aspect that will impact on the sector will be The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which will come into force in September 2008 as a single framework for learning, development and care for children in all registered early years settings from birth to five. It will replace the existing statutory 'Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage', the non-statutory '*Birth to Three Matters* framework', and the regulatory frameworks in the 'National Standards for Under 8s Day Care and Childminding'.

Upon receipt of the EYFS, local authorities will have a key role in ensuring the workforce is suitably trained and supported in how to deliver and implement the new framework into their settings

The Extended Services and Early Years service undertook a skills and qualifications survey across the sector. This targeted individuals working in the private, voluntary, independent and maintained childcare, education and play settings which has provided improved knowledge about the skills and qualifications within the sector and will underpin the plans for workforce development and action planning. This audit built on the earlier skills audit undertaken across the Early Years Sector based on the common core and Child Concern Framework.

6.4 School Governors

School Governors form the largest individual group of volunteers in the borough, (just under 1000 in office at any one time). The School Governors Service in Sutton is relatively fortunate compared to other London Authorities in maintaining a low vacancy rate and a very high take-up of training and development activities. Our governing bodies perform very well in terms of Ofsted ratings. Governors are not currently reflective of the diverse make up of the local population and steps are in place to begin to address this.

6.5 Local Authority support for schools

The local authority has a range of services that support children with more complex needs, and their interventions form part of the services described at Stage 2 and beyond on the Child Concern Framework (known as the Sutton Sun). The services include two Pupil Referral Units, Integrated Support Services, Educational Psychology, Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) and Traveller support.

The local authority also employs a diverse range of professional and administrative staff whose work directly impacts on service delivery to Sutton's children and young people. These services include Extended Services and Early Years (including Sutton Children's Information Service), Advice and Inspection, Borough School Attendance, Admissions, Student Finance, Behaviour Support, Special Educational Needs and the support services provided under the Service Management Group. This is a very diverse and ageing workforce, with some areas having specific recruitment difficulties.

There are also play and youth services, many of which are delivered all year round, after school and evenings. Both services are being reorganised to reflect national requirements to adapt and develop services to align with the extended services developments and Youth Matters. These services rely heavily on the employment of part-time and sessional staff. Their recruitment, retention and development present particular workforce challenges. In contrast to many other areas of the children's workforce these services contain a significant number of younger people.

Local authority support services for young people

6.6 Youth Service

As with other services the Youth Service has difficulties in recruiting and maintaining a suitably Qualified Team of workers and has traditionally in the past relied heavily on 'unqualified' sessional staff to deliver the main parts of the service in the evenings and during the holiday periods. Government legislation and or funding has meant that more targeted work with young people is necessary, which in turn requires a higher level of base knowledge than in previous years as the role of the Youth Worker has become more professionally defined.

Recently there has been an increase in the number of young people expressing a wish to become involved in or work in the Youth Service, the onus will be on the service to provide appropriate training packages in order to support employees in that wish. Existing staff that require training will also be supported in that process, however current resources make this a difficult task and training needs will need to be met internally with higher levels of training being provided elsewhere.

Sutton Youth Service is currently working in Partnership with Kingston, Merton, Croydon, and Richmond Youth Services to provide a NVQ2 in Youth work for Part-time Youth workers as a way of bridging the gap in training needs at that level.

6.7 Connexions

Connexions in the London Borough of Sutton is currently part of the South London Connexions Partnership, with effect from 1 April 2008 this Partnership will cease to exist with all the Connexions funding passing to the individual Boroughs as part of the Local Area Agreement funding. To date the Partnership has arranged a raft of training for Personal Advisers to complement the professional training organised by the individual employers (Connexions works on a sub-contracting model) and the more generic training organised by the Borough.

Following a decision by the consortium of Directors of Children's Services for the six Boroughs to seek a new contract for Information Advice and Guidance, a specification for the service to be delivered post March 2008 is currently being drawn up which will be modified to meet each individual Boroughs needs. It is envisaged at present that the contract for Sutton will include the training element for the Personal Advisers employed by the new guidance company. The responsibility for the Personal Advisers employed by the Local Authority (currently three, but could increase depending on the contract) would rest with the Local Authority or with a group of Local Authorities. The timescale envisages the Local Authorities drawing up a specification by end of June 2007, with the new provider being identified by November 2007.

Priority for 2007-08

- Developing the workforce for a more integrated approach to alternative provision, the youth service and behaviour support.

6.8 Safer Sutton Partnership/Police

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) in Sutton has been particularly active in engaging with young people in the borough, especially through the role of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs). These were fully established from 31 December 2006.

Sutton has one SNT per ward consisting of 18 Sergeants, 36 Police Constables and 54 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). These are headed by a Chief Inspector and 4 Inspectors.

The MPS guidelines for SNTs are clearly aimed at providing local communities with an opportunity to have a say in how the community is Policed, and this includes young people. The SNTs hold regular street briefings and public meetings, and are committed to developing key individual networks with the younger community, particularly since many young people are victims of crime themselves.

The SNTs work very closely with colleagues across the Council including the Youth Offending Team (which includes 2 PCs), as well as the Voluntary Sector to ensure that the young people in Sutton are included in the Community Safety agenda as broadly as possible.

We recognise that there are often individual initiatives run by the MPS with young people that will/may require input from Local Authority and partners. Training needs for staff to understand the nature and value of these initiatives across areas of operational provision range from simply having an awareness of the work being undertaken and its context, to more specific things such as provision of services and how to refer into them where necessary/appropriate.

With Alcohol and Drugs use high on most agendas, and in particular with reference to young people, how training is undertaken with staff to ensure consistency and competency is vital, this should range from an ability to provide basic and accurate information in an effective manner, through to provision of more suitable appropriate interventions where required. Workers also need to be aware of the importance of information sharing and protocols for doing so.

Domestic Violence is another topical area of work requiring attention to training in respect of the Child Assessment Framework for staff likely to be associated with children and families, including the MPS. Additional training again ranges from simple awareness and knowledge about what services are available to victims of DV, through to how to refer to such services to ensure continuity of care.

Challenges remain around information sharing in particular, and the development of a single and concise protocol is elusive. This should be rectified. Workers sometimes fail to disclose information that is shareable, and disclose that which is not, not through deliberate means but by lack of knowledge about what, how and with whom they can disclose.

6.9 14-19 Workforce Developments

The local authority provides a range of services to support young people aged between 14-19. They broker collaborative support through the Increased Flexibility Programme to facilitate young people receiving the nature of courses which suit them. The Education Business Partnership and the integral Work Experience Unit provide support for young people seeking work placements and career advice. The national

initiatives around the diplomas and International Baccalaureate are being supported by the Advice and Inspection Service.

6.10 Social Care (including Youth Offending Team) and Foster Care

There is a national shortage of experienced social workers, within particular areas it is more difficult to recruit and retain qualified experienced permanent staff this particularly affects those working with children and families with the most complex needs, including child protection, family court work, Youth Offending and looked after children.

Significant progress has been made in improving the recruitment and retention of social workers. This is demonstrated through a reduction in the vacancy rate for qualified social workers (from 30% in September 2005 to 26% in March 2006 and to 19% in March 2007). High numbers of social work staff continue to access post qualification training. 50% of current social work staff have obtained their PQ or advanced award through Sutton. There is an oversubscribed trainee scheme with 3 new social work trainees recruited in autumn 2006.

A recruitment plan is now in place with Human Resources with a package of measures implemented to improve salaries to become more competitive for newly qualified workers; a progression scheme for the more experienced and enhanced terms and conditions through better annual leave entitlements for qualified social workers. Revised job descriptions have been designed to clarify core competencies at each level.

Clinics for locum staff are planned to further understand how to attract permanent social workers to Sutton. A reduction in practice learning days is due to the high number of social workers on training and staff not available as practice teachers.

The Options for Excellence Report¹¹ focuses on the future role and tasks of social work, on developing a learning organisation, recruitment and retention, improving leadership and management, developing new ways of working and commissioning to maximize the skills mix and remodel services to meet needs more effectively. The final recommendations, following the national consultation, will need to be included in workforce planning, as will any workforce implications in the recent Green Paper 'Transforming the lives of Children and Young People in Care'. New developments for post qualifying training will require implementing the new Post Qualifying Framework.

The Integrated Children's System was implemented within timescales and work has taken place, and is ongoing, to use the system to develop and improve practice, focusing on clear analysis and outcomes.

A range of provision is provided by different professionals currently work together creatively at Stage 3 of the Child Concern Framework to prevent problems escalating and needing more specialist intervention through social care. Working across the whole age range is undertaken to prevent children, young people and their parents/ carers and requiring more costly and complex interventions which lead to poorer outcomes. Capacity needs to be built into the workforce to sustain and resource this and to be in a position to refocus resources longer term to improve outcomes for children and young people through Early Intervention and Prevention.

¹¹Options for Excellence: Building the Social Care Workforce of the Future (2006)

Good practice working at this earlier stage is contributing to meeting key cross-cutting priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan and include a range of parenting and domestic violence programmes for parents and children. Social care input into the Circle SureStart Health and Family Support Team (now delivering services in the local Children's Centres) and initiatives with Mental Health and Learning Disabilities for more effective work with those primarily working with adults.

Youth Justice

The new Youth Justice Board (YJB) HR and Learning Strategy 2006-08 is committed to making learning opportunities available to youth justice practitioners and managers and will continue to work in partnership with local authorities to ensure sustainability of these arrangements from April 2008. The YJB is also working closely with the DfES and the Children's Workforce Development Council to ensure integration of the common core competencies.

Good practice example:

Plans are under way to develop a role for non social work qualified social care staff in schools. These workers will work with parents of children identified as vulnerable at stages 2/3 of child concern. The posts will be funded by schools and the management is funded initially by extended services. The manager is a qualified social worker thus ensuring that appropriate thresholds are maintained and children are protected from harm. This recognizes the clear leadership role of Social Services in developing preventative services.

The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) has adopted the revised 'Working Together' guidance and this is now incorporated into training. Our Child Protection adviser is on the editorial board for the revised London Child Protection procedures which will be issued later in 2007. The LSCB is also developing a handbook for parents which will support them in safeguarding their children, and will be issued to all parents at school entry and transition. The LSCB receives an annual report on allegations against staff and carers and a local procedure on management of allegations has been adopted in draft by the LSCB. The multi agency LSCB training will develop the workforce to meet priorities in working with parental substance misuse and parental mental health issues.

Foster Care

There is a national shortage of foster carers. The workforce is divided into local authority foster carers and foster carers from private agencies. There are currently 75 Sutton fostering households, comprising 124 carers. They are not all based in Sutton, with a small minority at considerable distance. Carers have a wide variety of skill levels and care for children with a huge variety of needs. Sutton pays above the minimum recommended allowances, and is developing enhanced schemes, such as treatment fostering and practitioner schemes (see good practice example). There has been a recent increase in number of placements available following a revised advertising campaign. This campaign won a national recruitment award.

Foster care faces particular challenges in workforce development related to the recruitment of local carers, carers for children with disabilities, adolescents and for children with complex behavioural difficulties and the proposals for having different tiers of carers in the Green Paper¹², according to skills level Carers are not employees. They are not technically 'working'. A specific workforce issue is

¹²Green Paper Care Matters: Transforming the lives of Children and Young People in Care (2006)

addressing the widely differing needs and functions involved in fostering. Some carers will only ever care for one child; some are career foster carers who will have cared for over 100. Sutton employs a foster carer as development worker and this has greatly increased the numbers of foster carers accessing training and development, highlighted in recent fostering inspection.

Good practice example:

Recently a practitioner scheme has been developed for foster carers whereby experienced carers receive an additional allowance for mentoring and supporting new carers, and also participate in recruitment and training of new carers. This scheme rewards enhanced skill and competency, rather than being linked to complexity of placement.

6.11 Workforce for disabled children and young people and their families

Government policy for disabled children and young people and their families is set out in the twenty-year strategy, 'Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People' (Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, January 2005). It aims to enable disabled children and their families to access 'ordinary' lives, through effective support in mainstream settings. It envisages services – both specialist and mainstream – meeting families' needs through early family support. It stresses that services need to be 'fit for purpose' in terms of workforce, joint working and information about disabled children's needs. Particular emphasis is placed on the importance of childcare, access to "key workers" and empowerment of young people entering adulthood through person-centred planning and self-managed budgets.

In Sutton our response to government policy and local need includes initiatives such as:-

- "CONTACTS", a process that ensures families receive coordinated early support
- A key worker scheme for children under eight
- Dragonflies, a multi-disciplinary early years assessment unit for children with social communication difficulties
- Significant expansion of ASD provision within Sutton schools
- A Transition Unit to improve planning and coordination for young people moving to adult services
- New service models to enable disabled young people to access inclusive youth services
- A direct payments scheme under which approximately 100 families are managing their own care support.

Priorities for future development include improving access to childcare for children with disabilities, raising disability awareness and skills in mainstream settings like schools, playschemes and children's centres, working with schools to adapt the CONTACTS model to children over eight, developing specialist parenting support for parents of children on the autistic spectrum and expanding the range of employment, training and living options for young people post-16.

6.12 Voluntary and Community Sector

There are approximately 40 voluntary/community organisations (VCOs) providing services for children and families in Sutton. Most of the VCOs are small – either local charities or branches of national organisations and there are no major national or regional VCOs (e.g. Barnardos or NCH) delivering a substantial range of services. The VCOs in Sutton range from professional organisations, employing staff and

delivering services on behalf of the local authority (e.g. Homestart and Jigsaw) through to groups run entirely by volunteers (e.g. SPIN which supports parents of children with disabilities).

Whilst the overall numbers of paid staff in the voluntary sector are low, all VCOs work with volunteers greatly increasing the workforce and adding significant value to the services delivered.

The main challenges for the voluntary sector are linked to capacity building, funding, recruitment, retention and accreditation.

Volunteer training requires funding and is often specific to individual organisations, so whilst volunteers are accessing external training there will always be a need for VCOs to deliver their own as well. Some organisations are looking at the accreditation of volunteer training but this again has implications for capacity and funding. In some areas there are plenty of volunteers coming forward but insufficient funding for the staff to manage them (e.g. CAB) and this limits the capacity to expand the workforce and services. The Voluntary sector has recently piloted the parent outreach work in two schools.

6.13 Primary Care Trust (PCT)

The children's workforce in the PCT comprises health visitors, school nurses and paediatric therapy services (Occupational Therapy (OT), Physiotherapy, Dietetics and Speech and Language Therapy SLT). There is also a significant amount of collaborative work undertaken with the local authority on preventative work such as the Circle SureStart Health and Family Support Team (now delivering services in the local Children's Centres) and a range of parenting programmes, including initiatives around domestic violence. Equally there is joint work with the Local Authority in school nursing, in special schools and in Speech and Language Therapy.

There is a number of challenges for developing the children's health workforce which include:

- An ageing workforce in health visiting and school nursing where the skills mix needs to be maximised, particularly using nursery nurses more;
- No central funding for specialist practitioner training in London for 2007-08 which will present challenges for workforce planning and development;
- The need to get the balance right between delivery a service the Practice Based commissioners want; and
- Continuing to work collaboratively with the Local Authority on child centred models of care.

6.14 CAMHS

South West London and St George's Mental Health NHS Trust is undertaking a Trust wide review of the CAMHS workforce across the five boroughs it services. The Trust is also developing a CAMHS strategy, and the Sutton CAMHS partnership is developing a new CAMHS commissioning strategy which will be effective from April 2008. All of these initiatives will affect workforce planning in the longer term.

The CAMHS workforce in tier 3 (core CAMHS) currently consists of approximately 14 wte staff, including a medical and nursing clinic for sleep and behaviour and a substance misuse worker. The team is multi-disciplinary and includes psychiatrists,

psychologists, psychotherapists, nurses and family therapists and assesses and treats children and young people up to their 18th birthday. CAMHS also has a number of workers in partner agencies. There are staff in the joint adolescence service, youth offending team, looked after children, the Umbrella service, the Marsden Hospital, paediatrics (cystic fibrosis), Behaviour Support and the Referral and Assessment Team and Services for disabled children. Thus, there are large amounts of collaborative work with Sutton social services, Sutton and Merton PCT, the Marsden and St Helier Trusts.

There are currently four pressing needs relating to the workforce.

1. The addition of severe learning disabilities (SLD) within the CAMHS acceptance criteria.
2. The impending decrease in waiting times from 13 weeks to 11 weeks, with the breach for treatment at 18 weeks in the context of a high referral rates.
3. The disaggregation of the assertive outreach team which was set up following the closure of the tier 4 Stepping Stones under 13s provision. Budget to be reinvested in tier 3 in Sutton from 07/07.
4. The high numbers of children and young people self harming being referred from A&E.

These needs are currently being addressed by:

1. Skilling up the workforce by the provision of training relating to the assessment and treatment of mental health problems in the context of SLD.
2. New posts having a person specification which states that experience in SLD is desirable.
3. Using the revenue arising from the assertive outreach team to create new posts:
 - (i) **Staff grade doctor** : The job description has an element of assertive outreach for under 13s thus addressing the gap in tier 4 services for this group. The post holder will focus on assessment, thus addressing the reduction in waiting times, and freeing up other disciplines to carry out psychological interventions in order to meet the treatment waiting time target.
 - (ii) **Nursing/generic post** : This post also has an element of assertive outreach as above. The post will also have a special interest in adolescents and self harm, thus addressing the increase in numbers. The presence of a new post will also significantly help to meet the assessment and treatment waiting time targets.

7. Common themes and key challenges

Common themes and key challenges identified through workforce planning for the children's workforce are linked to changing the culture, skills and knowledge, resources, recruitment and retention. These form part of the gap analysis and future needs and scenario planning steps 3 and 4 in the 'Steps for Excellence Model'.

Changing the culture

- Addressing barriers created by professional silos to meet the need for practitioners and managers need to be able to work and lead across traditional boundaries confidently, safely and competently

Skills and knowledge

- Changing demographics, which will have implications for the design of services and developing the workforce to address skills and knowledge gaps.
- Maximising skills mix to build capacity across and within children's services.
- Developing managers to lead multi-agency teams and manage integrated working.
- Developing a high level of skills, which is required to work across age ranges and with children with additional, needs (behaviour, disability, SEN, complex medical need).
- Developing a more consistent approach for recruitment, induction and practice based on the common core of skills and knowledge.

Resources

- To ensure workforce developments are embedded within the Commissioning arrangements for children's service.
- Building capacity for those working with vulnerable children with additional lower level needs (Stages 2 and 3 of the Child Concern Framework) to support Early Intervention and Prevention.
- Building capacity particularly in the voluntary and community sector workforce.
- The need to free up capacity for staff for training and development to provide core services.
- Developing some professional specialisms due to lack of national funding for continual professional development.

Recruitment and retention

- Short-term funding streams making it difficult to recruit and retain workers.
- Different terms and conditions across London for some specialist and generic roles make it difficult to compete across sectors to compete successfully in the market place
- Lower level pay impacting in some sectors on recruitment and retention.
- There are specific hard to reach areas of recruitment apart from social workers which include some senior positions in special schools and education psychology.

8. Developing a more integrated children's workforce

8.1 Common Core of Skills and Knowledge¹³

Every Child Matters proposed the implementation of a 'Common Core of Skills and Knowledge' for the 'widest possible range of workers in children's services' and this will need to be embedded through job descriptions, induction programmes and new ways of working for example the Common Assessment and Lead Professional role.

These cover six key areas:

- Effective Communication and Engagement
- Children and young people's development
- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child
- Supporting transitions
- Multi-agency working
- Sharing Information

¹³ Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce (DfES 2005)

Good practice: 'Incorporating the common core in Early Years and Extended Services new job descriptions'

Workforce development focusing on Early Years and Extended Services during 2006 - 07 has extended to piloting the Common Core Skills. All new staff recruited to Children's Centres have been appointed to their post by assessing their competencies piloting the use of the Core Common skills as part of the Borough recruitment process. Work has been carried out to align job descriptions for school staff working across integrated services.

Priority for 2007-08

- Following an evaluation and review of the new format job descriptions pilot the common core will need to be rolled out further across children's services. There is a plan to look at roles of project workers and family support workers. We could link these to the school based POWs and develop common core for non social work qualified social care staff?

8.2 Developing integrated processes**8.2.1 Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and Information Sharing Arrangements**

The local Child Concern model provides the framework for assessment and information sharing arrangements for all agencies across the continuum of need. Training and developing the workforce to use the CAF is challenging a range of professionals for whom holistic assessment of children is new. The CAF is being rolled out across Sutton and is starting to provide the tool for integrated working through a common and consistent approach across agencies to assess and meet children's needs earlier to improve their outcomes.

The implementation of ContactPoint in 2008 will provide an additional tool to support effective information sharing across agencies and enhance integrated working.

8.2.2 Lead Professional

The lead professional is a key element of integrated support, to co-ordinate provision and act as a single point of contact for a child and their family when a range of services are involved, locally this is at Stage 3- 5 of the Child Concern Framework.

This is not a new role; there are already examples where practice is established locally from Stage 3, one example the key worker system for children with disabilities where multi-agency assessment and planning is well established is outlined before. We already have some good practice therefore to build on to ensure professional involvement is rationalised, coordinated and achieves the intended outcomes underpinned by the Common Assessment Framework or relevant specialist's assessments. Core skills based on the common core are identified for success as a lead professional and will enhance the consistent approach required from Stage 3. There is a need to build capacity within the workforce to take on the lead professional role.

Good practice: Developing new workforce roles

The Sutton Disability Partnership for Children and Young People has developed a Key Worker scheme for families with disabled children under 8 years old. Thirty professionals from Health, Education and Social Care agencies have, with the agreement of their managers, set aside up to three hours a week to provide information and support to families involved with multiple services and to coordinate all the services involved. The key worker role is a holistic one, focusing on the needs of the child and family in the round. It therefore often requires workers to take a broader view than their main professional role usually requires. Despite workload pressures in the short-term, managers have been willing to allow workers time to participate in the scheme because they understand that better support and coordination for families early on will lead to better outcomes and, eventually, reduced pressure on services. There are also benefits in terms of job satisfaction. Currently over 50 families are supported through this scheme and an evaluation has shown a very high level of satisfaction by both families and staff.

Priority for 2007-08

- Implementing the Lead Professional role across agencies building on work already in place for example the Key Worker scheme

8.2 What we currently know about capacity for training and development

8.2.1 Promoting Stronger Leadership and Management

Effective leadership and management is the key to service delivery ensuring effectiveness, accountability and commitment for better front line management and supervision. Ongoing clear strategic leadership and strong management are required to embed multi-agency and multi-disciplinary working across the children's services workforce. Action is required to support existing leaders and managers and to develop leaders of the future addressing some of the issues of staff turnover.

There is a Council cohesive and well-established corporate management development programme externally accredited and for managers at all levels, but this does not address managing in a partnership and multi-agency environment. There is therefore a need to agree across Children's Services how the framework within 'Championing Children'¹⁴ which highlights seven aspects of management and/or leadership is applied to managers of multi-agency children's services.

Improvements to management and supervision within schools are planned for this period through the embedding of performance management for non-teaching staff by production of a model appraisal scheme supported by training.

National evaluation of the CAF and Lead Professional role have both identified the need for the development of a supervision model for school staff and for other front line practitioners and their managers.

Priority for 2007-08

- There is a need to agree how the framework within 'Championing Children' applies to management development in Children's Services

¹⁴ Championing Children A shared set of skills, knowledge and behaviours for those leading and managing integrated children's services Dfes (October 2006)

8.2.2 Training and development

The Joint Training group reports to the Children's Workforce Steering Group, and their scope includes auditing current training, identifying what could be shared and developed to meet the needs across the children's workforce while making best use of resources of available resources. This group will also evaluate the outcomes of joint training programmes.

An annual programme of training is delivered to all schools, governors, service providers and interested stakeholders participating in the Children's Centres and Extended Services programme. The programme aims to ensure that all engaged partners have an understanding of the Every Child Matters agenda and are in a position to develop plans and service proposals, which meet the specified outcomes. The Extended Schools Training Plan is supplemented by the Extended Services and Early Years Training Programme for all providers delivering out of school and early years education services. The programme is available to all sectors.

The Local Children's Safeguarding Board (LCSB) safeguarding programme to ensure the child's wellbeing and safety are promoted across the continuum of need and all are multi-agency programmes. This programme also included the CAF training to emphasise the continuum across prevention and protection.

Currently resources to support training and development programmes outside of safeguarding remain (on the whole) in individual agencies/departments and corporate in the Council. One challenge is to develop a more integrated approach to meet training and development needs across the continuum of need to ensure best use of available resources including capacity of personnel to facilitate and deliver programmes, time for staff to be able to attend, as well as financial resources.

Good practice multi-agency trainers

- We have a well established approach to multi-agency training developing trainers from within the Borough from a range of agencies through structured parenting programmes, including domestic violence programmes for children and adults and this model has continued with the implementation of the CAF, Lead Professional and developing local information sharing arrangements through the Child Concern Framework.
- We also have service users training on parenting programmes and peer mentoring for disabled children.

This has been shown through feedback and evaluation of programmes by staff and trainers to be an effective model to implement change. This increases understanding of each other's roles, provides professional/personal development opportunities, assists retention of key staff, and enhances multi-agency working while also providing champions with additional knowledge in their own services.

Priorities for 2007-08

- Developing an induction module common to all children's workforce for inclusion in all children's services
- Agreeing common training priorities for the children's workforce

9. Views and needs of children, young people, families and carers

Participation is one of our guiding principles across children's services. We have some good examples of service user participation in service monitoring and development (such as the Disability Partnership for Children and Young People, Looked After Children, Care Leavers and those involved in or at risk of offending)

These models show us that service users have a part to play not just in identifying needs and commenting on services, but also in the change process itself. Exposure to the experiences of children and families encourages staff to take a user-centred, as opposed to a service-centred, approach to change.

We regard the involvement of service users as integral to workforce modernisation. We want to learn from these examples and apply the lessons to other services: in terms of workforce issues this means sharing information and ideas across services, developing skills in consultation techniques, and developing toolkits etc to support good practice.

Local consultations with a range of children and young people have confirmed national research findings, which identify the qualities children, young people and their families, most value in those working with them. Children and young people are increasingly a part of the recruitment process for those who will work with them. There are currently many different areas and services that seek the views of or involve participation of children, young people and their families across Sutton. These need to be brought together to help inform us whether the skills the workforce need are there in practice to help to meet the priorities.

10. Managing Change

10.1 Consultation

A range of agencies have been involved in building up a picture of the local workforce. This year Council employees had the opportunity to participate in an employee survey and/or in a survey in relation to Investors in People. The outcomes of these will help inform recruitment and retention within the Children's Workforce Strategy.

Consultation for the Strategy will focus on the specific priorities. The major themes of the strategy have already been subject to wide consultation through the development and review of the Children and Young People's Plan, which has included children, young people and their families. The Strategy will be made accessible to all agencies through the Sutton Children and Young People's Partnership and available to children, young people and their families to comment on via websites, including Sutton Council, the Sutton Children and Young People's Partnership, the PCT and others.

The Early Years workshop held in 2006 involved the participation of practitioners and managers working across the statutory and Private, Voluntary and Independent Sector in workforce developments.

10.2 Communication

The Council has drafted some common principles of communication, which are being applied to the Every Child Matters agenda across partners. Communication across the

children's workforce is crucial to the successful implementation of initiatives, particularly those, which are part of the Every Child Matters Change for Children agenda workforce development.

Current communication methods include the updates received at the Sutton Children and Young People's Partnership and website and the Children and Young People's Strategic Board. Other methods include, 'Lynx', the Council newsletter to staff, the Schools Newsletter, 'Informing Sutton Schools', the school governor newsletter, 'Bodytalk', the Sutton governor website, the Council and PCT website.

The Sutton Children's Information Service (SCIS) offers a front line service to families through a shop based within Sutton Town Centre and a website www.suttonchildren.org.uk that provides relevant local information and signposting to children's services for children and families.

Priority for 2007-08

- Communicating directly with children, young people and their families and those working in children's service about workforce developments

11. Evaluation and Review Arrangements

This forms part of step 6 in the Steps for Excellence Model.

The Workforce Strategy priorities will be formally monitored every six months, from October 2007 through the Workforce Development Steering Group, reporting on a regular basis to the Sutton Children & Young People's Partnership (SCYPP), who are responsible for Sutton Children and Young People's Plan. Reports on the children's workforce feed into other monitoring groups the Strategic Commissioning Group, Children and Young People's Strategic Board and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee (who will exercise its scrutiny function and receive 'exception' reports, which detail any areas that are not on course to be achieved). This is appropriate to the Council's leadership role in multi-agency activities. The Sutton Children and Young People's Partnership will contribute to this by commenting on specific outcomes, particularly those with a distinct multi-agency component.

As part of the corporate assessment process, the Audit Commission will examine how well authorities are implementing their workforce strategies and undertaking workforce planning with partners, as will Children's Services Inspections and annual performance reviews.

The one year Action Plan (Appendix 4), has SMART targets (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound) to make monitoring the Strategy simpler by clarifying what needs to be done, who will carry out the actions and by when, and if the targets have been achieved or not. The one-year action plan will contribute to the monitoring and evaluation of this three-year strategy carried out by the Workforce Strategy Group. **Please note: This appendix is not attached for the purposes of this consultation.**

12. Three Year Priorities for the Children's Workforce

Due to the high level nature of the three-year strategy the priorities in this main document are strategic and SMART targets are located in the one-year action plan in Appendix 4. These form part of strategies and actions plans Step 5 in the 'Steps for Excellence Model'.

Workforce data and planning

- To ensure key partners are invited to participate in workforce development
- Communicating directly with children, young people and their families and those working in children's service about workforce developments
- To develop a more consistent approach to workforce data collection and develop a central system for recording information on the children's workforce
- To develop a more accurate picture of the children's workforce and their needs to inform commissioning arrangements and workforce development

Improve recruitment and retention

- To agree a more joined up approach to recruitment and retention across key partners delivering children's services
- To roll out the common core in new job descriptions
- To map and begin to address retention hotspots
- To carry out a more detailed analysis of recruitment and retention issues amongst the different components of the children's workforce
- To attract a more diverse workforce

Develop training and development

- To develop a more integrated approach to induction and joint training across children's services across the continuum of need
- To develop child awareness in those whom work primarily with parents/carers
- To promote inclusion through disability and special needs awareness across the children's workforce
- To develop knowledge across the children's workforce to address the agreed key priorities of parenting, bullying, domestic violence and transition

Strengthen inter-agency working and develop new workforce roles

- To build capacity to improve access to extended services across the borough through a varied menu of activities for children with additional needs.
- To increase capacity through workforce remodelling for a range of parenting support
- To develop integrated working to support the role of the Children and Young People's Integrated Support Panels in multi-agency problem solving across the continuum of need.

Embed integrated processes across agencies

- To ensure understanding of the Child Concern Framework across those working with children and their families in both adult and children's services
- To develop a competency framework based on the common core of skills and knowledge to support implementation of the Common Assessment Framework and Lead Professional Role
- To ensure the implementation of ContactPoint is supported by workforce developments

Promote stronger leadership, management and supervision

- To develop leadership of integrated services
- To identify and foster career paths across and within children's services

Progress Report on some areas from the Children and Young People's Plan Service Management Action Plan 2006-07

- 1. Attracting and retaining quality staff and ensuring the local workforce promotes and reflects difference to meet the diverse needs of the local community. Specific areas where it is hard to recruit include social work and youth justice and recruiting local foster carers to meet the needs of the most vulnerable children.**

Progress

Some of the major issues that account for staff turnover among the children's service workforce include the perception of the work, for example, the low profile of the work among the general public, the low rewards / pay and conditions of service compared to similar jobs and the lack of mutual respect of the knowledge and expertise of professionals in the various disciplines across all the services and agencies. A successful recruitment strategy will need to address these issues. As part of the national agenda, the status and esteem of careers in children's services will be raised and the effectiveness of the existing national recruitment campaigns will be reviewed to inform decisions on future awareness raising campaigns.

Our Strategy includes recruiting more people into the children's workforce by promoting more flexible entry routes and ensuring that the work is attractive.

Two good practice examples to address some specific difficult to recruit and retain staff areas are:

- **Improving recruitment and retention for Social Workers**
Significant progress has been made in improving recruitment and retention of qualified social workers, one hard to recruit group. This is demonstrated through a reduction in the vacancy rate from 30% in September 2005 to 22% in October 2006. As well as continued high numbers of social work staff accessing post qualification training. 50% of social work staff have obtained their PQ or advance award through Sutton.

We have implemented improved packages, terms and conditions and training and development, with improved salaries, better leave entitlements and progression scheme for the more experienced social workers.

- **Improving recruitment and retention in Extended Services and Early Years 'In 2 Childcare Recruitment Project'**
To support people entering into a career in childcare within the Borough a recruitment project In 2 Childcare has run since 2004, which has demonstrated that there are a number of people who would like a career working with children. We have new enquiries every month through drop in surgeries held at the Sutton Childcare Information Centre (SCIC). The majority have very little experience of working with children or any childcare related qualifications to start work in the sector training programmes from entry-level qualifications with associated progression routes to up skill the new recruits this is a long term project.

This project is recruiting new staff into the workforce and supporting current workers to move into new roles within Sutton to support retention of the workforce. It is managed through the Employability Centre at Carshalton College, a Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) for Early Years.

The project is funded through the General SureStart Grant (GSSG) and is managed through a service level agreement via the Extended Services and Early Years Team. The service is free for the sector to advertise their job vacancies and the project will try to recruit for them and provide a personalised job matching service. Candidates can be signposted to career guidance, help with CV's and are also put forward for suitable Vacancies in Sutton.

2. Mapping the current children's workforce and their skills against the different stages of the Child Concern Framework and address any identified developmental needs to ensure that workforce developments support improvements for children and young people. Taking an incremental approach focusing initially on the Early Years workforce.

Progress

Work with the Improvement and Development Agency (I& DeA) explored the potential of developing a skills audit model by mapping the Early Year's workforce against the Child Concern Framework stages of need to be able to address any identified developmental needs. A well attended workshop with a range of practitioners and managers who work with children across the continuum of need in early years (Stages 1-5 of the Child Concern Framework) was held as part of the process to identify any developmental needs informed by those who work in this Sector. The skills audit has also been informed by the survey undertaken across the PVI Sector in Early Years Work to inform the use of the Transformation Fund.

3. Developing new workforce roles through building capacity in the PVI Sector. The Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) made available a small amount of funding to all local authorities to build capacity and skills in the voluntary sector during 2006-07

Progress

In Sutton this funding has been used to pilot a small family support project in two primary schools. Service delivery is provided by a partnership of voluntary organisations; and training a new type of child and family support worker based in the voluntary sector to increase the capacity to deliver these services locally.

Steps to Excellence Model

Workforce planning is vital in helping councils tackle problems and new challenges. It should be seen as an integrated approach to business planning rather than a separate activity. The 'Steps to Excellence' model enables local authorities to self evaluate their position regarding workforce planning. Sutton's current position is assessed below. **This model has been used across all children's services, it is not a comment on a individual agency.**

Assessment levels are: 1 – awareness; 2 – understanding; 3 – competence; 4 - excellence

	Level of assessment (Levels 1-4)	Description
Planning	Sutton assessed at level 2	Some understanding of need for planning. Basic analysis of Authority's data. Some limited reporting in place using current IT systems. Senior Management
Data Collection and assessment of current position	Sutton assessed at level 2	Standard coding structures with clear definitions. Minimal free text. Organisational and statutory statistics are analysed and trends identified. Individual and organisational data can be examined. Those capturing and providing data have some understanding of its purpose and use. Data validation is undertaken to improve accuracy. Systems are in place to improve data. HR, payroll and training databases have electronic interfaces with finance systems.
Future needs and scenario planning	Sutton assessed at level 2	A corporate understanding exists regarding the value of workforce information as a support to effective people management; but there is not uniform buy in from all services. Managers able to view a range of standard reports (e.g. management hierarchy, staffing, and absence). Obtaining accurate data may still be a problem in some areas but a realisation exists that improving the quality of data will bring benefits. Capacity requirements based on current workforce needs. Forecasting undertaken at a corporate level of key areas of future need.
Gap analysis	Sutton assessed at level 2	Uses information on current workforce establishment and estimates future requirements. Future requirements based on service planning objectives. Estimates gaps between current occupied establishment and estimated future workforce requirements. Gaps are based on whole workforce figures. Projections based on council staff.
Strategies and action plans	Sutton assessed at level 2	Organisation wide workforce plan. Contains action plans and strategies based on an analysis of current workforce data and an intuitive assessment of future needs and thus gaps. No real quantification in plans/strategies. Timescales attached to the strategies/plans but limited to next 12 months. Production/delivery of action plans seen predominantly as responsibility of HR. Not integrated with service planning. Plans are predominantly internally focussed. Senior level commitment to the delivery of strategies but no real resource allocation. Plans and strategies might also include: recruitment/retention, absence and diversity.
Evaluation	Sutton assessed at level 2	Workforce plans and process are assessed and reviewed annually. Includes: Reviewing requirements and gaps, revising targets and goals, evaluating effectiveness of measures taken, identifying and implementing corrective measures.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Detail	Action taken to mitigate risks
Failure to engage across agencies successfully and lack of sufficient cooperation	Local Authorities and their partners may fail to co-operate sufficiently and align their activities into coherent and effective local change programmes with supportive local workforce strategies.	Multi-Agency workforce group established with representatives from PCT, Voluntary Sector and schools formed to work co-operatively.
	Insufficient involvement of schools and health services.	Schools and health service representatives on workforce group.
	Agencies not bound by statutory requirements in their provision may not fully engage with the process, e.g. there is no statutory requirement for private schools to do the training provided for school support staff.	All key agencies committed and represented on workforce group.
	Some children's services providers by virtue of their structure and regulation may fall outside the regular agencies as stated in the national strategy and therefore will not be involved this new way of joint working.	All key agencies committed and represented on workforce group.
There is insufficient capacity available locally to move the agenda forward	Local Authorities and their partners may have insufficient leadership and resources capacity to support the project plan; project responsibility added to someone's day job and partners set unrealistic expectations about what can be achieved without dedicated project management resources. Training and development budgets could be adversely affected by budget reductions.	Addressed through the action plan.
The current national strategy will probably change as a result of the consultation	This could lead to further changes/proposals and a waste of resources in areas where new/additional changes have been proposed.	Incremental approach to work to take account of changing agenda.
Staff turnover	Staff turnover may increase if their perception of the new changes are negative; could affect the continuity and seamless delivery of the project targets; pressure to increase the workforce could lead to recruiting unsuitable people.	Communication to staff has been highlighted as a key issue to be addressed. Recruitment and Retention also highlighted as a key area to address.
Secondment of staff to pilots	Secondment of staff to pilots could lead to greater pressure on frontline services.	
Difficulty in engaging users	Lack of time or interest on the part of users in engaging with the change process; consultation fatigue.	Communications highlighted as an issue for development.
Difficulty in engaging staff	Difficulty in engaging staff due to an inability/reluctance of managers to release them from work.	
New national legislation from other Government Deps	New national legislation from other Government Departments (e.g. adult services) could trigger more changes.	Incremental approach to work to take account of changing agenda.
Lessons learned and good practice locally may not support the implementation of some of the national proposals	Lessons learned and good practice locally may not support the implementation of some of the national proposals; could lead to rushing through the process and indeed rushing professionals through training courses.	Incremental approach to work to take account of changing agenda.

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