

**THE EMERGING PRIORITIES FACING
CHILDREN'S SERVICES
2012 REPORT**

1 Introduction

This report provides findings from desk-based research to identify the emerging key priorities facing Directors of Children's Services and organisations delivering children's services in England over the past six months and looking forward to 2016. It builds on the first report in January 2011 and reflects on some of the changes in emerging priorities, eighteen months later.

2 Methodology

The same methodology as the January 2011 report has been used. A range of information sources were analysed to determine the 'top ten' emerging priorities. In referencing these, hyperlinks have been provided to allow the reader easy access to more detail. These sources are:

- a) C4EO targeted support assignments received, or in progress, anytime between January 2011 and July 2012.
- b) Publications, press releases and current knowledge from a range of national children's services organisations. These include the Department for Education (DfE), the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS), Children's Improvement Board, Ofsted and other national sources.
- c) Recent and forthcoming government legislation, guidance and Ministerial speeches.
- d) Media articles including CYP Now, Local Government Chronicle, Community Care.
- e) Discussions with DCSs and colleagues.

The eight most prevalent and/or significant priorities that appear facing children's services are shown in Section Four. Prevalence has been determined by how frequent it has been stated as a priority (e.g. from C4EO tailored support, the most common requests). Significance has been determined by the effect on children's services in terms of complexity and/or resource pressures.

Although the methodology used to gather this information is based on a variety of different sources, an element of subjectivity as well as the local and regional variation may also exist.

3 National priorities

The priorities from key government departments and national bodies are provided below. A General Election, which will take place by June 2015 at the latest, is a critical variable which will affect all national priorities. As many of the emerging priorities over the past two years have been driven by government policy, Children's Services will need to expect, and be ready to react, to further policy changes at that time.

3.1 Department for Education

The Department for Education Business Plan 2011-2015 was published in November 2010, and is a key document in determining central government-led priorities for children's services organisations. Although there are no changes in their published Structural Reform Priorities (listed below) since C4EO's last emerging priorities report, there has been an increased emphasis and emerging priority for the sector on a number of areas which are included in the list of priorities in section 4.

- Increase the number of high quality schools and introduce fair funding:
 - Increase the number of academies,
 - Introduce new free schools,
 - Reform the complex funding system; and
 - Ensure there is a high quality alternative provision for those who need it.
- Reform the school curriculum and qualifications to ensure all children gain the knowledge they need to prepare them for adult life.
 - Promote the teaching of systematic synthetic phonics in schools,
 - Reform the National Curriculum and GCSEs;
 - Reform and free up the qualification systems; and
 - Improve the quality and availability of Apprenticeship opportunities.
- Reduce bureaucracy and improve accountability.
 - Reform the inspection regime for schools, local authority children's services and Foundation Years providers, working with Ofsted.
- Train and develop the professionals who work with children.
 - Attract the best entrants to the school workforce and develop them with effective initial training and continuing professional development,
 - Reform teachers' standards, pay and conditions;
 - Recruit, train and improve the capacity of social workers who work with children and families; and
 - Improve the quality of the Foundation Years Workforce.
- Improve support for children in the Foundation Years
 - Retain a national network of Sure Start Children's Centres and ensure that they deliver proven early intervention programmes to support families in the greatest need; and
 - Ensure access to sufficient and high quality Foundation Years provisions.
- Improve support for children, young people and families, focusing on the most disadvantaged.
 - Reviews and reform provision for children with special education needs, disabilities and mental health needs,
 - Improve arrangements for protecting children from harm,

- Improve the quality, speed and cost-effectiveness of the adoption and children in care system,
- Improve opportunities for, and support available to, young people,
- Take steps to end child poverty and improve the life chances of the poorest; and
- Increase support for families.

3.2 The Association of Directors of Children's Services

The ADCS Annual Report 2010/11 lists their priorities for 2012/13 as promoting a whole systems approach that has a clear view of the child's journey at its heart, which is sustainable; affect transformational change with severely reduced resources in:

- tackling underperformance in all school settings;
- ensuring that the health reforms have children's health needs strongly embedded and in particular that the reformed system can respond effectively to the needs of children with SEN and disability; and
- ensuring that reforms to the family justice system, to adoption and to broader children in care services result in a re-shaping of services, professional practice and relationships with service users that genuinely improve outcomes for children, young people, their families and carers.

3.3 Health Services

The legislative backdrop for the significant changes within the Health Service, described in the previous report, is now well underway and in it's transition year (2012/13). The Bill is enabling GPs to hold a vast budget across England to commission services, and as GPs are independent contractors and have a business approach, we are likely to see a wide and diverse range of provider services in addition to qualified providers, including Community Interest Companies and social enterprises. The CCGs are also required to find £20 billion savings over the next four years.

Alongside CCGs there will be the embedding of new Health and Wellbeing Boards, which local areas are already implementing, and which will be responsible for determining the public health priorities for their communities.

The Children and Young People's Health Outcomes Forum report, published in July 2012, argues that health outcomes for children and young people are poor and making several recommendations for new outcomes measures (largely around very similar themes to the Every Child Matters agenda), strengthening existing indicators and specific recommendations for different organisations within the health and care system to ensure the improvements are achieved, including:

- Leadership and accountability across all agencies and partnerships and setting out responsibilities for children, young people and their families and how accountability will be exercised at every level in the system.
- Contribution to effective local safeguarding, that DH produce a full accountability framework for safeguarding children in the wider health system as soon as possible; that, as part of the new multi-agency inspections, CQC should consider how all parts of the health system, including relevant adult services, contribute to effective local safeguarding; and a recommendation that further work be undertaken on indicators that would drive improvement to protect and promote the welfare of children and young people, including a focus on measuring the effectiveness of early help/early intervention. In addition, that NICE be commissioned to develop a Quality Standard for safeguarding children.

- Integration and partnership, including cross-government join up on policy, funding and performance management; prioritise integrated care provision in their regulatory and performance roles for all partners; and a recommendation that the NHS Number should be used as the unique identifier to bring together health, education and social care data for all children and young people.
- Acting early and intervening at the right time, with a focus on tackling inequality, particularly of looked after children, including calling for: all organisations to take a life-course approach coherently addressing the different stages in life and the key transitions instead of tackling individual risk factors in isolation; Directors of Children's Services to be responsible for overseeing the overall quality and delivery of health and wellbeing services for looked after children; and CCGs with their local authority partners to ensure sufficient clinical expertise and leadership for looked after children, including a designated doctor and nurse.
- Workforce, education and training, including that all GPs who care for children and young people should have appropriately validated CPD reflecting the proportion of their time spent with children and young people; and recommendations for Health Education England and Centre for Workforce Intelligence.

The report is intended as a basis for a wider children and young people's health outcomes strategy. Moving forward, the relationship between local authority children's services and health services at a government department level will be interesting to watch as DH appear to strengthen its policy remit and reach within children's services as DfE weaken.

3.1 Children's Improvement Board (CIB)

CIB have three legacy programmes:

- Youth innovation zones – 12 pilots DfE contract continuing to March 2013
- Data – creating a single integrated database on LG Inform and development of data specialists – regionally based 'train the trainers' programme
- Integrated working programme (ex CWDC) and workforce development & training

CIB also have six policy strands, of which three are policy blocks for 2012/13:

- Munro & social work reform (2012/13 policy block)
- Early & foundation years (2012/13 policy block)
- Adoption, care & family justice review (adoption and care are 2012/13 policy blocks).
- Youth
- Data
- Integrated workforce

Whilst these are current policy strands, it is unlikely that these will change to any great effect in the next two years unless there are changes to government policy.

The work of CIB impacts greatly on priorities for local authorities going forward in terms of supporting policy development and embedding sector led improvement, which some regions are still in the early stages of the latter, with resources from each LA going into providing peer challenge, and some regions with further development work to be undertaken. Learning so far provides areas for development for CIB, LAs, C4EO and other providers:

- Improvement planning must be aligned and programmes of support should be co-ordinated;
- There should be an action-oriented diagnostic assessment and ensure there is robust challenging within 'the system' (from internal challenge, regional peer support, LGA peer reviews or C4EO and other provider diagnostics and 'critical friend' approach;
- Minimise the complexity of commissioning and funding and smarter commissioning of early support is needed;
- Quality Assurance and governance through management oversight, management of risk, effective reflective supervision and audits to inform practice are key.

Looking ahead, CIB anticipate that there will be demand for:

- Pre-inspection diagnostic assessments
- Sector Specialist support for deep dive peer challenge; improving access and direct work with families; QA arrangements and audit; developing the 'early help' offer; effectiveness of the LSCB; challenging across the system

4 The top current priorities

In her Presidential speech¹¹ which opened the annual conference in July 2012, Debbie Jones stressed the importance of being on the front foot particularly on children in care reforms and school reform. These appear to be two of the strongest agendas which continue to challenge LAs, and the consequence of these reforms will be felt far into the future, in all likelihood whatever changes any new government will make. In addition to the significant reforms themselves, the 'ripple effect', i.e. the impact on other services and consequences of the reforms, will be additional challenges for DCSs and children's services at any level to try and foresee and address.

The top priorities emerging from the analysis are not listed below in any order of importance. Priorities remain inter-related and inter-dependent, and probably more so than eighteen months ago as the need for better integration across services and the 'the child's journey' becomes a greater focus.

TOP PRIORITIES

1. Education and Skills reform

This was a priority in the last report and has risen to greater significance. Reviews, strategic decisions and activities which local authorities and schools continue to be undertaken to develop self-improving schools have been absorbing a great deal the time of DCS, Lead Member and other education, finance and additional stakeholders. The need for innovative solutions and excellent change management skills within the LA and a focus on building, or maintaining good working relationships between schools and partners, given the range of reforms and changes in this area cannot be underestimated. LAs are all at different places to support schools in implementing a self-improving school system and to meet the myriad of continues guidance, legislation and changes in Education and Skills, some of which are given below:

- continued rise in the number of **academies** and the consequences for LAs in terms of school planning and funding;
- **School Funding Reform**²: Arrangements for 2013-14 which sets out changes in schools funding formula and which in a letter to DCSs, DfE state that :the implementation of the pre-16 and high needs funding reform involves significant work by your authority”
- **National curriculum** overhaul to be implemented 2013/14³

1 Available from the members' only section of the ADCS website, visit www.adcs.org.uk

2

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/financialmanagement/schoolsrevenuefunding/a00205567/school-funding-reform-arrangements-2013-14>

3 <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/nationalcurriculum>

- **Raising the age** to which all young people in England must continue in education or training, requiring them to continue until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 from 2013 and until their 18th birthday from 2015⁴.
- On 19 July 2012 the Department published new statutory guidance on **alternative provision**⁵. The guidance covers important changes to regulations on Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) as of September 2012.
- The white paper, *The importance of teaching*⁶, describes the role of the LA, changes to Ofsted inspection and brings together some of the rationale behind the aforementioned transformational initiatives.
- *The missing link – the evolving role of the local authority in school improvement* published by ADCS (April 2012)⁷ focusses on encouraging LAs to take the initiative, shape their local education landscape to meet local need and work constructively with all schools. Schools however, are struggling with the weight of policy change; funding changes; and the strength of their relationship with the LA is becoming apparent and tested.
- Changes to Foundation Stage Profile and the early years agenda continues to be a key priority for many LAs.

2. Safeguarding

In the initial report, we identified safeguarding as a priority and social work reform as an emerging future priority 'on the horizon'. This appears to be a more significant key priority for local authorities, but more importantly partnerships, in terms of implementing recommendations from the Munro Review. At time of producing the report, there has been no firm commitment from DfE whether the Munro indicators, including the local, qualitative indicators are to be enforced. However, DCSs and LSCBs are focusing on implementing the changes from Munro and the new Working Together, as well as the additional driving factors, some of which are given below.

- A significant proportion of local authorities continue to see rising numbers of referrals, initial assessments, children subject of child protection plans and children looked after in the last two years. This challenge was researched by the ADCS in 2010⁸ and this research is being repeated with an additional focus on what different early intervention has made and permanence for children looked after. The continued rise in numbers of referrals, children subject of child protection plans and children looked

4 <http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/participation/rpa>

5 <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/g00211923/alternative-provision>

6 <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/toolsandinitiatives/schoolswhitepaper/b0068570/the-importance-of-teaching/>

7 <http://www.adcs.org.uk/schoolscausingconcern/>

8 <http://www.adcs.org.uk/download/news/adcs-sg-pressures-p2-report-final.pdf>

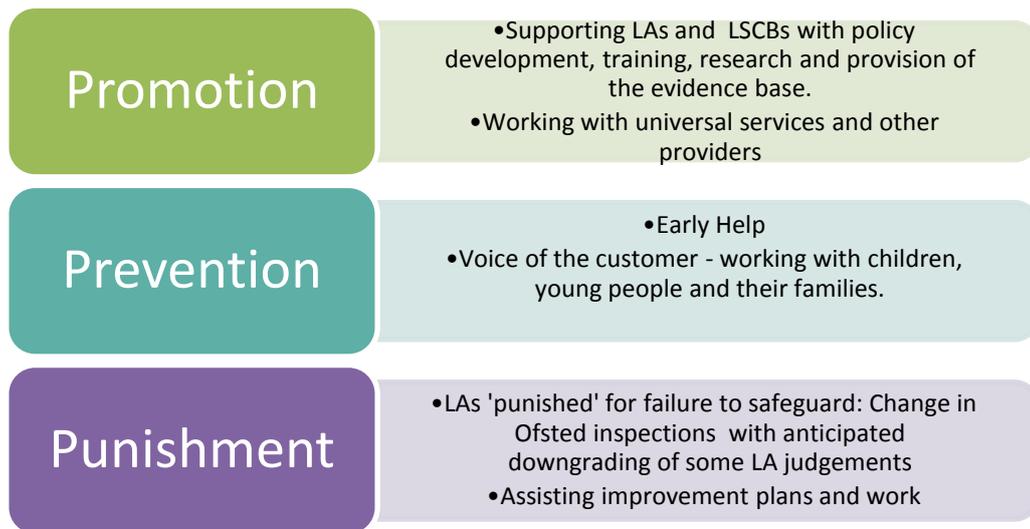
after not only creates financial and resource pressures, but has LAs continuing to look at where they can stem the rising tide.

- With the new unannounced Ofsted inspections seen by some as providing harsher criteria that a number of LAs becoming 'inadequate' this year so far, evidencing robust safeguarding practice continues to be a prime priority for DCSs. In July 2012, radical proposals for a new approach to the inspection of child protection services were published, outlining how the Care Quality Commission, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons and where necessary Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate will work together from 2013 to carry out no-notice inspections of multi-agency arrangements for the protection of children. At the same time, Ofsted published proposals for a new programme of inspections of services for children in care, to be carried out jointly with the Care Quality Commission.
- Some LAs are undertaking, or very conscious of, the 'test of assurance' required to meet the needs of *DfE's Statutory Guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and The Lead Member for children's services*⁹, published in April 2012. 41 (27%) DCS¹⁰ posts were joint directors of adults and children's services at May 2012, with the number growing and one LA recently reverting back from a joint directorship to two separate posts.
- Missing children will begin to feature towards the end of the year in LA priorities, as the DfE finalises a current multi-agency project looking in more detail at identification and strategies for missing children.
- Managing Cases: the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families: proposed changes to procedures for undertaking assessments of all children in need and will require local, regional and national development and implementation.
- Statutory Guidance on Learning and Improvement: proposed new arrangements for Serious Case Reviews, reviews of child deaths and other learning processes led by LSCBs.
- Effective LSCBs are critical in the future of safeguarding in terms of providing a strategic approach but also the effect that an inadequate LSCB can have on the LA – the new Ofsted inspections can fail on the performance of the LSCB. C4EO has undertaken a number of assignments working with LSCBs on performance management, CWDC undertook training on this in 2011 and it continues to be a priority and a focus in many areas.

There are other factors, projects and initiatives which drive safeguarding as a key priority now and in the future for LAs and partnership, and the emphasis is such that Looked After Children warrant a 'top priority' category in their own right outside of safeguarding. This is provided overleaf. Emerging priorities within safeguarding agenda and how providers can support LAs with this could be demonstrated within three elements as described in the model below.

9 <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00034-2012>

10 Source: ADCS



3. Children in Care

There has been a lot of political and media focus recently about particular aspects of the care system – namely adoption and children’s homes. These issues, the challenges posed by reduced resource and, in many places, increased entrants in to the care system, have prompted Directors of Children’s Services to begin a debate which is broader than some of the current national and local focus, to question ‘what is care?’ and develop a view of the whole system of services from first identification to securing permanency.

‘What is Care’ was a major focus of the ADCS conference in July 2012, and there are also a number of projects underway to evidence and change policy legislation and outcomes, and which will impact on future service provision. These are:

- **Family justice review**

The family justice modernisation programme¹¹ proposes “judicial solutions to the problems which are identified in the Family Justice Review.” There are two key elements to the proposals. The first is strong judicial leadership and management i.e. judicial control of the workload of the court by the management of judicial deployment to match resources to need. The second is robust case management of proceedings by the requirement to have a welfare timetable for each child based on evidence and research.

Debbie Jones, in the ADCS press release of 31st July states that “The proposals to develop a framework of good practice, and those relating to more robust case management in public law cases, will present significant challenges to the thinking and practice of Local Authorities in the way they develop and present their views to the courts, but the aim of the reforms makes such challenge worthwhile. Directors of Children’s Services, Cafcass and the judiciary will need to ensure that the whole system responds to these proposals, at a local and national level, and that we all make the most

11 <http://www.judiciary.gov.uk/publications-and-reports/reports/family/the-family-justice-modernisation-programme/family-modernisation-final-report>

of the new collaborative arrangements to change culture as well as procedure to ensure the focus is on timely and robust decision making.”

In terms of sector led improvement and the role providers have in supporting this, there are clear drivers for provision of the evidence base; quality assurance in case management and case audits in addition to any training and development needs of LAs.

- **Children’s homes**

In September 2010, DfE established a programme to work to support the residential care sector and encourage continuing improvements in the quality of residential care for children. In April 2011, they issued revised regulations, guidance and National Minimum Standards for children’s homes. However in June 2012, the media headlines read "Serious weaknesses" in England's care system have been revealed by a report which found children's homes failed to protect runaways, the children's minister says¹².

This is just one example where a single report and the subsequent media and ministerial attention can divert the attention from existing priorities and plans of a DCS and an LA to other areas.

- **Adoption and permanence**

Responding to government requirements and subsequent media attention around adoption and permanence, including the new regulations around adoption and recruitment of adoptors is well versed and needs no further explanation.

4. The child’s journey

Again, part of the safeguarding and looked after children priorities, but with a wider focus, there is a heavy emphasis on ‘the child’s journey’ - i.e. an Integrated, whole system and child centred approaches to policy development; service development and service delivery. Debbie Jones, in the ADCS annual report 2011/2012¹³ states that “we must constantly remind ourselves, each other and the wider policy-making world wider policy-making world that each individual child has a range of needs and many will come into contact with more than one part of the system throughout their childhoods. That experience should be coherent, consistent and well-navigated by the professionals leading at every stage. This means designing and delivering policy initiatives that are child-centred, joined-up and understood by the workforce who will implement them”.

The priority and challenge for not just DCSs, but all agencies and providers, including the voluntary sector, is to develop, implement and maintain a robust framework of working together and information sharing which promotes the child’s journey. Some local areas are showing innovative progress in developing children’s practices and locality working but the models across areas are varied and there is as yet no empirical evidence that this type of integrated working improves outcomes. However, there are a few models of good practice which the nation tends to look to, such as Westminster model.

Under this priority we could include troubled families, which was ‘relaunched’ by DfE in 2010 with a new name (from families with multiple, or complex, needs); an expectation that all LAs must know the troubled families in their area and have a clear strategy for

¹² <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-18478670>

¹³ <http://www.adcs.org.uk/download/annual-report/ADCS-annual-report-2011-12.pdf>

how they will improve outcomes for them, which are monitored. During 2011/12, this has been a priority for LAs to undertake, often with limited capacity and expertise to do so.

5. Ending Child Poverty

Meeting the national target to eradicate child poverty by 2020 is one of the few priorities which has been maintained from the Labour to the Coalition Government. It remains an existing priority for the majority of local authorities, reflected in their Children & Young People's Plans, support and guidance but anecdotally, this may be 'taking a lower place' on the emerging list of new priorities.

However, this is an area where external support to local partnerships can be achieved through reviewing current progress of previously undertaken assessments, strategies, and plans. In our last report, we commented that this priority is expected to become more challenging as the effects and implication of the current economic climate are felt, and that for some local authorities, the effect of the economic climate, including unemployment rates, will make reducing child poverty more challenging. This remains the case.

6. Health Reforms

Already outlined in section 3.3 of this report, future priorities for children's services in terms of the implementation, and the implications of, NHS reforms including the current Health and Social Care Bill are unfolding apace and are not without challenges. The transformation currently being undertaken within the health services has in some places, anecdotally, had a knock on effect on partnership working with health.

At the Annual NHS CONfed conference, Andrew Webb, vice-president of the Association of Directors of Children's Services, said government policies, from clinical commissioning groups in health to academies and free schools in education, were "actively encouraging fragmentation" – a potential challenge to integrated services¹⁴

DCSs have been concerned about the lack of clarity on safeguarding roles, responsibility and accountability and an increase in vacancy rates of designated health professionals. In terms of commissioning, this has in some areas started to become fragmented over the past year with further challenges forecast. The new *Children and Young People's Health Outcomes Forum report* does, however, offer a way forward for all those working with children.

It will be challenging to influence commissioning decisions, maintain a focus on children in the wider health agenda and develop and maintain good partnership between H & W Boards and LCSBs.

14 http://www.publicservice.co.uk/feature_story.asp?id=20491

7. Narrowing the gap and access to services

Some LAs have seen a widening of the gap between vulnerable and underperforming children and their peers, especially in educational attainment. Following on from C4EOs work on this to support the sector a number of years ago, the reasons behind the new increase, and a renewed focus on vulnerable children generally, does appear to be a priority for a number of LAs.

In addition, CIB have committed to ensure that vulnerable children are a priority area.

The increasing child population, where future population projections from the Office for National Statistics show that the size of the under 18 population is predicted to grow by 5.5% from 2008 to 2019 and 11.6% by 2033.¹ Is likely to exacerbate the pressure on services to ensure equity of access and outcomes.

8. Funding

The previous report described a backdrop of reduced funding for LAs and staffing pressures, and the situation remains the same, as evidenced widely within the media, LAs and other sources. A recent report highlighted that Councils plan to outsource a third of services by 2015¹⁵ in a bid to achieve savings of 18%. The survey by Yougov and Interserve also found that almost half of authorities have yet to develop or agree a strategy to deal with their 2014/15 budgets. 38% of councils consider there to be no service area, including Children's Services unsuitable for outsourcing.

Adrian Ringrose, chief executive of Interserve, commented: 'Forward thinking councils are aware that they need a transformational change given the severe pressure on budgets for the foreseeable future'.

According to the report 'Banking on Growth', issued by the Centre for Cities on 26 July¹⁶ which details trends in local government finance, local authorities increasingly lack the financial freedom and resources to finance capital schemes and thereby stifling growth and innovation.

New ways to fund services, social enterprise, income generation and shared services as well as other innovative approaches are sought by many areas, with some LAs considering, or already joined up (e.g. the 'tri-borough' of Kensington & Chelsea, Hammersmith and Fulham and Westminster). CIB are promoting a whole system approach to change, through their new demonstrator sites.

A key challenge for local areas, DCS, and commissioners is to ensure the right funding is the right place, at the right time.

15 <http://local-government.interserve.com/resources/downloads/sectors/Local-services-research-FINAL-July-2012.pdf>

16 <http://www.centreforcities.org/finance.html>

9. Workforce

The effect of changes in the workforce and workforce development is likely to be felt by the sector in the next year or so, with some already manifesting themselves.

As every year, there has been a turnover of DCSs, with 23 changes in 2012 and a number of these being interims, or having dual roles (eg Director of Adults and Children's Services) or becoming Director across more than one local authority (e.g tri-borough in London). In two LAs at least, the roles of Director of Children's Services, and Education provision, have been split into two different directorate within the Council.

Regional succession planning programmes are currently being evaluated with funding required to be found from within the sector from April 2013.

The Children's Workforce Development Council ceased in April 2012 with its functions split between CIB and DfE. On 31 July 2012 the GSCC closed and from 1 August 2012 the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) (currently the Health Professions Council (HPC)) will be the new regulator for social workers and social work education in England.

Development of skilled staff and aspirant leaders within the sector is a challenge given the number of experienced staff who have left the local authorities due to staff cutbacks or reorganisation, and a loss in some areas of this 'organisational memory'. Training budgets have been affected by the funding reforms, and there is further uncertainty given the changes to National College, regional succession planning, Munro and the Education reforms.

These are all factors which could impact on stability, training and development of children's services staff and therefore a priority for Chief Executives, Lead Members and DCSs to address.

5. Critical threads to all priorities

Weaving through the priorities for children's services are factors (referred to here as threads) which have the potential to help, or hinder in service delivery and improving outcomes. In 2010, C4EO developed 'ten golden threads' which are elements required to underpin all our work. These golden threads remain central to effectively address the current priorities:

- Promoting resilience
- Knowing your community – having good evidence base and knowing the needs of your community; listening to the views of parents, children and young people and community leaders;
- Involving service users in service design
- Seeing the bigger picture - Services need to consider the wider family and environmental context when seeking to meet the child's needs
- 'Holding the baton' – working together to provide continuity of staff, smooth transition and good information sharing between services

- A culture of working together with good inter-professional relationships
- Universal and targeted services working together and clear thresholds between different services.
- Staff training and development
- Proving what works - Measuring impact and cost effectiveness
- high quality strategic leadership and a shared vision.

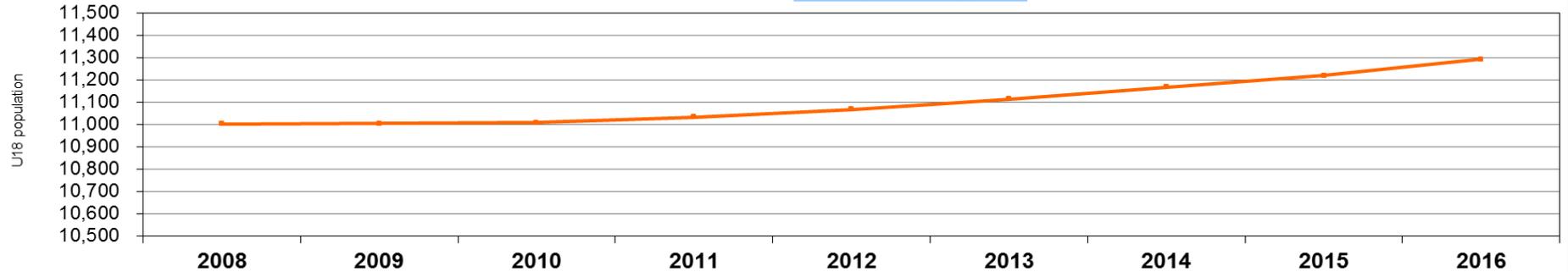
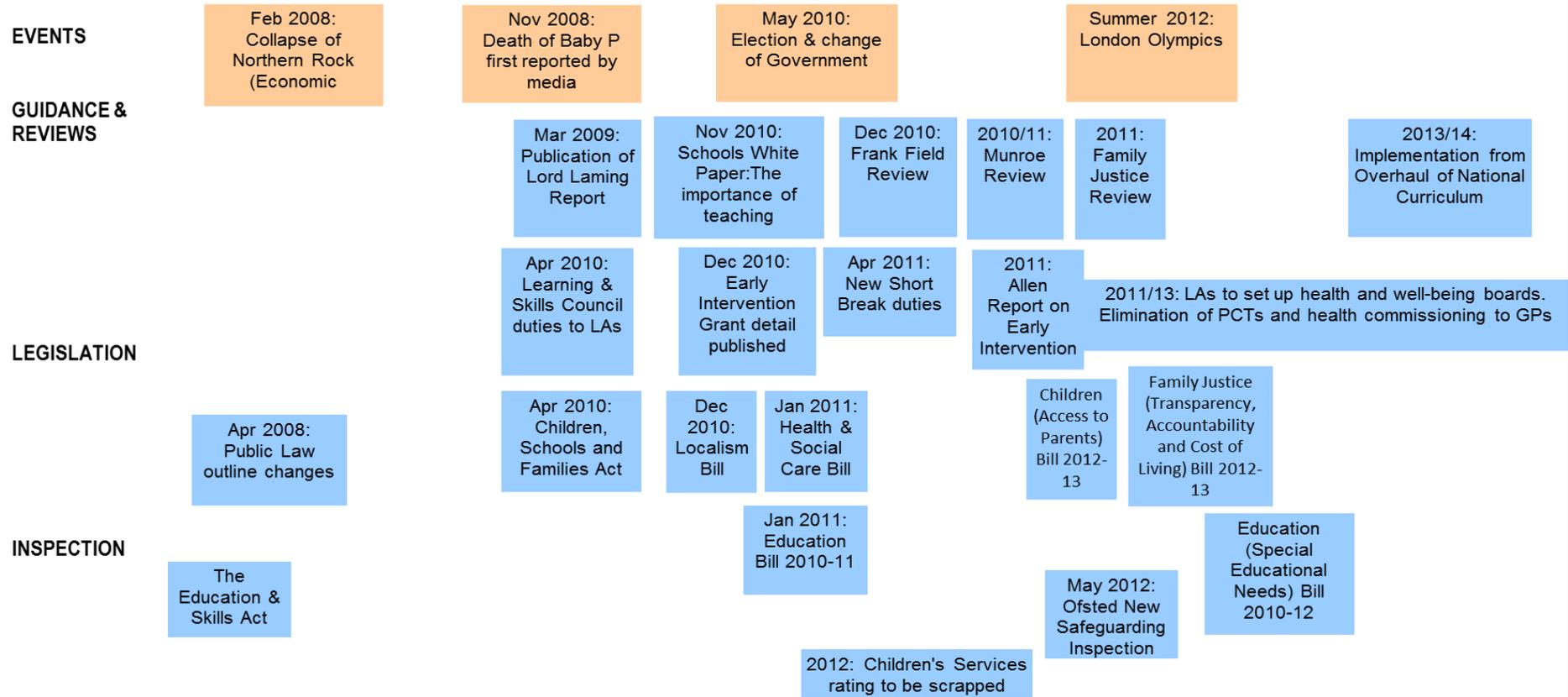
5 Conclusion

The roadmap for children's services continues to be one of significant change affected by a range of events, guidance, reviews and legislation, as detailed in this report and illustrated in Appendix A. The next general election is a key movable factor influencing what DCSs and providers do now, and what they will be required to do in the future.

Current drivers for change and for setting priorities in delivering services and improving outcomes appear to be marginally different from those 18 months ago with a greater attention on priorities of the Coalition Government; or driven by economic reasons, but some priorities still driven from either a failure to protect or to improve outcomes for children and young people, evidenced recently by the very sad death of Tia Sharp.

Priorities continue to all be inexorably inter-linked and inter-dependent and as always children's services organisations do not face distinct, clearly defined priorities. Now, more than ever, C4EOs golden threads are valid as factors which can positively influence the success in addressing priorities in children's services.

Legislation and Events impacting on priorities for Children's Services



Source of data: Subnational Statistics Unit, ONS. Crown Copyright.

APPENDIX B: SUMMARY OF C4EO ASSIGNMENT TYPES AS AT 9TH AUGUST 2012
(CLOSED AND OPEN)

	Total Number	Number by type	Type
T1 = Early Years	59	1	Data
		15	Development of partnerships, skills and best practice
		8	quality of provision
		5	Developing or reviewing strategy
		5	children's centre review
		2	EYFS
		7	OBA/measuring impact/cost effectiveness
		4	Narrowing the gap
		3	Family/parent engagement
		2	2 YO offer
	7	Unknown/attend events/other	
T2 = Disability	1	1	commissioning
T4 = Child Poverty	2	2	Workshop; monitoring impact of strategy and performance indicators
T5 = Schools	3	3	SEN development; performance review; new delivery model - schools traded services
T6 = Youth	1	1	critical friend - review of youth services
T7 = Families, Parents & Carers	2	2	troubled families; adoption
T8 = Safeguarding	16	3	childs journey; review of front door
		1	reflective practice
		1	prepare for inspection
		1	mentoring
		3	unknown/other
	7	Safeguarding and LSCB data and performance; QA	
T9/T3 = Early Intervention	5		Provide examples of good practice, evaluating CAF; new delivery model
T10/T0 = cost effectiveness; data	5	2	Cost effectiveness and measuring impact
		3	Performance and data - diagnostics; effective use of data; performance management frameworks

TOTAL

94

Source - weekly assignment summary - 09082012