
Children's Service Advisory Network Service Plan 2009/2010

Foreword

Welcome to the CIPFA Children's Services Advisory Network (CSAN) Service Plan, which sets out our planned activities from 1st April 2009 up to 31st March 2010. This plan has been written specifically to act as a quick guide and inform our existing and new members of the many benefits that are available as part of their subscription. I hope that as you read through this, you find it informative in terms of how to access our increasing range of member services, including details of upcoming events that we have scheduled.

Please get in touch with me if you would like further information.

Cliff Dalton (CIPFA)

Manager, CIPFA Performance Networks

For further details about CSAN, please contact:

T: 01262 851725

M: 07919 018 754

E: cliff.dalton@cipfa.org.uk

Or visit www.cipfanetworks.net/CSAN

Introduction to the CIPFA Children's Services Advisory Network (CSAN)

The CIPFA CSAN provides public sector practitioners with day-to-day practical support on implementing the Every Child Matters agenda. It facilitates knowledge sharing between public sector practitioners who wish to work together to improve commissioning and performance in the delivery of integrated children's services. Our strength lies in our network approach which brings together practitioners in a variety of innovative and energetic ways.

In addition to **free delegate places** at our events, CSAN members also benefit from:

- Regular policy analysis
- Briefings and discussion papers on key topics
- Access to our bi-weekly e-newsletter

- Online discussion forums – a new feature that has been launched with CSAN's updated website this year
- An extensive online archive of documentation, presentations, reports and technical guidance
- Comment and input from our Commissioning Support Group and Knowledge Bank of practical documents that commissioners can adapt.

The CIPFA CSAN is a highly practical network and advisory service for public sector practitioners. We have extensive links with other CIPFA services and partner organisations including the DCSF. Hence our members know us as "the leading body supporting the business side of L(E)As."

A look at 2008/2009

2008/9 continued a recent trend of bringing tough new challenges; reporting and regulatory requirements to Children's service providers.

Indeed it is now not only the policy agenda specific to Children's Services that practitioners are expected to deliver on, in areas such as *Every Child Matters - 2008/2009* also showed how important the broader corporate agenda is to all departments of an authority, most notably in areas such as Procurement; Governance; Performance Review and Joint or Collaborative Working. This raising of Service awareness and standards is set to continue further as the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) regime comes on line in April 2009.

In April 2008 our event on Strategic Commissioning for third sector providers proved an essential guide to authorities for satisfying a more joined up approach to service delivery. Both the DCSF and DH have third-sector inclusion strategies in place and the community 'place shaping' agenda legitimised by the Lyons review and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act provided an extra impetus in furthering this agenda. Our April series looked closer at some of the key issues around strategic commissioning with the third sector, most notably on ensuring quality in outcomes from this relationship and other issues around sustainability in this relationship.

In July we looked at performance for outcomes in Children's Services, which focused much more on the new requirements

of Comprehensive Area Assessment; Local Area Agreements, the National Indicator set in England, the One Wales Delivery Plan and the New Children & Young People Plans in Wales and Single Outcome Agreements in Scotland. Our series was designed to help local authorities ensure that the performance management arrangements *appropriate* for their area were set up to maximise the opportunities presented by this reinvigorating national approach to securing effective outcomes.

Our November series looked more specifically at Implementing the Children and Young Persons Act and addressed some of the challenges that this Act would bring. The Act was based on the proposals set out in the White Paper, *Care Matters: Time for Change*, which introduced two main policy issues. The first covers the development of the purchaser/provider split. The second covers the strengthening of the corporate parenting role and significantly increased attention on the stability of placements for looked after children. Our workshops in November looked at the latest proposals from Ofsted for inspection of the services for Looked After Children and provided local authorities with an opportunity to consider the implications of opening the market for the delivery of children's social care to alternative providers, including views and opinion from some excellent practitioner guest speakers.

Further details, documentation and copies of all PowerPoint slides from these events are currently available to members of CSAN from our website: www.cipfanetworks.net/csan

Themes for 2009/2010

Surely more than any other years, 2009/2010 are set to be the most challenging of all for local authorities. Comprehensive Area Assessment will be the new assessment framework from April with Ofsted having recently consulted on their part of the corporate review; Lord Laming's review following the Baby P case is likely to give rise to further policy change on the protection of the most vulnerable in our society; we have a new Children, Skills and Learning Bill/Act announced in the Queen's Speech for the 2008/2009 programme and revised guidance on the 'duty to co-operate', originally created in the Children Act 2004. The DCSF Children's plan: *Building Brighter Futures* also sets high expectations on delivering improvements for all children and young people, while the Audit Commission's report, 'Are We There Yet?' published in October 2008, was

critical in particular of governance and resource management arrangements in Children's Trusts. Despite the current economic climate, there are some very important investments authorities will need to make in tackling child poverty to ensure we give every child the best start in life and further plans following publication of the expected new Green Paper on Families & Relationships in the autumn to develop a coherent plan to strengthen support for families, with a particular focus on early intervention services

So there is much to consider for 2009/2010, both in terms of documentation support; interpretation and comment, along with more hands on practical support through our upcoming programme of events.

Calendar of CSAN Specific Events April 2009 – March 2010

Event Title	Content	Dates & Locations
Implementing 14 – 19 Changes	Our briefing will cover the key issues from the recent DCSF publication <i>Delivering 14 – 19 Reform: Next Steps</i> . We will identify the next steps which local authorities, schools and other partners need to take to deliver this agenda and its timetable of reform to 2015.	7 May in London 14 May in York
Introduction to Multi-agency and Joint Working Arrangements	The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 specifies that local authorities and PCT's produce a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) of the health and wellbeing of the local community. This series of events will look at the development of the JSNA within the context of effective commissioning to deliver the Children and Young People's plan and wider partnership working.	23 June in London 25 June in Manchester 2 July in York
Tackling Child Poverty	New series of events to take a critical look at actions to help reduce and eradicate child poverty. The events will focus on a wide range of issues including what is child poverty, key risk factors, and what authorities need to tackle in order to make significant progress in eradicating child poverty by 2020.	18 November in York 19 November in Manchester 26 November in London
Families & Relationship Green Paper	Topical events to cover the latest on the new Government Green Paper on Families and Relationships. The Green Paper expected to be published in Autumn 2009 will set out a coherent narrative on the issues facing families in the 21st century, the progress that has been made and detail how families can be supported to thrive and succeed.	19 January in London 26 January in York 27 January in Manchester
Looked after Children: Inspections under the Comprehensive Area Assessment	From April 2009 Ofsted has led the new programme of inspecting looked after children, Findings will help determine Ofsted's annual performance rating of council services for children and young people and will make an important contribution to CAA area and organisational assessments. This series will discuss the outcomes, lessons learned and the best practice from the first assessments under the CAA regime	9 March in London 16 March in York 17 March in Manchester

Programme caveat

All the programmes in this service plan are subject to change. Where new topics emerge that are considered as either more important or more urgent than those within the existing programme, the CIPFA CSAN will attempt to add them to the programme as outlined above. However there may be occasions when a new programme has to replace an existing programme already highlighted at short notice.

Increasing CSAN's service support to you - New for 2009/2010!

In addition to the above CSAN specific events, it gives me great pleasure to tell you of yet further improvements in our service to you, which come at no additional cost to your existing membership rates.

From April 2009, membership of the Children's Service Advisory Network will now include full access to a number of *joint events* that are to be delivered throughout 2009/2010 in partnership with our other policy & performance networks.

CSAN members will now be able to use their pre-paid places at any of these extra events

- ABC Masterclass - Using the ESD-Toolkit **(September 2009)**
- Specification Writing - Moving to Outcome Based Specifications **(October 2009)**
- Managing Processes to Deliver Sustainable Performance Improvement **(October 2009)**
- The New EC Public Procurement Remedies Directives **(November 2009)**
- Improving Performance against National Indicators **(November 2009)**

- Transforming Procurement Performance **(November 2009)**
- Procurement Fraud **(February 2010)**
- Total Place **(February 2010)**
- Getting VfM from Category Management **(March 2010)**

The key focus and rationale of each of these additional events is to improve knowledge; awareness and general good practice in a broader and more generic range of activities.

These extra events are being offered to a select range of other CIPFA networks – including CSAN, in order to encourage a more varied and comprehensive view on some of the key issues currently affecting all departments of your authority.

The events should therefore facilitate improvements in performance both for practitioners in your own Children's Services directorate, as well as raising awareness of how these strategic issues can impact on your authority more widely.

Further detail on these additional events will be sent to all CSAN members throughout the year (please note the scheduled dates for delivery). All material and other intellectual property from each of these events will also be available for access and download from the CSAN website as part of your current subscription – access to which will be restricted to CSAN members.

Briefings

Our briefings are done on an ad hoc basis and include summaries and analyses of key documentation including legislation and CSAN policy documents.

Documentation

All CSAN subscribers have online access to a library of documentation. In 2009/2010, we will continue to provide briefings with analysis of key documents and policy update. We will disseminate good practice and ideas obtained from our events and send e-mail alerts on new developments. We will also produce good practice guides.

E-Newsletters

Our e-newsletters continue to prove a most popular aspect of our service and we are very pleased to announce that these too are set to improve during 2009; articles and features for our newsletter now to include contributions from the Department for Children, Schools and Families; Network advisors; our Associate professionals and, most importantly, directly from other member practitioners.

E-mail alerts

When e-mail alerts are sent out to subscribers or workshop delegates, they are added to the website so that subscribers can access them at a later date, should they wish. Such e-mail alerts can include answers to delegates' questions at a workshop, information regarding important new publications or recent developments.

Contact details

How to contact the CIPFA Children's Service Advisory Network

Cliff Dalton

Manager, Performance Networks

T: 01262 851725

M: 07919 018754

E: cliff.dalton@cipfa.org.uk

Lisa Forster

Children's Services Advisor

T: 01430 828983

M: 07900 570980

E: lisa.forster@cipfa.org.uk

Dean Henry

Business Support Officer

T: 020 8667 8578

F: 020 8667 8580

Email: dean.henry@cipfa.org.uk

Peter Eckersley

Performance Advisor

T: 01912 537364

M: 07771 888790

E: peter.eckersley@cipfa.org.uk

Mohamed Hans

Performance Advisor

T: 01924 461825

M: 07717 345188

E: mohamed.hans@cipfa.org.uk