



Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED
All

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:

**OSMB
Cabinet**

**6th August 2008
1st September 2008**

JAR action plan

Report of the Interim Director of Children and Young People's Services

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To report on the findings of Leicester's Joint Area Review (JAR) and to highlight the requirement for the Local Authority to produce a JAR Action Plan.

2. Summary

- 2.1 Services for Children and Young People living in Leicester were subject to a Joint Area Review (JAR) led by Ofsted in January/February 2008. The JAR Report was published on 3rd June 2008 and summarises the findings of the JAR, identifies areas of good performance and areas where outcomes are poor and further action is needed. The report sets out 16 recommendations for action. The City Council is required to submit a response to these recommendations in the form of a post JAR Action Plan. Key partners and stakeholders have been involved in developing the action plan.

The plan is currently in draft and will continue to be refined over the coming weeks. The action plan must be published within 70 days of the JAR report, i.e. by 9th September. However, some of the recommendations must be addressed immediately, and therefore work needs to commence prior to publication of the action plan.

- 2.2 The Comprehensive Assessment was aligned with the JAR inspection of services for children and young people undertaken by Ofsted. This meant that the part of the corporate assessment covering the Council's achievements in relation to children and young people was assessed using the evidence provided from the JAR. The detailed planning as a result of the Comprehensive Assessment and the JAR will be undertaken as part of the planning for the Corporate Plan which is currently under preparation. This will align with delivering "One Leicester" currently being supported by DeLoittes. This work should enhance the Council's ability to deliver the JAR action plan by the smarter more joined up use of resources and further integration of services across departments.

¹ The expected publication date as indicated in the timetable sent to us by Ofsted was 16th July.

2.3 The CPA will be replaced by the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) on 1st April 2009. The reports on the Corporate Assessment and the Joint Area Review provide timely advice in preparing for the forthcoming assessment framework.

3. Recommendations (or OPTIONS)

3.1 Cabinet is asked to note the findings of the Joint Area Review and the requirement to develop and implement a Joint Area Review Action Plan (see draft Action Plan attached).

4. Report

Background

4.1 The Children Act 2004 requires a Joint Area Review (JAR) to be conducted at the request of the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families in accordance with arrangements made by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools. This system-wide inspection covers all publicly-funded services for children and young people, including those that are directly managed or commissioned by the council, as well as services provided by health and youth justice services. The JAR also covers the leadership and management of services for children and young people. The main purpose of a JAR is to evaluate how well all services, taken together, improve outcomes, so that children and young people are healthy, safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and are well prepared to secure economic well-being.

Leicester's JAR

4.2 Leicester's JAR took place in January/February 2008. Led by Ofsted, the review was carried out by a team of inspectors from Ofsted, the Healthcare Commission, and the Audit Commission. The review was undertaken according to the requirements of the Framework for the Inspection of Children's Services. It took place in parallel with the corporate assessment of the local council by the Audit Commission and formed the children and young people's part of the Local Authority Performance Assessment (CPA). The Youth Offending Service (YOS) was inspected in December 2007, just prior to the JAR, by HM Inspectorate of Probation. Findings from the YOS inspection were incorporated into the JAR.

4.3 The JAR comprised 5 investigations: 3 core investigations (included in every Joint Area Review) and 2 additional investigations based on outcomes for children and young people in Leicester. The areas of investigation were:

Core investigations

- Safeguarding
- Outcomes for Looked after children and young people
- Outcomes for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

Additional investigations

- The impact of the partner's strategy in reducing teenage pregnancy and improving outcomes for young parents in West Leicester
- The impact of the 13-19 strategy in improving outcomes for young people.

The JAR also looked at the management of services and capacity to improve.

4.4 In the course of their inspection, the inspection team:

- read over 650 documents that were provided by the city council and its partners
- examined over 100 case files, relating to 10 cases held by the city council
- conducted over 45 interviews and 25 focus groups
- went on 24 visits
- met with over 450 people, including:
 - 50 parents and carers
 - more than 200 children and young people
 - colleagues from over 30 schools and further education and training providers
 - colleagues from around 35 organisations, including health, the voluntary and community sector and some local businesses

How the process was managed

4.5 To prepare for and manage the JAR, we established a programme consisting of six projects, which were:

- **Communication:** we recognised the importance of engaging all stakeholders in the JAR preparation process, and promoting a common understanding of our shared priorities, and vision for children and young people. Our communication strategy addressed the needs of a wide range of stakeholders, and methods included the JAR newsletter, JAR web site, a JAR briefing pack, pocket – sized guides re the CYPP Priorities and workshops and briefings. We received extremely positive feedback on our approach to communication from managers and practitioners across the partnership.
- **Case File Analysis:** we provided the inspectors with 100 cases on children and young people. These included 35 looked after children, 30 children or young people on the child protection register and 35 with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who were known to the Education Service. From these, the inspectors chose 10 cases to examine in depth, focussing on **referral, assessment, planning and review** processes and evidence of **the effectiveness of interagency working in achieving better outcomes for children and families with serious and complex needs**. Over 100 files from all the agencies working with the selected cases were collated for examination by the inspection team.
- **Data gathering and quality control:** Collecting accurate information about performance in key areas, to help us measure progress on the five outcomes.
- **Evidence collection:** Gathering evidence to demonstrate how we are making a difference to children and young people (the impact on outcomes), and where services have improved in response to the views of children and young people. **Good Practice Examples** were included in each issue of the JAR newsletter, each focussing on one of the 5 outcome themes of the Every Child Matters Framework.
- **Document library:** Collating key documents for the inspection; publishing an updated Children and Young People's Plan; reviewing and producing policy/procedural documents; and ensuring public information leaflets were up-to-date and accessible.
- **JAR logistics:** Preparing pre-inspection briefing, managing the inspection and co-ordinating a response to inspection findings. During and following the inspection, the

Lead Inspector commented positively on how smoothly the process ran and the evident high level of planning and preparation across the partnership.

- 4.6 To support and manage the JAR Programme, a Programme Manager was appointed with a small team, comprising 3 project officers and admin support. A JAR Steering Group with appropriate representation across the Partnership was established. This ensured that there was sufficient capability and capacity to complete the project to the required timescale and quality standard.

Summary of JAR findings

- 4.7 Feedback from the lead inspector noted that the inspection team found evidence of sound commitment and strong leadership by the LA and partners. In particular, they recognised that real efforts are being made to improve outcomes, through redesign and development of services and that the Partnership is moving in the right direction of travel. The inspectors also noted that much recent work is not reflected in the JAR report, as the inspection focuses on impact, and where services are now.
- 4.8 In summary, the JAR concluded that services that safeguard children and young people in Leicester are of good quality, children in care are provided with good services, and the council and partners have good ambitions for all children and young people. However, they found that work to improve the educational attainment of students age 13 to 19, and to reduce the numbers of teenage pregnancies and improve outcomes for young parents in the west of the city needs to improve.

Each section of the report identifies evidence of positive impact on outcomes and areas for development:

Main findings

- 4.9 The main findings of the joint area review are as follows:

4.9.1 Safeguarding

Arrangements to safeguard children and young people are good, and referrals receive a timely response with a good proportion of initial and very good proportion of core assessments completed on time. The work of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is outstanding and offers a strong lead, and partners work effectively together at strategic and operational levels to deliver good services to children and families. All agencies ensure that recruitment procedures protect children well. An effective child accident prevention strategy has reduced the numbers of children and young people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents. Action has been taken to reduce first-time offending significantly, but re-offending rates remain too high. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) provide insufficient out-patient services. There has been slow progress in implementing the Common Assessment Framework.

4.9.2 Services for looked after children

Services for looked after children are good. The number is relatively low and reducing and a high proportion live in family placements. Placement stability is very good. The inspection of the council's fostering service judged it as excellent. Young people have good opportunities to contribute to strategic and operational changes and to their reviews, which are timely. Good educational support is provided, the number of looked after young people attaining one A*–G grade at GCSE is high and increasing numbers are attending

higher education. The high number of fixed-term exclusions from school contributes to a poor attendance rate, and other educational outcomes, including the number attaining five or more A*–C grades at GCSE, require improvement. Looked after children have good access to mental health services. The offending rate of looked after children is slightly higher than comparators, although numbers are small. Action continues to be effective in increasing the number of looked after children who have a qualified social worker. The number of children adopted is good.

4.9.3 Children and young people who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD)

The contribution of local services to improving outcomes for children and young people who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is adequate. Multi-agency assessment of needs and services for young children are good, as are the specialist teaching services. Children and young people make at least satisfactory progress at school and many make good progress. Outcomes at post-16 are good. However, while the proportion who are not in education, employment or training has decreased, this figure still remains too high. There is too little specialist therapy support. The evaluation of the effectiveness of provision is insufficient and strategic and action planning is underdeveloped.

4.9.4 Teenage pregnancy and support to young parents

Teenage pregnancy rates remain too high and there has been insufficient improvement in health outcomes for young parents in West Leicester. The newly established Teenage Partnership Executive and strong partnership working at strategic and operational levels demonstrate recent prioritisation to drive improvements in these areas. There is a wide range of support, care and advice for young parents and expectant mothers and a widening of the range and quality of preventative education in teenage pregnancy hotspot areas. However, the partnership lacks robust local data to inform planning and evaluation of the impact of its preventive work.

4.9.5 The impact of the 13-19 strategy in improving outcomes for young people

Standards and achievement at Key Stages 3 and 4 are too low. There is a clear strategic focus on raising standards and aspirations for all young people. Good partnership work supports good curriculum development and delivery that promotes retention and progression in education. There is a wide range of targeted support arrangements to help young people succeed. The numbers of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) is reducing, national and local area agreement targets have been met, but NEET figures remain too high. Effective work supports and retains young people in learning, and young people in post-16 provision show good or better progress and attainment. Coordination and evaluation of strategies are insufficiently robust. Target setting at strategic and local level is not sufficiently challenging.

4.9.6 Service management and capacity to improve

Ambitions for children and young people are good and based on inclusive consultation and needs analysis. Leadership by senior management across the partnership and the lead member is strong and is driving action to address areas of underperformance. Priorities are good, owned by the partnership and supported by the redirection of resources towards areas of underperformance. Partnership working is strong and adds value, achieving sustainable improvements to key areas such as the safeguarding of children and young people. There is a proactive approach to learning. Some strategies are new and have yet to make an impact. Capacity, though adequate, is not sufficient to ensure a good rate of service improvement in some areas. Performance management is

adequate and improving but is not consistently driving service improvement. Overall value for money is adequate, but systems to deliver value for money across the partnership are insufficiently developed.

4.9.7 The grades for Leicester are in the table below:

4: outstanding; 3: good; 2: adequate; 1: inadequate

	Local services overall
Safeguarding	3
Looked after children	3
Learning difficulties and/or disabilities	2
Service management	2
Capacity to improve	2

4.9.8 Additional Investigations

- The impact of the partners' strategy in reducing teenage pregnancy and improving outcomes for young parents in West Leicester City Council was judged inadequate
- The impact of the 13-19 strategy in improving outcomes for young people was judged inadequate

JAR Recommendations

4.10 The JAR made a number of recommendations for further action to improve our service delivery to children and young people. These are detailed below:

4.10.1 For immediate action

The local partnership should:

- ensure that an appropriate way is found for the successful dissemination of the findings of this report to children and young people in the area
- review its provision and reprioritise action to reduce the number of vulnerable young people, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, who are not in education, employment or training
- develop a performance management system for school improvement which is fit for purpose
- ensure that all looked after children have qualified social workers allocated to them
- implement the Teenage Pregnancy National Support Team recommendations in order to improve the quality of data and analysis to inform action to reduce teenage pregnancies.

4.10.2 For action over the next six months

The local partnership should:

- develop a coordinated strategy and detailed action plans to coordinate and improve services for children and young people who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- improve the evaluation of provision for children and young people who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and use this information to improve the progress they make
- reduce the rate of offending by looked after young people and re-offending in the 13–18 age group
- set clear and challenging targets at partnership, school and individual levels which will improve the educational progress and the attainment of young people between the ages of 11 and 16
- establish a clear focus on value for money through strategic commissioning and service planning across the partnership
- tackle problems of capacity through joint workforce planning and development
- set challenging targets for service improvement across the partnership and establish a robust system of service management across the partnership
- ensure the sufficient availability of specialist therapy service provision for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- increase the capacity of out-patient services in CAMHS.

4.10.3 **For action in the longer term**

The local partnership should:

- improve health outcomes for young parents and children
- improve educational attainment by looked after children and young people.

Next steps

4.11 The Statutory duties on the Council following the issue of a JAR inspection report are set out in The Children Act 2004 (Joint Area Reviews) Regulations 2005 (SI 2005/1973). The Council is responsible for publishing the report locally, within 30 working days, by sending a copy to local partners, a local radio station and a local paper, by making a copy available and by supplying a copy on demand.

The Council must prepare an action plan in response to the report's recommendations, consulting partners, and must publish the plan in the same way as local publication of the report; this must be done within 70 working days. Therefore we must publish our action plan by 9th September 2008.

We have sent the JAR report to all LCYPSP members and posted the report on the JAR website. An action plan is being agreed (See appendix 1 – draft action plan). Work is underway to identify required actions, with leads, and success criteria.

Review of the Children and Young People's Plan and Annual Performance Assessment

- 4.12 There is a statutory duty to undertake an annual review of the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) or draft a new plan. We are also required to submit a self assessment to Ofsted as part of the Annual Performance Assessment (APA) which must clearly indicate the specific contributions made by the councils' own services to outcomes and include grades for these. In 2008, councils have the option to submit their CYPP review instead of an APA as long as they meet the APA requirements.
- 4.13 We have recently completed the review of Leicester's CYPP and submitted this as our APA self-assessment on the 26th June. The review has been informed by the JAR findings and it is proposed that any recommendations and actions arising from the review be incorporated into the JAR action plan so that we have a single action plan for children and young people's services and the partnership.

5. FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

- 5.1.1 To address the recommendations arising from the JAR, additional resources will be required and existing resources may need to be used differently. Resourcing issues will be considered in more detail as the Action Plan is prepared.
- 5.1.2 There has already been an estimation of the costs to deliver the TLL Action Plan (detailed in the report to Cabinet 14.7.08). Appendix 2 details actual and forecast additional costs.

Colin Sharpe, Head of Finance and Efficiency, CYPS, ext .29 7750"

5.2 Legal Implications

The report identifies the legal context and relevant statutory duties on the Local Authority:

- 5.2.1 Section 4.1 confirms the JAR report was prepared pursuant to Children Act 2004
- 5.2.2 Section 4.8 sets out the next steps required pursuant to Children Act 2004 (Joint Area Reviews) Regulations 2005 (SI 2005/1973)
- 5.2.3 Section 4.9 confirms the requirement annually to review or redraft the CYPP plan
- 5.2.4 The JAR findings accord with the statutory duties on local authorities to work in partnership with key partners and stakeholders
- to achieve the outcomes for children specified in part 2 Children Act 2004 and supporting regulations and guidance and
 - to provide targeted youth support to ensure the needs of vulnerable young people are identified and met in line with wide reforms currently being introduced by the government through legislation and guidance.

Cathy Healy, team Leader Community Services Law, x 6712

6. Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph References Within Supporting information
Equal Opportunities	Yes	The report addresses action which will improve outcomes for children, young people and families, especially the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.
Policy	yes	See above
Sustainable and Environmental	Yes	See above
Crime and Disorder	Yes	See above
Human Rights Act	Yes	See above
Elderly/People on Low Income	yes	See above

7. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

Joint Area Review, Leicester City Children’s Services Authority Area: Review of services for children and young people
 Leicester Children and Young People’s Plan Review, 2008

8. Report Author

Andrew Bunyan
 Interim Corporate Director
 Children & Young People’s Services
 x 29 7710

Susan Harrison
 Service Manager
 Children’s Policy and Planning
 x 29 6724

Key Decision	No
Reason	N/A
Appeared in Forward Plan	N/A
Executive or Council Decision	Executive (Cabinet)

Appendix 1 – see attached JAR Action Plan.

Appendix 2

Table 1 TLL Actual and Forecast Additional Costs (by financial year) November 2007 – Summer Term 2009

TLL ACTUAL & FORECAST COSTS All figures in £000	2007/08 Actual (Nov 07 – Mar 08)	2008/09 Forecast (Apr 08 – Mar 09)	2009/10 Forecast (Apr 09 – Aug 09)	Total Forecast (Nov 07 – Aug 09)
<u>Themes, Project Team & Learning Services</u>				
Early Years and Foundation Stage	20	413	172	604
Primary (KS1 and KS2)	96	507	78	681
Key Stage 4	153	690	167	1,010
Leadership Development & CPD	34	807	314	1,155
Behaviour and Attendance	0	426	52	478
Performance Management	50	873	150	1,073
Total of Themes	352	3,717	934	5,003
TLL Project Team	Charged to CYPS	440	150	590
Project Lead and School Improvement Advisers in Learning Services	78	700	300	1,078
Total TLL Plan (Excluding School Improvement)	430	4,857	1,384	6,671
<u>School Improvement</u>				
Executive Heads, Associate Heads and Lead Teachers in Schools	39 + charged to CYPS	700	200	939
Federations and Collaborative Working	0	400	150	550
Total School Improvement	39	1,100	350	1,489
GRAND TOTAL	469	5,957	1,734	8,160