Training and Development Needs of Leaders of Children's Services

York Consulting LLP

department for
children, schools and families

Training and Development Needs of Leaders of Children's Services

York Consulting LLP

CONTENTS

ANNEXES

Annex A – Method, Sample and Study Issues
Annex B - Skills, Knowledge and Behaviours Framework
Annex C – Models of Change

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

1. This report presents the findings of a study undertaken by York Consulting LLP (YCL) for the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) entitled, "*The Training and Development Needs of Senior Local Leaders and Managers of Children's Services.*" The research was conducted between October 2007 and February 2008.

2. The Every Child Matters (ECM) policy requires professionals from across all sectors supporting children and young people to work collectively as one workforce. To achieve this vision, the roles and remits of many local leaders have undergone a period of significant change. The traditional view of leaders as champions of a specific service area no longer holds true. Leaders are responsible for delivering change, which for many has required both a broadening of knowledge of other sectors, and a new style of leadership to meet the specific demands of integrated working. The study sought to understand the development needs of local leaders and how these were being met.

3. The recently published National Development Framework[1] recognises that professionals working in partner organisations, such as health services, youth justice and the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sectors have important skills which are transferable to the local authority children's services context, and vice versa. The research sought to understand the structural and developmental issues which may influence the realisation of this vision.

4. The study involved six in-depth local area case studies including interviews with the Director of Children's Services (DCS), assistant directors of children's services, members of the Children's Trust, the Chief Executive of the local authority (LA) and the Lead Member for Children's Services (LMCS). A further sixteen interviews were carried out with DCSs over the telephone.

The Skills, Knowledge and Behaviours Required by DCSs

5. The study highlighted the importance of strong leadership underpinned by a number of personal qualities and values necessary for effective delivery of the DCS role. The qualities identified were generally similar to those that might be expected for other local authority leadership roles. However, one in particular was considered critical for the DCS role - the passion for the children's rights and entitlements agenda.

6. Stakeholders described a range of professional characteristics (or behaviours) which they considered to be important. These included:

    - displaying a personal and professional demeanour which commands the confidence of others;
    - the ability to anticipate, manage and take risks;
    - working collaboratively and recognising and respecting the skills of others;
    - a commitment to developing others;
    - ability to remain robust under pressure, and inspire others to do the same.

7. The knowledge, skills and abilities identified related to seven core themes:

    - shaping the future;

---

[1] DCSF (2008) Leading and Managing Children's Services in England: A national professional development framework

- leading the partnership;
- strategic management;
- the corporate and political dimension;
- safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- intelligent commissioning;
- workforce development.

8. In some case study areas, it was clear that specific professional experience within the education or social care sector was a key factor influencing appointments. However, it was highlighted that this was not specifically covered in either the national guidance on the role[2] or the Professional Development Framework[3].

9. Other issues which were considered to influence effective delivery of the role were raised by the DCSs consulted. These were:

- the corporate and political demands of the role;
- the mismatch between the statutory responsibilities and decision making powers;
- the expectations associated with the size and breadth of the role;
- the emphasis of responsibilities across all ECM outcomes.

10. The majority of DCSs consulted did not see a significant difference between the skill requirements of today's DCSs and the future generation. Nevertheless some did highlight that the role is evolving to become increasingly similar to that of a Chief Executive, meaning that, in the future, specific professional knowledge may become less important than is currently considered to be the case.

The Support Needs and Opportunities of DCSs

11. Identifying the development needs of the DCSs was something of a challenge, particularly for those that had been in post for some time. To be appointed, DCSs clearly need to have evidenced that they are effective leaders and able to secure the confidence of a wide range of stakeholders. Nevertheless, consultations with current DCSs did highlight some common areas of development associated with knowledge and leadership when taking up the position:

- given that many DCSs currently come from a specific professional background, gaining experience of the sectors they were less familiar with was initially important;

- the integration agenda means that DCSs' attention is predominantly focused on issues such as: developing robust lines of accountability; outcome based management; pooling budgets; joint appointments; and commissioning services. These represented new challenges and have therefore required strong leadership skills;

- some consultees identified that, for them, leading the partnership required an additional set of skills and a change in style.

12. Most support needs identified by the DCSs consulted had been met through 'on the job' opportunities. Examples included opportunities provided by the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS); peer networks; coaching support; local themed groups; and work shadowing. However, access to such opportunities was often opportunistic and locally sourced. Many DCSs considered that access to development opportunities could be better coordinated to meet specific needs and address common issues. This was particularly true in relation to:

---

[2] http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/15B8D6CB4AAA0C6EFCBE30CFEFD428D6.pdf

[3] [3] DCSF (2008) Leading and Managing Children's Services in England: A national professional development framework

- addressing knowledge gaps of children's services outside of local authority provision;
- developing skills to support commissioning;
- improving access to and coordination of coaching arrangements.

Changing Roles of Leaders of Children's Services (excluding the DCS)

13. The study has highlighted that the roles of many Tier 2 and Tier 3 leaders have changed significantly as a result of a widened remit for children's services. All of the six case study areas had undertaken some form of restructuring in response to the ECM agenda and the move towards Children's Trust arrangements. This had involved two types of restructuring: firstly at the Tier 2 level, reflecting broadening roles for these leaders; and secondly at Tier 3 level via the introduction of locality based multi-disciplinary teams.

14. The structural changes had resulted in the following outcomes for local leaders:

- increased partnership working – new ways of working with a wider cohort of professionals which demands a more outward looking approach;

- increased involvement in political/corporate agendas – dealing with elected members and engaging with corporate developments across the LA;

- responsibility for a wider management portfolio – expanding remit for leaders;

- the demands of a more strategic role - taking more responsibility for articulating and taking forward the vision.

15. Leaders of children's services outside of the local authority had also seen changes to their role, through the increasing demands of partnership working. For some professionals, the changes were more significant as their roles had recently been brought under local authority structures.

Development Needs of Leaders of Children's Services (excluding the DCS)

16. To meet the demands of partnership working, all Tier 2 leaders and their health, justice and PVI equivalents consulted in the case studies identified knowledge gaps associated with the children's service areas they were not currently directly engaged with.

17. Many Tier 2 leaders working within LA structures had also seen changes to the remit of their roles. The key development areas associated with these changes were both developing specific knowledge of new sectors they were taking responsibility for, and developing the skills associated with strong leadership.

18. Leaders' knowledge of children's services areas outside direct previous experience has been developed via the following opportunities:

- professional development opportunities:
  - work shadowing;
  - mentoring and action learning sets;
  - accessing cross-service training and development opportunities;
  - conferences and ADCS events;
  - Virtual Staff College (VSC) Seminars;

- 'on the job' training opportunities:
  - multi-agency strategic management teams;
  - deputising for the DCS;
  - personal networks.

19. Development of leadership skills had been facilitated by involvement in: 'visioning', change management and leadership development opportunities; leadership qualifications, such as MBAs; and 'on the job' opportunities, for example deputising for the DCS, corporate projects and secondment opportunities.

20. Health professionals and other children's service professionals that had been brought within local authority structures through developments in integrated services identified some additional development needs. These were understanding the business and culture of LA services; and developing skills and knowledge to deal with the political demands of the role. Opportunities which supported the development of these professionals were:

   * phased induction processes;
   * secondments to the LA prior to taking on their new role;
   * sitting on multi-agency management teams;
   * shadowing Tier 3 managers;
   * using peer networks;
   * visiting other LAs where non-LA managers had successfully made the transfer;
   * leadership development programmes;
   * Action Learning Sets;
   * cross-organisation training and development.

21. However, whilst opportunities had been accessed by LA leaders in all case study areas, there was variability in the extent to which they were part of a long term development strategy, and tailored to individual need. More often than not, opportunities had been sourced on an ad hoc base in response to pressing issues, rather than as a longer term leadership development strategy. Concerns were raised that where opportunities were available, capacity and time issues mean that Tier 2 leaders and equivalents commonly faced challenges in accessing them. This was a growing issue in light of expanding remits.

22. The study also identified that children's workforce development strategies did not, on the whole, focus on the development needs of senior leaders. Where they did, they tended to incorporate local authority leaders only, rather than those outside of LA funded children's services. Most stakeholders considered that benefits could be gained by improved coordination of the range of development opportunities, with increased cross-region and cross sector working, including:
   * networking;
   * work shadowing;
   * joint training;
   * leadership programmes.

Succession Planning: Issues to Consider

23. The current pathways to the DCS role have predominantly been from local authority positions, either in education or social care and there are currently few candidates coming forward for positions from non-local authority backgrounds. This suggests some barriers (either developmental, structural or both) which may be limiting the potential to achieve the intended diversity of the profession.

24. Whilst stakeholders acknowledged that leaders from other sectors could potentially become a DCS, concerns were expressed that the immediate knowledge demands of the role may be too great without appropriate professional experience. In addition, many of the core skills that the current DCSs considered to be critical to effective delivery of the role had been acquired through their prior experience working within LA based professions.

25.   In order to encourage potential candidates from non-local authority backgrounds, it will be important to develop opportunities which will provide the necessary experience. This is particularly relevant in relation to developing the skills to deal with the corporate and political demands of the role, which can only be gained through local authority experience.

26.   There is a range of challenges other than the skills issues presented earlier which will influence the development of effective succession planning. These are:

- local perceptions about knowledge requirements for potential leaders;
- the existence of succession planning strategies;
- the ability to attract future leaders due to issues with pensions, salaries and benefits.

Recommendations

27.   The core aim of the research was to "*provide an information base on which DCSF will develop policy on the best ways to support the training and professional development of the senior leaders and managers of children's services in local authorities[4]."* Readers should recognise that the research was not tasked with developing fully costed and specific recommendations on how to address the issues presented. The suggestions made here should therefore be considered as options for DCSF to explore further in conjunction with partners.

28.   The key issues raised by the research which require further attention are:

- the role and remit of the DCS, not only as leader of children's services but also as a member of the corporate team;

- access to relevant development opportunities which will support Tier 2 leaders and leaders of children's services outside of the local authority;

- DCSs' access to one to one support.

Short Term Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The findings of this research should be considered in any review undertaken in relation to the DCS role (DCSF/ADCS).

Recommendation 2: Engineer both national and local debate on the challenges associated with achieving the vision of increased professional diversity of DCSs (ADCS/LGA).

Recommendation 3: Undertake a review of workforce development strategies in relation to senior leaders to establish the extent to which their needs are incorporated into local plans (CWDC/Government Offices (GO)/Children's Trusts).

Recommendation 4: DCSs to prepare for the expected Commissioning Support Programme (DCSs/Children's Trusts/regional ADCS).

Medium Term Recommendations

Recommendation 5: To support professionals entering senior roles, clarify the parameters of the required professional knowledge and consider mechanisms to support access to information (CWDC/CWN).

---

[4] DCSF: Research specification EOR/SBU/2007085

Recommendation 6: Local areas to undertake development needs analysis of senior leaders (children's trust – workforce development managers).

Recommendation 7: Provide a range of cross sector development opportunities for senior leaders both within and outside of local authorities (Children's Trusts/regional ADCS networks/CWDC/GO).

Recommendation 8: Provide opportunities for one to one support for DCSs who consider they would benefit from it (ADCS/Regional ADCS/GO).

Recommendation 9: Partners working in Children's Trusts should develop succession planning strategies to support progression to the DCS role (Children's Trusts/regional ADCS networks).

Long Term Recommendations

Recommendation 10: Consider the potential for the development of a National Centre for Leadership of Children's Services to serve as a centre of excellence for the profession (Expert Group/ADCS/CWN).

Recommendation 11: Further explore the structural barriers which will influence the possibility of increasing the professional diversity of senior leaders. Explore potential solutions to address the barriers identified (DCSF/CWDC).

1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   This report presents the findings of a study undertaken by York Consulting LLP (YCL) for the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) entitled, "*The Training and Development Needs of Senior Local Leaders and Managers of Children's Services.*" The research was conducted between October 2007 and February 2008.

1.2   The purposes of the research were to:

- *provide an information base on which DCSF will develop policy on the best ways to support the training and professional development of the senior leaders and managers of children's services in local authorities;*

- *help inform the content of the leadership and management section of the Children's Workforce Strategy Action Plan[5].*

1.3   The research was managed by a steering group of representatives from the Children's Workforce Network (CWN), the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC), the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) and the DCSF.

1.4   The CWDC commissioned a piece of research alongside this study which explored the development needs of middle and junior leaders. The findings from the two projects will be considered in parallel and alongside the Aiming High strategy[6].

CONTEXT

1.5   Every Child Matters (ECM) introduced significant changes to the way in which children's services are planned and delivered.   The Children Act 2004 placed a duty on every Children's Services Authority[7] (CSA) in England to appoint a Director of Children's Services (DCS) and designate a Lead Member (LM) for Children's Services. The aim was to provide a clear line of accountability for Local Authority (LA) children's services.

---

[5] DCSF: Research specification EOR/SBU/2007085. The Action Plan was subsequently published as DCSF (2008) Building Brighter Futures: Next Steps for the Children's Workforce
[6] http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/publications/tenyearyouthstrategy/
[7] Section 63 of the Children Act 2004 defines a Children's Services Authority (CSA) in England as: a county council in England; a metropolitan district council; a non-metropolitan district council for an area where there is no county council; a London borough council; the Common Council of the City of London and the Council of the Isles of Scilly.

1.6 The DCS and LM are key to driving change to secure better outcomes for children and young people. They are responsible for the functions of the CSA, which include building and sustaining the partnerships on which Children's Trusts depend. As is the case in all organisations, effective leadership is recognised as one of the key factors for success. However, this is not the sole responsibility of the DCS. Strong leadership across the whole children's services agenda is crucial.

1.7 For many local leaders and managers working within children's services, professional roles and remits have recently been subject to a period of significant change. The current focus on developing Integrated Youth Support Services (IYSS) has reinforced this, requiring leaders to look above their traditional professional parapet, broaden their knowledge of other sectors, and implement a changed approach to leadership.

1.8 In light of this, the aim of the study was to provide an evidence base on the development needs of leaders and understand how they accessed support for professional development. The recently published National Professional Development Framework[8] provides detail on the specific skills, knowledge and behaviours relevant to all local leaders and managers of children's services. This document was used to drive the research.

FOCI OF THE STUDY

1.9 The role of the DCS formed a core part of this study. The reasons for this were threefold. Firstly, the DCS plays a critical role in facilitating the leadership of partner services; secondly, because the core skills and abilities required to effectively deliver the DCS role should be mirrored in the leaders of the other relevant services; and thirdly because the role is relatively new and had not previously been examined in a national study. The research also examined the development needs of service leaders both *within* and *outside* of authority funded services, taking into account the changes to their roles.

1.10 A key issue considered throughout the study was that the development needs of today's leaders of children's services may well be different to those of future generations. Currently, most DCSs and Tier 2 officers have progressed from a LA background in either education or social services. However, in the future this may not always be the case. The National Development Framework[9] recognises that those working in partner organisations, including health services, youth justice and the private, voluntary and independent sectors (PVI) have important skills which are transferable to the LA children's services context, and vice versa. The study sought to understand some of the issues, both structural and developmental, which may influence the realisation of this vision.

---

[8] DCSF (2008) Leading and Managing Children's Services in England: A national professional development framework
[9] *Ibid*

STUDY OBJECTIVES AND APPROACH

1.11 The study was charged with fulfilling the following five outcomes:

- an analysis of the skills, knowledge and behaviours required by **current and future** DCSs;

- an analysis of the **training and development needs**, opportunities and gaps of **current DCSs** and **recommendations** on how these can be met;

- an analysis of the **current roles of those working at 2nd and 3rd Tier levels** in local authorities;

- an analysis of the **current training and development** needs of children's services managers from a range of services within and outside of the LA;

- **succession planning strategies** for children's services managers from a range of services within and outside of LA.

1.12 The research involved six in-depth local area cases studies including interviews with the DCS, Tier 2 leaders and their Children's Trust equivalents, members of the Children's Trust, the Chief Executive of the LA and the lead member for children's services (LMCS). A further sixteen interviews were carried out with DCSs over the telephone. Around 100 stakeholders were consulted. More details of the method, sample and issues in carrying out the research are presented in **Annex A, Method, Sample and Study Issues**.

1.13 Readers should be aware that in order to limit the burden of the research, most of the DCSs involved in the telephone interviews agreed to take part in the research through their involvement in the ADCS's Workforce Development Policy Committee. This may have influenced some of the findings of the research.

PROFILE OF LEADERS OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

DCSs

1.14 In seeking to identify development needs, it is important to understand the professional backgrounds of DCSs. The National Professional Development Framework recognises that most DCSs come from a LA background in either education or social services[10]. However, the nature and length of this experience varies across the group, as does their professional career prior to taking up the post. This will clearly impact on development needs.

1.15 Analysis of the key characteristics of the 22 DCSs in our study revealed that all had progressed from senior LA leadership positions, of which:

- sixteen had most recently held a senior local authority position in education/learning;

---

[10] DCSF (2008) Leading and Managing Children's Services in England: A national professional development framework

- six had most recently held a senior local authority position in social care.

1.16 Other characteristics which provide more detail on the profile of the DCSs consulted are as follows:

- thirteen were female and nine were male;

- eight had been internal appointments, fourteen external;

- fifteen had been in post for two or more years, three between one and two years and four less than one year.

1.17 Whilst we did not specifically ask about age, evidence provided in the consultations suggests that the females consulted were typically younger than the males. Further analysis of the data revealed no specific correlation between other characteristics reviewed.

Professional Route to Position of DCS

1.18 DCSs were asked to provide details of their professional career, and highlight specific opportunities that had supported their progression to the position of DCS.

1.19 The following themes emerged[11]:

- a number of the DCSs highlighted their previous significant experience of leading and managing organisational change, which was crucial in their current role;

- a majority of the DCSs consulted had clearly had a very mixed career, moving around both local areas and roles - this exposure to a range of different professions and environments was considered to have provided them with a rounded view of the children's services agenda as well as exposure to different political contexts;

- one third of the DCSs expressed the importance of the multi-agency demands of their earlier professional career. As one DCS commented, *"I qualified as a teacher and worked part time as a youth worker so have always worked with health, social services and the voluntary sector on kids with difficulties. Children's Services moved in my direction." (*DCS)

- being able to demonstrate experience and effectiveness in dealing with the political demands of the role was considered very important by a number of DCSs. This was particularly the case for those working in an area where no party had overall control (NOC);

- a small number highlighted their prior experience in leading partnership working as a key factor supporting their progression;

- four DCSs reported that undertaking a professional management qualification, such as an MBA, earlier in their career had helped their progression[12].

---

[11] Whilst it is not possible to definitely state the number of DCSs each of the above applies to, the themes are ordered from those which were most commonly cited, to those which were less common.
[12] Caution. This does not mean that only four of the DCSs consulted had a professional management qualification. DCSs were asked to outline their career history and which factors had supported them in progressing to the role. Four cited a management qualification as key.

1.20 This picture illustrates that are mixed pathways to the DCS position. However, the make-up of the current sample indicates that having senior LA experience has so far been of critical importance. This, along with exposure to a range of services covered by the agenda, and experience of managing and leading change has supported the progression of the DCSs involved in this research.

Profile of Other Leaders of Children's Services - LA

1.21 **Table 1.1** provides an overview of the leaders (Tier 2 and equivalent) spoken to during the course of the consultation process. Five Tier 3 managers (workforce development or human resource managers) were also interviewed.

Table 1.1 Senior Leaders: Interviewees	
LA senior leaders (Tier 2)	**Partner managers**
Education 11	Health 6
Social Care 6	Voluntary Sector 4
Local Government 3	Police 2
	Other 4*
Total 20	**Total 16**

* Other – Chief Executive Children's Fund; Government Office Representative; LSC and Connexions

1.22 As Table 1.1 shows, most of the LA Tier 2 leaders were from traditional LA backgrounds. Other interesting characteristics to note are as follows:

- over half (11) had a background in education, six in social care and three in local government;

- most of the LA leaders consulted (15) had been in post for less than two years. This meant that the majority of these Tier 2 leaders had been appointed since the current DCS came into post;

- slightly more were internal appointments (9), than external appointments (7)[13].

Profile of Leaders of Children's Services outside of the LA

1.23 **Table 1.2** provides an overview of the partner managers spoken to during the course of the study. A total of sixteen non-LA leaders were consulted. Only one was employed within the children's services directorate. A further consultee from the Primary Care Trust (PCT) was about to move over to a post within the LA.

---

[13] This information was unknown for four interviewees

1.24 Nevertheless, consultees did identify a small number of leaders at Tier 2 who were from non-LA backgrounds[14]. These included staff from backgrounds in the PCT, Connexions and the Youth Offending Service. In one of the case-study authorities two Assistant Directors (Tier 2) had been originally seconded from Connexions and the PCT and both were now permanent Children's Services employees.

1.25

1.26

1.27

1.28

Table 1.2 Partner Managers: Interviewees		
Health (6)	**Voluntary sector (4)**	**Police (2)**
Director of Public Health	Director of Care Forum	Chief Inspector, Safer Neighbourhoods
Head of CYP Provider Services PCT	Community & Voluntary Services Strategic Manager	Deputy Chief Superintendent
Strategic Chief Executive Health Board	Barnardo's Operational Level Manager	
Chief Nurse & Director of Women's & Children's Commissioning PCT	Training & Network Manager, Community Engagement Network/ Council for Voluntary Services	
PCT Director		
Director of Provider Services		

REPORT STRUCTURE

1.29 The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- **Section 2** presents the Skills, Knowledge and Behaviours required by DCSs;

- **Section 3** discusses the support needs and opportunities available to DCSs;

- **Section 4** consider the changing roles of leaders of children's services;

- **Section 5** examines the support needs and opportunities available to leaders of children's services, excluding DCSs;

- **Section 6** considers the findings of the research in relation to succession planning;

- **Section 7** presents our recommendations.

1.30 The annexes include:

---

[14] We recognise that the term Tier 2 is not used for those outside of the local authority. However, for the purposes of this report the term has been used to refer to Tier 2 equivalents working in non local authority settings (i.e. senior managers).

- **Annex A** – Method, Sample and Study Issues;
- **Annex B** - Skills, Knowledge and Behaviours Framework;
- **Annex C** – Models of Change.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

2   THE SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND BEHAVIOURS REQUIRED BY DCSs

The Skills, Knowledge, Behaviours Required by DCSs

- The study highlighted the importance of strong leadership underpinned by a number of personal qualities and values necessary for effective delivery of the DCS role. The qualities identified were generally similar to those that might be expected for other local authority leadership roles. However, one in particular was considered critical for the DCS role - the passion for the children's rights and entitlements agenda.

- Stakeholders described a range of professional characteristics (or behaviours) which they considered to be important. These included:

  - displaying a personal and professional demeanour which commands the confidence of others;
  - the ability to anticipate, manage and take risks;
  - working collaboratively and recognising and respecting the skills of others;
  - a commitment to developing others;
  - ability to remain robust under pressure, and inspire others to do the same.

- The knowledge, skills and abilities identified related to seven core themes:

  - shaping the future;
  - leading the partnership;
  - strategic management;
  - the corporate and political dimension;
  - safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
  - intelligent commissioning;
  - workforce development.

- In some case study areas, it was clear that specific professional experience within the education or social care sector was a key factor influencing appointments. However, it was highlighted that this was not specifically covered in either the national guidance on the role15 or the Professional Development Framework.

- Other issues which were considered to influence effective delivery of the role were raised by the DCSs consulted.   These were:

  - the corporate and political demands of the role;
  - the mismatch between the statutory responsibilities and decision making powers;
  - the expectations associated with the size and breadth of the role;
  - the emphasis of responsibilities across all ECM outcomes.

- The majority of DCSs consulted did not see a significant difference between the skill requirements of today's DCSs and the future generation. Nevertheless some did highlight that the role is evolving to become increasingly similar to that of a Chief Executive, meaning that, in the future, specific professional knowledge may become less important than is currently considered to be the

---

15 http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/15B8D6CB4AAA0C6EFCBE30CFEFD428D6.pdf

The Skills, Knowledge, Behaviours Required by DCSs
case.

2.1 The study highlights the importance of strong leadership skills underpinned by personal qualities associated with delivering the DCS role. It also shows that the National Professional Development Framework provides a good overview of the skills and knowledge required to deliver the DCS role. However, the study also identified that there are a number of issues not explicitly represented in published policy documents and/or that require further consideration[16].

CURRENT DCSs: SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND BEHAVIOURS

2.2 It is widely recognised that the demands placed on DCSs are significant: the role is pivotal in leading the Children's Trust and driving the ECM agenda in the local area; the breadth of the sectors involved requires detailed understanding of the workings of numerous sectors; the subtleties of how the DCS approaches the role and manages the political relationships are equally important. In this section we aim to disentangle the multiple demands of the role to define the different values, characteristics, skills, and knowledge required.

Personal Qualities and Values

2.3 The personal qualities and values which influence how DCSs behave was considered particularly important by the stakeholders consulted. The DCS is a highly visible role, responsible for inspiring others to commit to change to improve outcomes for children and young people. A synthesis of the views from across the case study areas is provided in the following list of qualities and values. There was a strong sense that these values cannot be learnt. They are what motivate the DCS in their everyday work.

Personal Qualities and Values
• A passion for the children's rights and entitlements agenda
• High levels of motivation, enthusiasm, commitment and flexibility
• A high degree of probity and integrity
• Strong commitment to public service
• Display empathy, honesty, impartiality and respect for others
• Celebrate diversity and promote social inclusion and equality of opportunity
• Exercise a high degree of self-awareness and knowledge limitations

2.4 Consultees considered that the key differentiator between the DSC role, as compared to other local authority leadership roles, was the passion for the children's rights and entitlements agenda. The following quotes illustrate this point.

> *"It was the enthusiasm, passion and child centred vision which the chosen candidate demonstrated that led to their appointment. After a long day of interviewing, we sat bolt upright."* (LMCS)

---

[16] *ibid*

*"All the leadership qualities are very important, but our DCS talks
non-stop about the vision for children. It's clearly what drives them
and brings others along too." ((LMCS)*

2.5 Stakeholders considered that these qualities needed to be demonstrated in every
aspect of the DCS's professional life in order to secure the commitment of others,
and maintain the drive behind transformational change.

Professional Characteristics

2.6 Stakeholders described a range of professional characteristics which they
considered were important for the DCS to display in their approach to delivering the
role. These differ from the core values as they are specific actions which the DCS
has to demonstrate and deliver. Analysis of evidence from across the case studies
provides the following critical professional characteristics demanded of DCSs.

Professional Characteristics
• Lead by example with an empowering and open style
• Command respect through confident, professional demeanour
• Inspire self and others
• Be credible and resilient
• Drive to seek creative solutions to solve problems
• Work collaboratively
• Communicate clear purpose and direction
• Act and think corporately and collaboratively
• Deal with ambiguity and change
• Develop self and others
• Act as a strong reflective, lateral and analytical thinker
• Act courageously when facing tough decisions
• Anticipate, manage and take risks
• Challenge, support and facilitate others to move outside of their comfort zone
• Remain robust under pressure and be able to work to tight deadlines

2.7 Whilst these characteristics can be commonly found in literature on leadership and management theory, stakeholders highlighted why some of these were so important for DCSs:

- consultees stressed the critical importance of *displaying a personal and professional demeanour which commands the confidence of others*. The importance of securing the confidence of headteachers and elected members was highlighted as critical in being able to deliver change. This was considered to be an even greater challenge for DCSs with less experience in the education sector;

- the ability to *anticipate and manage risks* was considered to be key. However, equally important was the *capacity to take risks* to drive significant change. This was considered to be a characteristic which does not sit easily with some professionals working in children's services where management and aversion of risk is more common;

- to engage the wide range of stakeholders across the various different sectors, consultees placed particular emphasis on the DCS's approach to *working collaboratively and recognising and respecting the skills of others*;

- *a commitment to developing others* was a further key priority. Stakeholders reported that roles at all levels were undergoing significant change. It was therefore considered important that the DCS should develop a culture which recognises the challenges of the new roles, provides opportunities to gain experience and supports staff to develop;

- the highly complex demands of the role were also raised as a particular challenge requiring DCSs to be able to *remain robust under pressure, and inspire others to do the same*.

2.8 Whilst the list is not exhaustive, it does provide a clear sense of the characteristics required of DCSs.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

2.9 Disentangling the knowledge, skills and abilities required to deliver the role was difficult to achieve. The role is evolving and therefore, so too are the knowledge demands placed on DCSs. The Knowledge and Skills Framework developed as part of this study (**Annex B – Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour Framework**) is structured to examine the core responsibilities of the role and link the specific knowledge skills and abilities required. This Framework should be read alongside the remainder of this section. The core elements of the role are:

- shaping the future;
- leading the partnership;
- strategic management;
- the corporate and political dimension;
- safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- intelligent commissioning;
- workforce development.

Shaping the Future

2.10 Stakeholders considered that a critical skill required of the DCS was the ability to facilitate partners to *collectively develop a shared vision.* This was considered central in *providing clarity* to professionals on the ambitions of the local Children's Trust. Once in place, stakeholders considered that the DCS had to be able to *articulate and sell the vision*, ensuring that the partners recognised that the life chances of children and young people were at the heart of the change. Being able to *bring others to a common agreement* on what was needed to achieve the vision was also key.

2.11 The ability to be *flexible to different audiences*, yet consistent with the message was considered crucial. In order to do make this vision a reality, DCSs need to have a *strong understanding of policy* influencing the direction of all other related partners, and understand the sector specific challenges in delivering the change.

Leading the Partnership

2.12 Stakeholders highlighted the critical importance of the *skills of the DCS in being able to lead and develop effective partnership working*, and move the local agenda on to achieving integrated working in its fullest sense. This element was also considered to be one of the greatest challenges facing the DCS.

2.13 In order to achieve success, the DCS was required to have *a strong grasp of the principles of change management* and be skilful in anticipating the risks and challenges. In addition, their skills in being able to *influence, negotiate and persuade* more reluctant partners to engage were key. Being able to deliver change required DCSs to *understand the political and financial levers* which would allow this to be achieved, without alienating partners. Understanding *culture and values* of partners was a key tool in achieving this.

Strategic Management

2.14 Strong knowledge of effective strategic management was also a key requirement of the role. This included a range of knowledge and skills which are classified under:

- *securing accountability and being accountable* – requiring strong knowledge of accountability frameworks and multiple governance structures;

- *financial management* – being able to demonstrate strong fiscal management and creativity with budgets;

- *analysis, evaluation and decision making* – making effective use of the knowledge base to inform decision making and identify key priorities.

2.15 DCSs highlighted that the role required a high level of business acumen to deal with and manage the complexities of partnership working.

The Political and Corporate Dimension

2.16 Stakeholders considered that the political demands of the role demanded a range of specific knowledge – *understanding the democratic and decision making processes*, and skills – in being able to *influence decision making* and *secure the confidence* of elected members. Stakeholders considered that DCSs had to be able to *engender wide support for the ECM agenda*, be *alert* to how people/politicians would react to decisions and *manage the handling* of issues. There was also an acknowledgement that the challenge faced by DCSs differed across local areas depending on the local political landscape.

> *"It's one thing being able to sell the vision and secure buy-in for the children's agenda. It's quite different when you're trying to persuade obstructive council members to support a new development for looked after children. You're battling against the 'not in our back garden' syndrome. It takes real skill and experience to make things happen." (LMCS)*

> *"In this area, no one party has overall control. This is very different from my previous position where local structures shielded my work from the political challenges. Gaining an understanding of how to work with the different power blocks has been key to success here." (DCS)*

> *"I'm aware that where I'm moving to the political situation is more straightforward as there is majority rule. We have to handle situations very sensitively in this local authority to try and bring about consensus." (DCS)*

2.17 The ability to effectively manage the reputation of the local authority with its' key stakeholders partners and with national government, as well as the media, was also considered to be key.

> *"You have to be able to manage media coverage of issues that are likely to make headlines. Anticipating the headlines and the public reaction is vitally important." (DCS)*

Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children

2.18 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children was considered an important knowledge area for DCSs and appropriately it is a prominent feature of existing literature.

Intelligent Commissioning

2.19 Developing knowledge and understanding to support children's services to become an intelligent commissioner of services was a growing priority for most DCSs consulted. Managing this transition and developing the appropriate structures to understand when, how and where to get the most out of commissioning was considered to be a key development area for most DCSs.

Workforce Development

2.20 The importance of workforce development is a key strand in delivering the ECM agenda. Providing leadership to such a diverse workforce raises a number of challenges which demands that DCSs have a strong grasp of the strengths, weaknesses and gaps within leadership and management structures, be able to build and manage multi-disciplinary teams and joint appointments, and know how/where to go to develop appropriate partnerships. In skills terms, stakeholders considered that DCSs needed to be able to instil and create drive and motivation, uphold parity of esteem between different professionals and, importantly, encourage and promote a reflective professional practice which strives for continuous improvement.

ADDITIONAL ISSUES FOR NATIONAL POLICY AND GUIDANCE

2.21 Whilst the National Professional Development Framework[17] provides a good overview of the skills and knowledge required to deliver the DCS role (as outlined above) there are a number of issues that stakeholders considered were not sufficiently represented in this, or other policy documents such as the Role and Responsibilities of the DCS and Lead Member[18]. Stakeholders considered that the issues highlighted below need to be reflected in any review into the role.

The Corporate and Political Dimension

2.22 One significant omission in the national guidance raised by a number of DCSs was the role of the DCS as a member of the corporate team for the local authority. This responsibility is in addition to the significant demands of leading children's services. As one DCS commented, "*The DCSF guidance only reflects half of the role*". Many DCSs consulted reported that the corporate responsibilities were significant both in terms of the additional demands placed on the time of the DCSs, and crucially in terms of the professional skills required to manage the corporate and political arena.

Representing Skills across Children's Services

2.23 Some stakeholders expressed concern that the national guidance was LA centric, at the expense of representing the skills required in the health and PVI sectors.

---

[17] DCSF (2008) Leading and Managing Children's Services in England: A national professional development framework

[18] http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/_files/15B8D6CB4AAA0C6EFCBE30CFEFD428D6.pdf

"I can see it covers everything from a LA perspective but it only pays lip service to non-local authority based professions." (Health sector representative)

Local Area Demands

2.24 Whilst there was consensus on the generic skills and abilities demanded, three case study areas have purposefully appointed a candidate with a specific professional background. In these, the rationale was to support the process of addressing specific weaknesses within LA provision. The following quotes illustrate this point.

"Our priority was to appoint somebody from an education background as it's a hugely sensitive issue in this local authority." (HR Director)

"We needed somebody that had a proven track record in delivering improvements in achievement and attainment to have confidence that we would make progress here." (Tier 2 Officer)

"Education achievement has historically been strong in this area. The priority was in relation to improvement of social services and the appointment reflected that." (DCS)

2.25 In the other case study areas the professional experience sought was less explicit, although the following quote illustrates that local authority professional experience was an important consideration.

"We were looking for some generic skills that we would expect all members of the corporate management team to have. For example relevant experience of working at a senior manager level, although not necessarily within the public sector. We wanted to see evidence of experience in policy development, strategic leadership and working within the political environment." (Chief Executive)

Remit and Responsibilities

2.26 Stakeholders highlighted the fact that the DCS does not have the autonomy to make decisions on all of the statutory responsibilities which come under their remit. Where this is the case, the role relies on effective negotiation and influencing skills. Stakeholders highlighted that there was a risk that for those partners who do not share the same priorities, negotiation may have limited success.

Size of the Role

2.27 A number of stakeholders also went on to highlight some of the implicit challenges which resulted from the size of the DCS role:

- *size of budget* - the DCS's role on the board is complicated due to the size of the budget they control[19]. Stakeholders reported that this requires delicate handling to ensure that they work as an equal partner and are sensitive to the challenges this caused for other members;

- *the breadth of the role and consequent demands this places on time* - consultees highlighted that when the dual responsibilities of the leader of children's services and member of the corporate board were taken into account, pressures were significant, often at the expense of a work-life balance.

ECM Balance

2.28 Whilst recognising safeguarding as a crucial element of the role, a number of consultees felt that there could be greater emphasis on other ECM outcomes.

> *"Safeguarding is very important but so too are the other elements of the ECM agenda. The guidance doesn't feel like it gives as much weight to the other agendas." (Tier 2 Officer)*

SKILLS KNOWLEDGE AND BEHAVIOURS OF FUTURE LEADERS

2.29 The majority of DCSs consulted did not see a significant difference between the skill requirements of today's DCSs and the future generation. Nevertheless some did highlight that the role is evolving to become more strategic and similar to that of a Chief Executive.

2.30 Many DCSs highlighted that over the last three years they had been involved in supporting developments at an operational level. A common view was that over the coming year they would need to move from dealing with issues of day to day problem solving to a more strategic overview, to *"bring the strands together."*

> *"I see the role as similar to that of a Chief Exec, where the ability to lead and embed the vision of the Directorate is of key importance. I'm increasingly reliant on the heads of service to lead on their key areas, and to fill the gaps in my knowledge where needed." (DCS)*
>
> *"It was apparent that the DCS is moving to a more strategic and over-arching role now that all second tier appointments are in place. The post-holder has moved from being a 'salesperson' for the strategy to one taking hold of the policy, planning and development associated with building the Partnership." (Case study example)*
>
> *"The dimensions and complexities of the DCS role equal that of a Chief Executive ..(but that)..a Chief Executive is much more politically exposed." (DCS)*

---

[19] DCSs consulted oversee more than 60% of the council budget and more if they are also responsible for adult services

3   SUPPORT NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES: DCSs

Support Needs and Opportunities: DCSs
• Identifying the development needs of the DCSs was something of a challenge, particularly for those that had been in post for some time. To be appointed, DCSs clearly need to have evidenced that they are effective leaders and able to secure the confidence of a wide range of stakeholders. Nevertheless, consultations with current DCSs did highlight some common areas of development associated with knowledge and leadership when taking up the position: - given that many DCSs currently come from a specific professional background, gaining experience of the sectors they were less familiar with was initially important;   - the integration agenda means that DCSs' attention is predominantly focused on issues such as: developing robust lines of accountability; outcome based management; pooling budgets; joint appointments; and commissioning services. These represented new challenges and have therefore required strong leadership skills;   - some consultees identified that, for them, leading the partnership required an additional set of skills and a change in style.   • Most support needs identified by the DCSs consulted had been met through 'on the job' opportunities. Examples included opportunities provided by the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS); peer networks; coaching support; local themed groups; and work shadowing. However, access to such opportunities was often opportunistic and locally sourced. Many DCSs considered that access to development opportunities could be better coordinated to meet specific needs and address common issues. This was particularly true in relation to: - addressing knowledge gaps of children's services outside of local authority provision;   - developing skills to support commissioning;   - improving access to and coordination of coaching arrangements.

3.1   Identifying the development needs of the DCSs was something of a challenge, particularly for those that had been in post for some time. To be appointed, DCSs clearly have to have evidenced that they are effective leaders and are able to secure the confidence of a wide range of stakeholders. Nevertheless, consultations with current DCSs did highlight some common areas of development associated with knowledge and leadership when taking up the position.

KNOWLEDGE GAPS

3.2 As might be expected, addressing knowledge gaps was a key development area for most DCSs on taking up the post.

Sector Specific Knowledge

3.3 Whilst all of the DCSs consulted had a local authority background, there were significant differences in their journey to the role, and hence the range and breadth of experiences encountered. Therefore, the professional background of the DCS clearly influenced the gaps they had when taking up the post. All those consulted either had a background in education or social services or both. As DCSs have direct responsibility for these core services, a majority of stakeholders reported that they had had to quickly gain experience of the sector they were less familiar with, whilst acknowledging the fact that they could not be, and indeed were not required to be, expert in both. However, there appeared to be slightly differing views on the depth of knowledge required.

> *"I don't think there were any significant areas where my knowledge was lacking. Although my background is education I have a strong team that is responsible for social care. I don't need to become an expert as well. Though it's tempting to get involved, it's not necessary or appropriate." (DCS)*

> *"I need to understand more about social care practice, particularly in terms of how it could be and should be modernised. Being able to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and empathy is important in leading change." (DCS)*

> *"Understanding the school improvement agenda was the key thing on taking up the post, particularly in relation to the rules of intervention. Also, knowledge of the funding mechanisms for schools. These issues are so politically sensitive and keeping headteachers on board is key." (DCS)*

3.4 Equally, in order to be able to effectively manage the partnership DCSs highlighted the importance of having an in depth understanding of the health, justice and PVI sectors. Understanding the culture, remit and operational practices were considered critical in being able to influence decision making practices of stakeholders within these sectors. The evidence from the consultations with DCS identified that health in particular had been identified as a priority.

> *"I had a lot to learn about cultures of other services, in particular the hierarchies of health. If you're going to influence change, you need to understand the levers you can pull." (DCS)*

3.5　In some case study areas, some non-LA stakeholders indicated that the DCS still had more to learn about their sectors. For example, representatives from the voluntary and community sectors considered that the DCS would benefit from gaining a more detailed understanding of the impact of local authority decisions on their services.

> *"The DCS is clearly committed to working with the voluntary sector, but I think it would help if somebody fairly senior in the LA spent some time with us to understand the impact that decision making has on us. I can raise the point at partnership meetings but there's nothing like seeing it first hand." (Voluntary sector representative)*

The Developing Agenda

3.6　As structures and frameworks for partnership working become embedded, DCSs reported that they were taking the agenda to the next level through the development of:

- robust lines of accountability;
- outcome based management;
- pooling budgets;
- joint appointments;
- commissioning services.

3.7　DCSs highlighted that these were relatively new areas requiring both development of knowledge and strong leadership to manage the negotiations across partners. In particular, developing effective commissioning skills was considered to be a key priority.

> *"Our joint work with the PCT as commissioners of services is increasing. A priority is to ensure that we develop knowledge and skills in relation to commissioning, procurement and managing the development of services when not delivered by the LA." (DCS)*
>
> *"There's more for us to learn about commissioning and outcome based accountability. It's something we're learning about as we move forward." (DCS)*
>
> *"There's a huge cultural difference between LAs and PCTs as commissioners. Currently there's a lack of clarity about where the balance should lie. We're addressing these skills through internal corporate training and development." (DCS)*

3.8　These development needs were relevant for both the DCS as well as Tier 2 leaders and are considered in more detail in Section 5.

LEADING THE PARTNERSHIP

3.9 All DCSs highlighted that the leadership demands of partnership working were significant. Whilst all those consulted had significant leadership experience within the LA context, some identified that leading the partnership required an additional set of skills and a change in style. One DCS commented:

> *"I've made a concerted effort to develop the leadership role and worked hard to move away from a traditional managerial role. Sometimes LA colleagues did not understand the decisions I was making but I was thinking in the wider context of the partnership." (DCS)*

3.10 Furthermore, leadership of the partnership was considered to be increasing in complexity as the agenda develops. Some stakeholders, particularly those that had been more recently appointed, highlighted the daily challenges of the role.

> *"I'm used to working with agencies that aren't accountable to me. However, as this agenda develops, the range of services and agencies involved in the Children's Trust is growing. I think there's a big issue related to how we manage the growing complexities of the partnership." (DCS)*

> *"This is a corporate role where maintaining the status quo would signify failure. We need to dismantle barriers and build partnerships. This demands a more lateral approach than we've had to work in before. It's our role to engage the key players and enable them to recognise and fully play their role." (DCS)*

3.11 DCSs did not consider that these sorts of challenges had thrown up specific development needs. Most considered that the role was all about being able to respond to these issues and lead the way.

OPPORTUNITIES TO ACCESS SUPPORT

3.12 As may be expected for professionals working at such a senior level, most development needs identified had been met through 'on the job' opportunities. This approach was generally considered to provide greater benefits than could be achieved through accessing externally provided opportunities.

Opportunities Provided by the ADCS

3.13 The opportunities provided by the ADCS were considered by all those consulted to be particularly effective mechanisms for supporting professional development. The conferences provided opportunities for networking between colleagues, as well as deepening understanding on emerging national policy.

Peer Networks

3.14 The DCS regional and sub-regional peer networks were also widely considered to have provided an effective mechanism for sharing learning, problem solving and discussing common challenges. In all regions, DCSs reported that they valued these networks and considered they provided vital support.

> *"The ADCS regional group is of enormous benefit. It's a support group where people can openly admit what they don't know. We have specific sessions run by DCSs from a specific background on issues such as building relationships with schools." (DCS)*

3.15 From these regional events, DCSs identified that more specific development opportunities were taking place between individuals. For example, one DCS reported that they had arranged for the DCS and Tier 2 officers in neighbouring authorities to work collaboratively on specific issues through joint learning and exchange visits.

3.16 Another DCS indicated that efforts had been made to regularly meet with DCSs from 'the core cities'. In this example, it was reported that the DCS chose which conferences to attend based on their knowledge of which other DCSs would also attend.

> *"I attended the LGA conference in November because I knew there would be a lot of DCSs from London boroughs there. They face similar issues to our area in terms of deprivation etc. Also, there are over 200 schools in this authority whereas others in my neighbouring authorities have around 100." (DCS)*

Coaching Support

3.17 Seven of the DCSs consulted indicated that they regularly accessed one to one coaching support. These arrangements tended to be provided by a DCS in a neighbouring authority with a different professional background, or by the Chief Executive in the LA. One DCS reported that they were supported by an 'executive coaching programme' run by the LA for managers at Tiers 1 to 3. Another reported that they regularly met with a senior member of the National College for School Leadership (NCSL).

Local Themed Groups

3.18 Membership of local themed groups, for example on Looked After Children (LAC), were considered to provide very effective mechanisms for filling knowledge gaps.

> *"My learning has largely been an informal process of assimilation and dialogue through learning from other people on the other sectors. This is good enough for within LA functions but is more of a challenge where health is concerned." (DCS)*

Work Shadowing

3.19 Work shadowing, learning from colleagues and undertaking personal learning were reported to be the key mechanisms for developing an understanding of the operation of other sectors.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

3.20 Whilst DCSs did not specifically indicate that there were significant gaps in support available, there was a sense that development of senior leaders could be better coordinated to meet specific needs and address common issues. This was particularly true in relation to:

- addressing knowledge gaps of other children's services;
- developing skills to support commissioning;
- improving access to and coordination of coaching arrangements.

Addressing Knowledge Gaps of Other Children's Services

3.21 For many DCSs, an immediate need on entering the role was developing their knowledge of other sectors. Whilst stakeholders acknowledged that much of this learning would always be developed through the 'on the job' opportunities mentioned earlier, there was the potential to address some of the immediate challenges by providing a central bank of information which provided both "*the basics*" in terms of culture, roles and governance arrangements, as well as how DCSs tackle common issues. Access to appropriate 'on the job' opportunities in non-LA based sectors was reported to be more limited due to both the physical location of services and knowing who to ask.

Developing Skills to Support Commissioning

3.22 Developing skills on commissioning was a key priority identified by many DCSs. Most reported that they were tackling this through local development work in partnership with colleagues from the health sector. Whilst it is likely that this approach would ultimately meet needs, there is potential to speed up the learning process.

3.23 The DCSF is about to launch a Commissioning Support Programme for LA and Children's Trust partners to develop effective commissioning practice. The programme will offer training and development and facilitate peer to peer networking and collaboration. The DCSF is currently in the process of procuring the services of a consortia or main supplier to deliver a substantial part of the programme. They will help build commissioning capability through the package of training, support and guidance developed as well as enable professionals to learn from each other through facilitated peer support, networks and learning[20].

---

[20] DCSF unpublished – Communication on the Commissioning Support Programme

3.24 DCSs should ensure that they prepare for the roll out of this support and consider how to make most effective use within the LA.

Improving Access to and Coordination of Coaching Arrangements

3.25 A number of DCSs who had accessed coaching support indicated that they would welcome this. Some DCSs reported that they had tried to source some form of externally provided coaching support but had been unsuccessful in finding anyone appropriate. The busy workloads of other DCSs meant that finding space for development activity for other colleagues was a challenge.

4 CHANGING ROLES OF LEADERS OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

<div style="border:1px solid">

The Changing Roles of Leaders of Children's Services

- To meet the demands of partnership working, all Tier 2 leaders and their health, justice and PVI equivalents consulted in the case studies identified knowledge gaps associated with the children's service areas they were not currently directly engaged with.

- Many Tier 2 leaders working within LA structures had also seen changes to the remit of their roles. The key development areas associated with these changes were both developing specific knowledge of new sectors they were taking responsibility for, and developing the skills associated with strong leadership.

- Leaders' knowledge of children's services areas outside direct previous experience has been developed via the following opportunities:

  - professional development opportunities:
    - work shadowing;
    - mentoring and action learning sets;
    - accessing cross-service training and development opportunities;
    - conferences and ADCS events;
    - VSC Seminars;

  - 'on the job' training opportunities:
    - multi-agency strategic management teams;
    - deputising for the DCS;
    - personal networks.

- Development of leadership skills had been facilitated by involvement in: 'visioning', change management and leadership development opportunities; leadership qualifications, such as MBAs; and 'on the job' opportunities, for example deputising for the DCS, corporate projects and secondment opportunities.

- Health professionals and other children's service professionals that had been brought within local authority structures through developments in integrated services identified some additional development needs. These were understanding the business and culture of LA services; and developing skills and knowledge to deal with the political demands of the role. Opportunities which supported the development of these professionals were:

  - phased induction processes;
  - secondments to the LA prior to taking on their new role;
  - sitting on multi-agency management teams;
  - shadowing Tier 3 managers;
  - using peer networks;
  - visiting other LAs where non-LA managers had successfully made the transfer;
  - leadership development programmes;
  - Action Learning Sets;
  - cross-organisation training and development.

</div>

The Changing Roles of Leaders of Children's Services

• However, whilst opportunities had been accessed by LA leaders in all case study areas, there was variability in the extent to which they were part of a long term development strategy, and tailored to individual need. More often than not, opportunities had been sourced on an ad hoc base in response to pressing issues, rather than as a longer term leadership development strategy. Concerns were raised that where opportunities were available, capacity and time issues mean that Tier 2 leaders and equivalents commonly faced challenges in accessing them. This was a growing issue in light of expanding remits.
 	
• The study also identified that children's workforce development strategies did not, on the whole, focus on the development needs of senior leaders. Where they did, they tended to incorporate local authority leaders only, rather than those outside of LA funded children's services. Most stakeholders considered that benefits could be gained by improved coordination of the range of development opportunities, with increased cross-region and cross sector working, including:
 	
    • networking;
    • work shadowing;
    • joint training;
    • leadership programmes.

4.1 The study has highlighted that the roles of many Tier 2 and Tier 3 leaders have changed significantly as a result of a widened remit for children's services.

CHANGES TO THE STRUCTURE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

4.2 All of the six case-study areas had undertaken some form of restructuring in response to the ECM agenda and the move towards the implementation of Children's Trusts arrangements. Analysis of case-study areas shows the following structural changes:

- in four areas significant restructuring had taken place at Tier 2 level, which resulted in an expansion of the remit of their roles;

- in three areas restructuring had taken place at the locality level through the introduction of locality based multi-disciplinary teams.

KEY CHANGES TO THE ROLES OF TIER 2 LEADERS

4.3 Key changes to roles of Tier 2 leaders (and, in many cases, Tier 3 leaders) focused on the following arenas:

- partnership working;

- political/corporate dimension;

- a wider management portfolio;

- more strategic role.

Partnership Working

4.4 Interviewees commented on the increased significance of partnership working for both Tier 2 and Tier 3 leaders. This has resulted in a higher level of visibility to partners as well as regular joint working. Consultees considered that the demands of partnership working were even greater for existing Tier 3 leaders than those at Tier 2. The majority of current Tier 3 leaders were considered to be less used to partnership working and more likely to be in specialist roles, resulting in a more significant knowledge gap. Key development needs were highlighted in terms of developing understanding of the roles, structures and cultures of other services.

Political and Corporate Dimension

4.5 Consultees highlighted that the changes made to Tier 2 roles demanded a much increased level of engagement with the political arena. This was reflected in more regular engagement between Tier 2 leaders and elected members as well as deputising for the DCS, both in meetings and more widely across the corporate agenda.

4.6 It was also highlighted that Tier 2 leaders increasingly have a more cross-cutting corporate role within the LA which requires greater knowledge of, and ability to work effectively with, other sectors within the council such as regeneration, housing, and post-16 education. Stakeholders considered that the ECM agenda had clearly helped facilitate these changes.

> In one LA case-study the lead on economic wellbeing had a focus on 14-19 year olds and stressed the importance of linking with regional regeneration partners, as well as those from employment and housing.
>
> *"If we take ECM seriously, we need to look beyond our front gates to engage with all partners across the region." (Tier 2 Leader)*

4.7 Tier 2 leaders indicated that since the structural changes had been introduced, they were more focused on their contribution to meeting corporate objectives (for example regarding the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) rather than a specific service area. This outward looking corporate focus was reflected throughout LAs. As one interviewee observed, senior administrative staff now also understood their contribution to the Joint Area Review (JAR) and CPA.

Wider Management Portfolio

4.8   Tier 2 leaders' management portfolio was becoming wider and their remit was broader. Increasingly they were managing and working with people outside their traditional areas of expertise, leading to a need for more generic management skills within the Tier 2 role. Stakeholders reported that greater knowledge of other areas was required or an ability to access knowledge or experience which would help 'fill the gaps'.

More Strategic Role

4.9   Stakeholders considered that the roles of Tier 2 leaders were becoming more strategic, demanding greater powers of delegation and a distributed approach to leadership. This shift means that Tier 2 leaders were increasingly becoming 'facilitators' rather than 'doers' and, given the structural changes within LAs, commissioners rather than providers of services.

4.10 Their increased range of responsibilities (due to an expanded directorate) also means that they have more of an influencing role and are also playing a greater role in the development of the LA's vision for Children's Services and beyond.

KEY CHANGES TO LEADERS OUTSIDE OF THE LA

4.11 The ECM agenda and integration of services is also having an impact on professionals outside of LA funded children's services. The beginnings of significant change are starting to emerge with professionals from the health sector being brought under LA structures. More generally all those involved in partnership working are being required to develop their knowledge and understanding of other sectors. For many, it will take time to achieve a detailed understanding of all the services they will be working collaboratively with.

TWO MODELS OF CHANGE

4.12 We have developed two case studies which demonstrate how local areas are adapting to the change process at the Tier 2 level. A brief overview of each authority is presented here. A more detailed summary is presented in **Annex C: Models of Change**.

Case Study 1: Model of Change
1) Changes made
• Tier 2 leaders appointed with a strong commitment to the change process who are 'complementary and supplementary'
• Tier 2 leaders appointed with a wide range of experience, including two from non-LA backgrounds
Wider management portfolio
• The broader remit at the second Tier is reflected in the expanded integrated services directorate (all leaders plan and operate in relation to ECM outcomes)
• Seven multi-disciplinary locality teams are being established to deliver integrated

Case Study 1: Model of Change

services with team managers recruited from a range of disciplines and managing staff from a range of services
- Reorganisation of the CYP directorate has helped address issues around a lack of joined up/silo working

Greater partnership working
- Reflected in the creation of a **Joint Leadership Team** chaired by the DCS
- Membership includes: the Deputy DCS, all Tier 2 leaders and key senior managers from partner organisations (council, health, police, fire and rescue service voluntary & community sector)

Increased political and corporate engagement/responsibility
- Introduction of fortnightly meetings between Lead Member for Children's Services and Tier 2 leaders
- Tier 2 leaders submit 6-monthly reports to LMCS on key priorities, issues and concerns
- Increased corporate responsibility for Tier 2 leaders linked to wider remit/role e.g. Director of Learning Services no longer just working with schools

Greater strategic working
- Reflecting the need for greater delegation by Tier 2 leaders and less involvement in operational activities

2) What has been done to support the change?

Partnership/integrated working
- Joint Leadership Team provides experiential learning and opportunities for Tier 2 leaders to gain skills via joint working with other sectors
- Jointly funded roles at Tier 2 and Tier 3 and combined teams to address particular issues, such as CAF
- Integrated services used as a focus for all Tier 3 leader events
- University providing management development courses designed specifically for the LA focusing on leadership and partnership work

Wider management portfolio
- Peer coaching: every senior manager identifies a peer with whom they can talk through particular issues and suggest alternative strategies
- Directors conduct Performance and Development Reviews (PDRs) of other directors providing cross-fertilisation of ideas

Political and corporate engagement
- The PDR process helps all staff understand their contribution to council and corporate objectives so that they are aware of the 'golden threads'
- Regular opportunities for Tier 2 leaders to deputise for DCS in fulfilling political and corporate responsibilities
- Council wide projects led by Tier 2 leaders and council wide Tier 3 management development programme

3) This is what is planned to support future change

Partnership/integrated working
- Three additional posts have been created to assist the management of locality managers (with a focus on quality and performance)
- LA and PCT leaders are developing a 'culture change course' for locality managers and

Case Study 1: Model of Change
team leaders (Tier 3)

4) Challenges identified

- Wider management portfolio
- Difficult for Tier 2 leaders to understand what their core responsibilities are and meet the information demands of a wider portfolio

Partnership/integrated working
- Delays in implementing changes have impacted on the effectiveness of delivery
- Tier 2 and 3 leaders responsible for managing staff with different employment terms
- Tier 2 leaders require skills to influence people they do not directly have control over
- Technical ICT issues are impacting on the effectiveness of integrated working
- Conflict with corporate structures when developing training programmes for staff

Case Study 2: Model of Change

1) Changes made

- Management structure
- DCS appointed from a social care background – balanced the already strong record of the LA in education and supported the integration of Education and Social Services to form the Children's Services Directorate (CSD).
- Tier 2 officers (3) come from education, social care and performance management backgrounds. All have remits wider than their immediate field of expertise

Wider management portfolio
- DCS takes a strategic and corporate management role and has a national role which has the potential to bring a wider perspective to the work of CSD. This has led to greater delegation at Tier 2 level
- Implementation of change is at Area and District Officer levels. To test whether more integration is possible at district level a post has been created to represent jointly the areas of education and social care

Greater partnership working
- The way in which management boards are structured involves partner organisations in the decision making process
- The level of structural/organisational change amongst some key partners in the Trust has had an impact on the degree to which partnership working could be/has been established

Increased political and corporate engagement/responsibility
- A system of Cabinet Government closely involves Lead Members of the Council in the decision making process. They chair a number of key boards and work closely with senior officers
- All at Tier 2 take on a corporate role as well as specific to the CSD. They represent the CSD at meetings with Lead Members/elected members and at some corporate boards and liaise directly with key partner groups

Greater strategic working

Case Study 2: Model of Change
• A holistic and strategic approach is developing to the delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) which is linked to the Local Area Agreement (LAA). In turn both will link with the developing strategy for Sustainable Communities and the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Plan (RIEP)
2) What has been done to support the change? ***Partnership/integrated working*** • Committee and Board structures involve partners in decision-making • Child-centred approach focuses partners on outcomes • Re-structuring of partner organisations having an effect on liaison and communication • Senior Managers' Forum considered a powerful tool to lead the process of re-engineering dual roles and encourage integration • Multi-agency induction to the work of CSD and training for the Common Assessment Framework forms part of the LA's training framework ***Wider management portfolio*** • A network of CSD 2nd Tier officers facilitated by the Government Office meets four times a year and provides 'a helpful forum to exchange ideas and learn together' ***Political and corporate engagement*** • Only one officer at Tier 2 expressed the need for more help with operating within the political arena
3) This is what is planned to support future change • Workforce Development Strategy (WDS) to be implemented to support Tier 3 in implementing the change agenda. Links with the integrated qualifications framework being developed by the CWDC • Leadership Development Programme commissioned to support succession planning and skills development, particularly at corporate level • Use of RIEP to foster communication and multi-agency working
4) Challenges identified ***Partnership/integrated working*** • Need to continue to find opportunities to break down barriers and foster closer integration • Partnerships with health and voluntary sectors need strengthening • Size of LA has the potential for fragmentation of approach • Need for further expertise in intelligent commissioning of services from partners • Delays with WDS have impacted on effectiveness of integrated working

5 SUPPORT NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES: LEADERS OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Support Needs and Opportunities: Leaders of Children's Services

- To meet the demands of partnership working, all Tier 2 leaders and their health, justice and PVI equivalents identified knowledge gaps associated with the children's service areas they were not currently directly engaged with.

- Many Tier 2 leaders working within LA structures had also seen changes to the remit of their roles. The key development areas associated with these changes were both developing specific knowledge of new sectors they were taking responsibility for, and developing the skills associated with strong leadership.

- Leaders' knowledge of children's services areas outside direct previous experience has been developed via the following opportunities:
  - professional development opportunities;
    - work shadowing;
    - mentoring and action learning sets;
    - accessing cross-service training and development opportunities;
    - conferences and ADCS events;
    - VSC Seminars;

  - 'on the job' training opportunities;
    - multi-agency strategic management teams;
    - deputising for the DCS;
    - personal networks.

- Development of leadership skills had been facilitated by involvement in: 'visioning', change management and leadership development opportunities; leadership qualifications, such as MBAs; and 'on the job' opportunities, for example deputising for the DCS, corporate projects and secondment opportunities.

- Health professionals and other children's service professionals that had been brought within local authority structures through developments in integrated services identified some additional development needs. These were understanding the business and culture of LA services; and developing skills and knowledge to deal with the political demands of the role. Opportunities which supported the development of these professionals were:
  - phased induction processes;
  - secondments to the LA prior to taking on their new role;
  - sitting on multi-agency management teams;
  - shadowing Tier 3 managers;
  - using peer networks;
  - visiting other LAs where non-LA managers had successfully made the transfer;

- leadership development programmes;
- Action Learning Sets;
- cross-organisation training and development.

- Concerns were raised that where opportunities were available, capacity and time issues mean that Tier 2 leaders and equivalents commonly face challenges in accessing them. This was a growing issue in light of expanding remits.

- The study identified that children's workforce development strategies did not, on the whole, focus on the development needs of senior leaders. Where they did, they tended to incorporate local authority leaders only, rather than those outside of LA funded children's services. Most stakeholders considered that benefits could be gained by improved coordination of the range of development opportunities, with increased cross-region and cross sector working, including:
  - networking;
  - work shadowing;
  - joint training;
  - leadership programmes.

5.1 The key development needs for Tier 2 leaders working within the LA were reported under similar themes as for the DCSs, i.e. knowledge of other sectors and the development of strong leadership skills. However, whilst the themes were similar, the specific types of needs and approaches to addressing these were different[21]. The needs of non-LA employees being integrated under LA structures were also reported under similar themes but with a key additional area relating to working within the political arena.

DEVELOPMENT NEEDS: KNOWLEDGE GAPS

5.2 Restructuring of children's services meant that most Tier 2 leaders had responsibilities outside their previous professional experience, which resulted in gaps in their knowledge around specific service areas, skills and contexts. The main areas identified by interviewees focused on:

- sector specific knowledge;

- knowledge and expertise around the commissioning of services;

- understanding of the political arena.

---

[21] The reader may feel there is some repetition of issues reported in Section 3 and Section 5. However, we feel this is a necessary consequence of exploring the specific needs of these two different groups of leaders.

Sector Specific Knowledge

5.3 Variation in the stage of development of integration of services impacted upon the knowledge and therefore the development needs of Tier 2 leaders within those LAs. Some partner managers considered that Tier 2 leaders still had significant gaps in their knowledge and understanding of partner agencies which created significant challenges to joint working. Similarly, LA leaders themselves acknowledged that there was still a significant amount of work to be done to achieve fully integrated services.

> *'We wax lyrical about cross-working out of silos but why I am in a room on my own? Why aren't we working together?" (Tier 2 Officer)*

5.4 Tier 2 leaders highlighted a need to develop their knowledge of other LA sectors. Those from education backgrounds acknowledged a need to develop an understanding of health and social care, such as social care budgeting. Those who did not have an education based background felt that they needed to increase their knowledge and understanding of schools, in particular in relation to: effective engagement; developing positive relationships; and raising their professional 'credibility' in this context.

5.5 Stakeholders also identified gaps in their knowledge around particular areas of responsibility, for example the legislation surrounding safeguarding.

Knowledge of Commissioning of Services

5.6 Many Tier 2 leaders consulted highlighted that they needed to learn about the processes of commissioning other services. Interviewees recognised a need to gain an understanding of different services' definitions of, and approaches to, commissioning and procurement. One LA was looking at reviewing practice across partners to try and address this need.

Understanding the Political Arena

5.7 Some Tier 2 leaders felt that they needed to improve their knowledge and understanding of the political arena within the LA and, in particular, how to work effectively with elected members. This was identified as an area for development by those interviewees who had previously worked in LAs where the links between LA managers and elected members was not well developed. This identified need also reflected the requirement for increased political engagement in Tier 2 roles within LAs. This was not considered to be an issue for DCSs.

DEVELOPMENT NEEDS: LEADERSHIP SKILLS

5.8 A range of development needs were identified for Tier 2 leaders linked to leadership skills. These closely mirrored the skills, knowledge and behaviours required of DCSs and focused on:

- articulating the vision for children's services;

- delegation and developing a distributed approach to leadership;

- their approach to risk taking;

- partnership working;

- cultural change.

The Vision for Children's Services

5.9 Articulating the 'vision' for children's services to others (both within and outside the LA) was seen as an area for development at Tier 2. The ability to deliver the vision creatively and implement the change agenda when the majority of Tier 2 leaders' experience and/or background was still within one service area was viewed as a challenge and something where they may require additional support.

Delegation and Distributed Leadership Skills

5.10 Tier 2 leaders are increasingly 'facilitators' rather than 'doers'. Therefore the ability to delegate effectively and to share leadership responsibilities was considered to be critical as their remits broaden and they manage staff from outside the LA.

Partnership Working

5.11 Stakeholders considered that the development of skills to lead partners not under their direct responsibility was essential. Stakeholders identified their need to develop skills in partnership working and how to ensure 'buy-in' (to a joint vision) from other partners. There was also a view amongst Tier 2 interviewees of the need to develop Tier 3 leaders' skills in partnership working and strategic awareness, as they too were increasingly being drawn into these arenas.

Cultural Change

5.12 In order to help break down barriers between health, social care and education some interviewees focused on the need for all partners to develop a more positive approach to risk taking. Both LA partners and those outside of the LA considered that their partners were relatively '*risk averse*'. Some leaders clearly need to be supported to develop an environment which promotes calculated risk taking when this is appropriate.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES ACCESSED BY TIER 2 LEADERS

5.13 Opportunities accessed by Tier 2 leaders focused primarily on: acquiring knowledge and technical skills; and developing their leadership skills. A number of the development opportunities accessed were also those that were identified where further support would be appreciated.

Opportunities to Develop Knowledge and Technical Skills

5.14 Tier 2 leaders developed their knowledge of other areas/sectors via opportunities considered under: professional development opportunities; and 'on the job' training opportunities.

Professional Development Opportunities

5.15 Examples of professional development opportunities accessed by leaders were as follows:

- **work shadowing** - in one case study area, it was highlighted that work shadowing was being encouraged across the region. Interviewees identified that that they would value a more systematic approach to this, for example spending a month shadowing one or two other service/partnership areas;

- **mentoring and action learning sets** were seen as helpful in providing solution-focused approaches and suggesting alternative methods for addressing particular issues. In one case-study LA, every Tier 2 leader identified a colleague to act as a peer mentor. Peer mentors (both within and, in some cases outside the LA) provided opportunities for Tier 2 leaders to share and discuss common issues and effective practice;

- **accessing cross-service training and development opportunities.** These provided Tier 2 leaders with important insights into workforce development opportunities/strategies from other sectors. An example of this is provided below;

Example: Benefits of Cross Service Training and Development Opportunities
A training and development programme provided by the NHS at a regional level presented a new way of looking at workforce planning. It focuses on the services and needs required in order to create job roles. Once participants have identified the services required, they then look at the skills and knowledge needed for those services and only then are the job roles created. This means that there is little danger of overlap in job roles because they are based on services and associated needs rather than existing constructs linked to job roles. It was felt that such an approach to workforce planning would greatly facilitate integrated models of working.

- **conferences and ADCS events**. These were reported to provide Tier 2 leaders with opportunities to discuss issues and access courses to develop particular knowledge areas, for example on commissioning and the primary capital programme, and other 'themes of the moment';

- **VSC Seminars**. These were seen as particularly beneficial because they were run by leaders who had been through similar experiences. In addition the approach encouraged participants to be reflective and debate the issues. One DCS noted that they actively encouraged Tier 2 and 3 leaders to attend these events as it gave them a much broader perspective on current issues.

On the Job Training Opportunities

5.16 A range of 'on the job' training opportunities were identified. The following examples were provided:

- **multi-agency strategic management teams** - in one area a 'case-work methodology' used by the senior management team meetings was seen as extremely useful in developing the knowledge, skills and expertise of the Tier 2 leaders. This approach was seen to have impacted positively on service delivery within the LA, helping to 'unblock' some of the most intransient cases. One of the Tier 2 leaders (from an education background) commented that the case-work presentations given by health colleagues were a '*huge eye opener'*, as they focused on the entire family. This was seen to be different to the traditional education-based profile which would just focus on the individual child or young person;
- **deputising for the DCS** in work with elected members provided opportunities for Tier 2 leaders to develop their skills and knowledge regarding the political agenda. In one of the case study LAs Tier 2 leaders had been given responsibility for managing council wide corporate projects which helped develop their expertise in this area;
- **personal networks** were considered to provide an important source of support for Tier 2 leaders.

Leadership Opportunities

5.17 Tier 2 leaders reported accessing a range of opportunities, which they felt had helped the development of their leadership skills, including: 'visioning', change management and leadership development opportunities; leadership qualifications, such as MBAs; and 'on the job' opportunities, for example deputising for the DCS, corporate projects and secondment opportunities.

Visioning Days

5.18 Visioning activities or leadership development opportunities were felt to have been beneficial. These activities were often linked to the change process, for example the establishment of new senior management teams/directorates or services.

Leadership Group Development Days

5.19 Other authorities had provided leadership development opportunities to support the LA's transition to Children's Services, like the Leadership Group Development Days described below.

Leadership Group Development Days
This developmental programme was introduced to support senior leaders in adapting to their changing role and to: • Establish CYPS leaders in their roles • provide 'a view from the bridge' whereby the leadership could communicate the long-term vision and priorities in the context of the area's CYP Plan • assist in organisational development, especially integration in the new service, promoting the 'one service' agenda and developing understanding of outcomes and services contributions to them • give all leaders an opportunity to engage in the strategic planning for the service, especially improving performance on cross-cutting themes • add depth to performance management e.g. deepening understanding of JAR areas for improvement • brief/update on current key issues, projects, and legislation • intra-service networking

Leadership Development Courses

5.20 Examples of leadership development courses included: external leadership development programmes (at the regional level); and internal development programmes for Heads of Service (which met every two to three months for development half days).

Regional Leadership Development Programme
This was a four-day programme funded by councils within one of the government office regions. The programme focused on: • authentic leadership • managing 'toxic cultures' • stress resilience • establishing culture The Tier 2 leader, who was about to take up a DCS post, felt that the programme had provided 'lots of new ideas' and 'thinking about how I lead, showing my strengths and weaknesses, and values'. The programme included 360 degree appraisals, coaching challenges and very practical use of case-study examples allowing participants to authentically translate them to their own roles.

5.21 A small number of interviewees had gained higher level professional leadership qualifications, such as MBAs, which they felt had helped support their transition to their current role. There were some interesting developments within the case-study authorities:

- one had developed an internal MBA in association with a partner university. A total of 20 places were allocated to both internal and external partners each year;

- another was working jointly with a neighbouring authority to develop a MBA across the children's workforce.

5.22 Consultees had mixed views on the value of some of the leadership development courses available, with a belief that many of them were too generic and needed to be adapted to meet the individual needs of senior leaders. A number of authorities had worked with universities to develop their own programmes for senior leaders. For example, one of the case-study LAs had developed management development courses with a partner university (at degree and postgraduate level) on leadership and partnership working. Another had developed a Masters in integrated working for Tier 3 leaders and above.

5.23 At the Tier 3 level a number of councils had leadership development courses that staff had to pass in order to be appointed. These courses tended to focus on developing generic leadership skills, partnership working and identifying talent. They were also used to test key competencies in Tier 3 managers, particularly regarding corporate management skills and were also used to identify areas for professional development.

DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES: NON-LA LEADERS OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

5.24 Development needs of non-LA leaders can be considered at two levels. Those who have been brought under LA structures, and those who are partners from more of a distance. We consider the needs of the former group as these will become more of an issue as the integration agenda progresses.

Development Needs

5.25 The challenges and therefore development needs of non-LA professionals coming into senior managerial roles within the LA were considered to be similar to, but an extension of those, of LA stakeholders who have experienced an expansion in remit and a step up in responsibility. These are considered under the following themes:

- **knowledge of culture:** stakeholders highlighted that they needed to learn about the business, culture and language of service areas which they were going to have responsibility for, but had no existing experience of. These gaps show a clear need for in-depth induction and ongoing support for non-LA leaders being brought under new structures;

- **the political arena**: unsurprisingly, the political dimension of LAs was seen as a particular gap for non-LA leaders. One PCT manager highlighted that they needed a greater understanding of their future responsibilities in relation to elected members. 'A*t the moment I am not accountable to them but I will be in the new world'*.

Development Opportunities

5.26 Development opportunities accessed by non-LA leaders were: specific development opportunities which they had accessed, or planned to access, to support their transfer into posts within the LA; and general development opportunities which had supported the development of their leadership and management skills.

Specific Development Opportunities

5.27 Specific development opportunities accessed to support non-LA leaders coming into LA posts focused on developing their knowledge of the LA and included:

- experiencing a **phased induction process** so that non-LA managers could spend a proportion of their time in their existing post whilst also learning about their new role;

- having an **initial secondment** to the LA for a number of months, prior to taking on their new role;

- **sitting on multi-agency management teams** within Children's Services, prior to taking on their new role. For example, in one case-study authority the PCT manager sat on the Children's Services Management Team for over a year, prior to taking up her post in the LA. This was felt to have been invaluable in terms of gaining an understanding of how the LA operated and the terminology and language used;

- **shadowing Tier 3 managers** to gain an understanding of their roles;

- using **peer networks** to identify colleagues in other LAs who are or have experienced similar change processes to provide peer support throughout the process;

- **visiting other LAs** where non-LA managers had successfully transferred over to senior leadership positions.

General Development Opportunities

5.28 General development opportunities accessed by non-LA leaders coming into LA posts:

- **leadership development programmes** accessed by non-LA managers were felt to have helped support their integration into their LA leadership role. Examples of courses included the: 'Common Purpose Programme', 'Directors of the Future Programme' and 'Leading Empowered Organisations';

The Common Purpose Programme
This was a regionally based programme for senior leaders from a wide range of sectors (both the DCS and PCT Chief Executive had also been on the course). It is a 6 to 8 month course, a day a month. This is a programme where senior leaders are exposed to agencies and organisations outside their normal organisational remit. Activities include collaboration with peers in other sectors, site visits (e.g. to see how successful businesses are run and their levels of interdependence), expert briefings and exposure to different approaches to leadership. The programme was felt to be extremely beneficial in gaining insights into how to work with others and included challenging modules on 'leading outside your authority' and 'influencing others'. Participants also worked with entrepreneurs who shared their

experiences of leadership.

- **Action Learning Sets** were seen as a valuable support mechanism and developmental opportunity which could be used across organisational frameworks. They were seen as a particularly useful strategy for senior managers moving into new service areas as they could provide peer support, solution-focused strategies and alternative ways of working. 'Action learning' (used by partner managers within the CVS sector) was also seen as a useful strategy for assisting integrated working whereby all new opportunities for joint working are logged and used as a basis for the next action (i.e. an action/reflection model);

- **cross-organisation training and development** - partners from one case-study authority were developing cross-organisation training and development within the CYP Strategic Partnership in the form of 'innovation workshops' (previously used in the voluntary sector). Key staff from all the partner organisations come together in the workshops to explore and address issues and challenges.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN ACCESSING DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

5.29 For many Tier 2 leaders (both LA and non-LA) opportunities were not an issue, but the capacity to fulfil them was. Significant time and capacity constraints were identified by Tier 2 for leaders within LAs to access the opportunities identified to, for example, gain knowledge of frontline delivery, to network outside the LA, or to be involved in corporate projects within the LA.

5.30 In other LAs the focus of the Workforce Development Strategy at Tier 3 and below meant that there was a lack of leadership development programmes at Tier 2 level and above.

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

5.31 There are clearly a range of development opportunities to support senior leaders both within and outside of the LA. However, across areas there was significant variation in the approach to developing senior leaders. Whilst this is not a criticism per se, most stakeholders considered that benefits could be gained by centralising coordination of a range of development opportunities, with increased cross-region working.

5.32 Some stakeholders also considered that there was a need to develop competency frameworks for all key children's services areas, e.g. safeguarding, to ensure that leaders at all levels had the appropriate skills to manage the work they were responsible for. This would add clarity to the purpose of some of the development opportunities.

5.33　The most common areas for development highlighted were access to regional training and development opportunities including networking, work shadowing, joint training opportunities and leadership development programmes. Whilst these examples are available in some areas, there is potential to extend the reach of these.

Networking

5.34　Regional support networks were reported to be widely used by DCSs and seen as beneficial. There was a view that Tier 2 leaders would benefit from similar opportunities. A number of those consulted already had access to some opportunities via regional networks convened by the Local Government Office (four times a year). These were seen as a helpful forum to exchange ideas and provide joint learning opportunities. These could be extended across all regions.

5.35　The VSC had been used by a number of LAs to provide training days for senior leaders. A regional group of LAs were also looking at the possibility of commissioning VSC to run courses on commissioning and management.

Work Shadowing

5.36　Consultees also considered that Tier 2 leaders and equivalents would also benefit from access to additional work shadowing and secondment opportunities across the sectors. Such opportunities would help fulfil the demands of the increasingly more outward looking nature of their role. For example, one of the case-study LAs was considering releasing Tier 2 officers who had developed good practice/expertise in a particular area to work with other LAs on a consultancy basis to assist their own professional development.

Joint Training

5.37　Interviewees also identified that regional training opportunities on practical issues, such as commissioning, quality assurance and risk assessments would be of value. One partner manager suggested that these would be most beneficial if they brought together a range of partners at Tier 2 level and equivalent (LA and non-LA stakeholders), in order to provide opportunities for cross-service/sector learning as well to '*look at scenarios and working through them with people you are not used to working with*' (partner manager).

5.38　Cross-organisation training and development within the CYP strategic partnership and 'innovation workshops', where key staff from partner organisations come together to explore issues and challenges, were currently being explored in one of the case-study LAs.

Leadership Programmes

5.39 The study has highlighted that most LAs' Workforce Development Strategies focused on Tier 3 and below. Gaps in provision therefore focused on a lack of leadership programmes at Tier 2 and above.   This was beginning to be addressed in some of the case-study LAs via the commissioning of LA-wide Leadership Development Programmes. In others, it was envisaged that development programmes (currently being put together) to support the implementation of integrated locality based working at Tier 3 would be expanded to incorporate Tier 2 leaders and above. However, there is a need to ensure that such programmes fulfil the professional development needs of individual managers, rather than providing a 'sheep dip' approach to training and development.

6 SUCCESSION PLANNING: ISSUES TO CONSIDER

Succession Planning: Issues to Consider

• The current pathways to the DCS role have predominantly been from local authority positions, either in education or social care and there are currently few candidates coming forward for positions from non-local authority backgrounds. This suggests some barriers (either developmental, structural or both) which may be limiting the potential to achieve the intended diversity of the profession.
 	
 • Whilst stakeholders acknowledged that leaders from other sectors could potentially become a DCS, concerns were expressed that the immediate knowledge demands of the role may be too great without appropriate professional experience. In addition, many of the core skills that the current DCSs considered to be critical to effective delivery of the role had been acquired through their prior experience working within LA based professions.
 	
 • In order to encourage potential candidates from non-local authority backgrounds, it will be important to develop opportunities which will provide the necessary experience. This is particularly relevant in relation to developing the skills to deal with the corporate and political demands of the role, which can only be gained through local authority experience.
 	
 • There is a range of challenges other than the skills issues presented earlier which will influence the development of effective succession planning. These are:
 	
     • local perceptions about knowledge requirements for potential leaders;
    • the existence of succession planning strategies;
    • the ability to attract future leaders due to issues with pensions, salaries and benefits.

6.1 The current pathways to the DCS role have predominantly been from local authority positions, either in education or social care and there are currently few candidates coming forward for positions from non-local authority backgrounds. This suggests some barriers (either developmental, structural or both) which may be limiting the potential to achieve the intended diversity of the profession.

6.2

THE SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE DEMANDED

6.3 In Section 2 we highlighted the range of skills, knowledge and abilities required to deliver the DCS role. Current DCSs identified that the following key factors had been important in supporting their progression:

- gaining experience of leading and managing organisational change;

- having a very mixed career, moving around both local areas and roles;

- involvement in multi-agency work throughout their professional career;

- leading partnership working;

- undertaking a professional management qualification such as an MBA;

- successfully managing challenging political issues;

- experience of either education or social care or both.

6.4 The last two key factors identified were considered to be of particular importance by a majority of the DCSs consulted. However, these experiences can only be gained through working within a local authority. Provision of development opportunities to address gaps in experience for those children's service leaders currently outside the local authority will be critical to ensuring effective integration across services and the potential for diversity of experience amongst DCSs and other senior leaders.

LOCAL PERCEPTIONS ABOUT POTENTIAL LEADERS

6.5 Whilst stakeholders acknowledged that leaders from other sectors could potentially become a DCS, concerns were expressed that the immediate knowledge demands of the role may be too great without appropriate professional experience. In addition, many of the core skills that the current DCSs considered to be critical to effective delivery of the role had been acquired through their prior experience working within LA based professions.

6.6 The research also showed that in some areas, specific professional knowledge and experience in either education or social care was a key priority when making appointments. This suggests that some key local stakeholders are not convinced that professional experience is less of a priority than leadership skills. Further debate on this issue is required both locally and nationally.

EXISTENCE OF SUCCESSION PLANNING STRATEGIES

6.7 The evidence from the research study indicates that most areas had not developed a specific succession planning strategy. This is not to say that development activity to support the progression of future leaders was not taking place. Section 5 highlighted a range of opportunities which local leaders were accessing. The issue was that the opportunities tended to be focused on local authority employees only and varied significantly across areas. Partners working in Children's Trusts need to take a broader view of the potential pool of future leaders taking into account those across *all* children's services.

REMUNERATION AND REWARDS

6.8 As well as the developmental issues raised, DCSs also highlighted two very significant structural barriers which would need to be addressed. These were: the attractiveness of the job in relation to the salary offered; and issues related to transferring benefits accumulated throughout their professional career.

> *"I don't think the issue of succession planning is really about professional development. It's more about addressing the (lack of) attractiveness of the job. People look at the role as a 'grief'/'status' calculation and if the grief element is greater than the status element then people are reluctant to apply. At the moment the grief element is too high and as a result we have 'monumental' recruitment difficulties". (DCS)*

> *"We really need to look at what prevents people from moving over. Salaries in the health sector are much higher, people have good pension and benefits packages. Will they really be prepared to give that up for the reward of the job?" (DCS)*

6.9 There appears to be a mixed picture in different areas of the country in relation to the supply of good quality senior leaders. One area reported that they faced significant challenges, whereas in another, competition for the DCS post was considered to be tough.

> *"I've unsuccessfully advertised two or three times for Tier 2 posts in order to groom for succession to DCS. The CEO is concerned that we won't be able to fill the DCS post when I retire." (DCS)*

> *""There were 14 candidates (all from local authority backgrounds) at the assessment stage for the role. I thought the competition was challenging." (DCS)*

6.10 A more widespread issue appeared to be in relation to attracting credible professionals for Tier 2 and Tier 3 education related posts. The recent increases to headteachers' salaries and the existence of the SIP programme were raised as two key factors which had resulted in local authority positions becoming increasingly uncompetitive in salary terms.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The core aim of the research was to "provide an information base on which DCSF will develop policy on the best ways to support the training and professional development of the senior leaders and managers of children's services in local authorities[22]." Readers should recognise that the research was not tasked with developing fully costed and specific recommendations on how to address the issues presented. The suggestions made here should therefore be considered as options for DCSF to explore further in conjunction with partners.

7.2 The key issues raised by the research which require further attention are:

- the role and remit of the DCS, not only as leader of children's services but also as a member of the corporate team;

- access to relevant development opportunities which will support Tier 2 leaders and non-local authority based equivalents to develop the range of skills and knowledge required to be effective leaders of children's services;

- DCSs access to one to one support.

7.3 The recommendations are presented as short, medium and long term actions.

SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: The findings of this research should be considered in any review undertaken in relation to the DCS role (DCSF/ADCS)

7.4 The findings of this research should be considered in any review undertaken in relation to the DCS role. The following themes should be a particular focus of attention:

- the specific professional experience required;

- the corporate and political demands of the role;

- the mismatch between statutory responsibilities and decision making powers;

- the expectations associated with size and breadth of the role;

- the emphasis of responsibilities across all ECM outcomes.

---

[22] DCSF: Research specification EOR/SBU/2007085

Recommendation 2: Engineer both national and local debate on the challenges associated with achieving the vision of increased professional diversity of DCSs (ADCS/LGA)

7.5   If the long term vision of increasing the professional diversity of DCSs is to be achieved there is a need for the ADCS and the Local Government Association (LGA) to engage in a debate with Chief Officers and Elected Members on the perceptual, developmental and structural challenges faced, and how these can be addressed.

Recommendation 3: Undertake a review of workforce development strategies in relation to senior leaders to establish the extent to which their needs are incorporated into local plans (CWDC/Government Office (GO)/Children's Trusts)

7.6   The CWDC should encourage local areas to review their workforce development strategies to consider both the scope of coverage at senior leadership level, and of stakeholders both within and outside of local authority roles. Regional networks of ADCSs should consider the findings of these local reviews and engage in discussions about the potential to develop both local and cross-regional opportunities for development. Government Offices (GOs) should consider the role they can play in supporting these developments.

Recommendation 4: DCSs to prepare for the expected Commissioning Support Programme (DCSs/Children's Trusts/regional ADCS)

7.7   In partnership with other local areas and to maximise learning potential, partners working in Children's Trusts should consider how they will participate in the DCSF's forthcoming Commissioning Support Programme to meet identified local knowledge needs for developing effective commissioning strategies and practices. DCSs need to ensure that their Tier 2 and Tier 3 officers, their commissioning teams and other relevant stakeholders engage with the Support Programme.

MEDIUM TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

7.8   The integration agenda is placing additional demands on the knowledge and skills required of leaders of children's services. Local areas are responding to these challenges in different ways. The recommendations pull together practice and suggestions from local areas to support further development.

Recommendation 5: To support professionals entering senior roles, clarify the parameters of the required professional knowledge and consider mechanisms to support access to information (CWDC/CWN)

7.9 The development of a clear framework of the minimum levels of knowledge in relation to different service areas should be considered for those in, or coming into, children's services leadership positions. To support this, consideration should be given to developing a bank of resources on the ECM website which provide a reference guide on the governance, responsibilities and roles of services within the children's services agenda. These resources could act as the first step of support before finding out more through locally sourced opportunities.

Recommendation 6: Local areas to undertake development needs analysis of senior leaders (Children's Trusts – workforce development managers)

7.10 If not already undertaken, a development needs analysis should be conducted by LAs and partner organisations to identify the key development areas to support senior leaders through integration of services. The CWDC could support this through their existing strategies for local areas, such as the Regional Development Managers (RDMs) or the online toolkit.

Recommendation 7: Provide a range of cross sector development opportunities for senior leaders both within and outside of local authorities (Children's Trusts/regional ADCS networks/CWDC/GO)

7.11 Further exploration of regional opportunities for joint working on development opportunities should be explored to facilitate the integration of children's services. Options to consider are:

- development of joint approaches to appointment of leaders (i.e. range of partners on appointment panels);

- further develop processes to support joint appointments (appointments of roles which span local authority and other services);

- introduction of development opportunities for Tier 2 leaders and other children's services equivalents which include:
  - secondments;
  - job shadowing;
  - involvement in multi-agency panels;
  - deputising.

7.12 The ADCS should consider the development of regional networks to support Tier 2 leaders and their equivalents.

7.13 In undertaking all the above, there needs to be a clear commitment to provide opportunities, and crucially the time and capacity for Tier 2 leaders and equivalents to access the range of training and development opportunities available.

Recommendation 8: Provide opportunities for one to one support for DCSs who consider they would benefit from it (ADCS/Regional ADCS/GO)

7.14   Whilst there are likely to be a range of challenges to overcome, further consideration should be given to developing a peer support programme which considers matching DCSs with different professional backgrounds; linking DCSs facing similar local challenges; or proving support to newly appointed DCSs. The regional ADCS networks were considered the most appropriate arena to explore the potential for such an arrangement. One DCS commented that the profession could potentially benefit from something similar to the School Improvement Partners (SIP) programme.

Recommendation 9: Partners working in Children's Trusts should develop succession planning strategies to support progression to the DCS role (Children's Trusts/ADCS)

7.15   A number of DCSs highlighted that the current generation had a duty to ensure that they did not replicate the traditional social care/education divide. The following examples could be included as part of local or regional succession planning strategies:

- **'talent spot'** potential senior leaders from across of children's services – identify those from Tier 3 upwards;

- **skills match** – existing professional experience of potential candidates to senior leadership demands;

- **menu of opportunities** – develop a local/regional menu of opportunities for development (on the job and specific development opportunities) for potential future candidates across children's services.;

- **coaching support** – to support individuals to develop.

7.16   The Regional Improvement and Efficiency Strategy in one area (in draft at the time of reporting) included a programme of support for Local Area Agreement (LAA) development, which could be accessed by senior managers.

Regional Improvement Strategy
• Action learning and shared networks to build partnership capacity
• Peer challenge and assistance with targeted support in response to particular difficulties
• Member and officer skills development on empowerment, engagement and commissioning
• Strategic workshops with voluntary and community partners to build trust and confidence
• Web-based information and toolkits to help create LAA/LSPs.

LONG TERM RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 10: Consider the potential for the development of a National Centre for Leadership of Children's Services to serve as a centre of excellence for the profession (Expert Group/ADCS/CWN/NCSL/DCSF/LLUK)

7.17 Drawing on the experience of the National College for School Leadership, consideration should be given to the development of a National Centre for the Leadership of Children's Services.

7.18 The research has highlighted that, currently local areas are sourcing and developing a range of opportunities to meet the needs of a diverse workforce. There is potential to centralise the development and provision of these opportunities matched to the core leadership competencies and knowledge requirements for effective leadership of children's services.

7.19 A national centre could lead the development of a leadership model for senior leaders which includes a generic 'core' leadership development course, supported by specialist modular opportunities which meet the particular needs of individual leaders. This could draw on the interesting developments going on at the local level, including those which focus on the development of MBAs linked to children's services.

7.20 Any developments would need to be based upon a flexible learning model to meet the diverse needs of future leaders. It is important that the notion of National Centre does not automatically mean a national centre in physical terms but rather national models and programmes for support and development of leadership within Children's Services. The discussions need to be linked with the parallel discussions on leadership development in the youth workforce.

Recommendation 11: Further explore the structural barriers which will influence the possibility of increasing the professional diversity of senior leaders. Explore potential solutions to address the barriers identified (DCSF/CWDC/LGE/LGA)

7.21 There needs to be further investigation into the structural issues (related to pay and conditions) which prevent practitioners from different processional backgrounds from transferring between services. There is potential for further research to analyse how some local areas have tackled the issues highlighted in attracting senior leaders from non-local authority backgrounds. The Local Authority community, particularly Local Government Employers, need to be part of these discussions.

ANNEX A
METHOD, SAMPLE AND STUDY ISSUES

METHOD

1.   The method for undertaking the research into the training and development needs of leaders of children's services involved:

- research with national organisations;
- the development of a skills, knowledge and behaviours framework;
- case studies in six local areas; and
- semi-structured telephone consultations with sixteen DCSs.

2.   The rationale, approach and issues with each element of the method are presented below.

Research with National Organisations

3.   The aims of this element of the method were to develop an understanding of each organisation's view on the key leadership development priorities for DCSs and identify any existing good practice with regards to leadership recruitment and development within the children's services sectors.

4.   Semi-structured telephone interviews were held with representatives from the following organisations:
- Association of Directors of Children's Services;
- Children's Workforce Network;
- Children's Workforce Development Council;
- Department for Children, Schools and Families;
- Training and Development Agency for Schools;
- National College for School Leadership.

Skills, Knowledge and Behaviours Framework

5.   The purpose of developing a skills knowledge and behaviours framework was to provide a benchmark of the current literature on the requirements of DCSs. This was achieved through pulling together information from a range of documents relevant to the subject area. This was then reviewed by members of the steering group before being used as a tool for the research team and stakeholders to help guide and inform consultations. The Framework was updated with views of stakeholders following the research. The final version is provided in Annex B: Skills, Knowledge and Behaviours Framework.

6.   The documents used to inform the first drafts of the Framework were:

- DCSF (2008). Leading and managing children's services in England: a national professional development framework (draft version)
- YCL on behalf of Academies for Sustainable Communities (2007). Gap Analysis for Sustainable Communities Professionals for the Academy for Sustainable Communities
- DCSF (2005). Statutory Guidance on the roles and responsibilities of Directors of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services;
- NCSL (2004). National Standards for Headteachers.

7.   Whilst the Framework presented in this report provides a detailed analysis of the knowledge and skills demanded of DCSs, it is important to recognise the following limitations:

- the objective of the research was to undertake a qualitative analysis of the skills and knowledge demanded of DCSs. It was not to produce a fully tested and developed Framework. It should therefore not be considered to be a definitive document;

- interviews lasted between 30 minutes and one hour, with consultees asked to review the Framework prior to interview. However, the extent to which a detailed review was undertaken varied;

- the consultations covered a range of themes, of which the Framework was just one. Therefore time spent discussing the Framework with each consultee was around ten to fifteen minutes;

- the Framework was developed based upon the most recent documents, which draw on a wide body of knowledge on leadership and management theory practice. The Framework is not an attempt to replicate these. Furthermore, It does not take into account the knowledge requirements demanded of Chief Education Officers or Directors of Social Services;

- the revised Framework has not been re-reviewed by the consultees.

Case Studies

8.   The aim of the case studies was to provide an in depth understanding of the views of a range of stakeholders on the training and development needs of leaders of children's services taking their area as context. Case study areas were selected to provide a mix of authorities based on a range of criteria including region, CPA scores and other contextual LA characteristics.

9.   The table below provides an indicative outline of the range of consultees spoken to and how long for in each area. The breadth of consultation required was achieved in each area.

Local Area Case Study Interview Schedule	
Local Authority Chief Executives x 1 (30 minutes)	Telephone
Lead Members of Children's Services x 1 (30 minutes)	Telephone
Directors of Children's Services x 1 (1 hour)	Face to Face
Assistant Director of Children's Services Directorates - up to 4 (45 minutes)	Face to Face / Telephone
Non-LA members of Children's Trusts - 2nd Tier equivalents – e.g. health, justice, 3rd sector (4 x 30 minutes)	Telephone
Children's Workforce Development Managers x 1 (1 hour)	Face to Face
Children's Service Advisers, Government Offices x 1 (45 minutes)	Telephone
Recruitment agencies & training/development organisations (local, regional, national as identified) – as necessary	Telephone

10.   The case studies and relevant characteristics are detailed below. As can be seen by the selection, a good mix was achieved across most of the relevant characteristics, except for the fact that all were either improving well or strongly.

Local Area Characteristics						
Area	Region	Rural/ Urban	Authority Type	CPA CS (2006)	CPA CS (2007)	Direction of Travel
Area 1	SW	Large Urban	Unitary	1	2	Improving well
Area 2	SE	Mixed Rural	CC	3	3	Improving well
Area 3	E	Large Urban	Unitary	2	2	Improving well
Area 4	Y and H	Rural 50	Unitary	3	3	Improving well
Area 5	NE	Major Urban	Met Dist	3	3	Improving strongly
Area 6	Y and H	Major Urban	Met Dist	3	3	Improving well

11.   The approach to setting up and undertaking consultations involved:

- DCSF contacted selected authorities and outlined broad case study requirements;
- York Consulting contacted the Personal Assistant (PA) of the DCS to introduce the study, identify potential dates and outline documentation required for review prior to the visit (including local structures, CYP Plan etc);
- PA of the DCS sent relevant information to York Consulting, and arranged an initial informal telephone conversation with DCS to clarify expectations;
- York Consulting sent research tools to the PA in advance of the consultations, including the Skills Framework;
- PA identified a key individual who could provide contextual background information to York Consulting on the local area and structure of Children's Services prior to visit;
- York Consulting / PA arranged a date to undertake a visit to the area and interview people identified in the table above.
- Further interviews were undertaken over the telephone;
- A case study report on each area was produced to inform the overall research. A short report was sent back to each local area involved.

Telephone Consultations

12. The aim of the telephone consultation was to test out the emerging findings from the case studies and explore the issues identified with a wider cohort of DCSs.

13. Sixteen members of the ADCS agreed to take part in the consultations which were semi-structured and carried out over the telephone.

ANNEX B
SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND BEHAVIOURS FRAMEWORK

Director of Children's Services: Knowledge and Skills Framework

1.   This document presents the knowledge and skills required of Directors of Children's Services. It was developed to inform the DCSF commissioned study researching the development needs of senior local leaders and managers of children's services. The original framework was based upon a number of published documents including the DCSF's Professional Development Framework and Championing Children. It has since been updated to reflect both additional documents sourced throughout the study, as well as the views of consulted stakeholders.

2.   Whilst the Framework provides a detailed analysis of the knowledge and skills demanded of DCSs, it is important to recognise the following limitations:

- the objective of the research was to undertake a qualitative analysis of the skills and knowledge demanded of DCSs. It was not to produce a fully tested and developed Framework. It should therefore not be considered to be a definitive document;

- interviews lasted between 30 minutes and one hour, with consultees asked to review the Framework prior to interview. However, the extent to which a detailed review was undertaken varied;

- the consultations covered a range of themes, of which the Framework was just one. Therefore time spent discussing the Framework with each consultee was around ten to fifteen minutes;

- the Framework was developed based upon the most recent documents, which draw on a wide body of knowledge on leadership and management theory practice. The Framework is not an attempt to replicate these. Furthermore, It does not take into account the knowledge requirements demanded of Chief Education Officers or Directors of Social Services;

- the revised Framework has not been re-reviewed by the consultees.

3.   The stakeholders consulted broadly agreed that the original Framework used in consultations, which draws upon the published literature, represented the knowledge and skills required to serve as an effective Director of Children's Services. However, there was some difference in stakeholders' views on the priority given to different elements depending on their professional background. A number of consultees also identified that there was also a requirement to:

- clearly differentiate between skills and knowledge;

- provide a greater level of emphasis to some elements of the Framework; and

- provide a greater level of detail of the specific skills and knowledge required.

4.   The text which follows illustrates this point, based on York Consulting's assessment of one of the case study areas.

Case Study Assessment: The Framework
In this case study area, it was generally felt that the skills framework did represent the skills knowledge and behaviours needed. However, prioritising these characteristics depends on the perspective and background of the interviewee. Leadership came first for some, including characteristics such as drive, commitment, compassion, achieving objectives. For others, safeguarding and promoting welfare was critical.

5. The Framework has been updated and re-structured into the following elements to more effectively differentiate the different elements required to fulfil the demands of the role:

- principal accountabilities;
- personal qualities and values;
- professional characteristics;
- knowledge, skills and abilities.

Knowledge and Skills Framework
Principal Accountabilities
Corporate
Act as chief adviser to the political administration on all matters to do with children, young people and families
Provide support to the democratic processes of the council
Develop and foster relationships with government, professional bodies and other national, regional and local organisations to represent and promote interests and influence on national and international policy matters
Lead on council wide projects that deliver the effective management of change and service improvement, cross service working and creative solutions within the Council and directorate
Directorate
Professional responsibility and accountability for the effectiveness, availability and value for money of the Local Authority children's services
Leadership both within the Local Authority to secure and sustain the necessary changes to culture and practice, and beyond it so that services improve outcomes for all and are organised around children and young people's needs
Build and sustain effective partnerships with and between those local and out-of-area bodies, including the private, voluntary and community sectors, who also provide children's services in order to focus resources (financial, human, physical or any other resources) jointly on improving outcomes for children and young people, particularly in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
Personal Qualities and Values
- A passion for the children's rights and entitlements agenda
- High levels of motivation, enthusiasm, commitment and flexibility
- A high degree of probity and integrity
- Strong commitment to public service
- Display empathy, honesty, impartiality and respect for others
- Celebrate diversity and promote social inclusion and equality of opportunity
- Exercise a high degree of self-awareness and knowledge limitations
Professional Characteristics
- Lead by example with an empowering and open style
- Command respect through confident, professional demeanour
- Inspire self and others
- Be credible and resilient
- Drive to seek creative solutions to solve problems
- Work collaboratively

Knowledge and Skills Framework
- Communicate clear purpose and direction - Act and think corporately and collaboratively - Deal with ambiguity and change - Develop self and others - Act as a strong reflective, lateral and analytical thinker - Act courageously when facing tough decisions - Anticipate, manage and take risks - Challenge, support and facilitate others to move outside of their comfort zone - Remain robust under pressure and be able to work to tight deadlines

Knowledge and Skills Framework		
Role Requirement	**Knowledge**	**Skills and Abilities**
Shaping the future	- In depth knowledge of CYP and non-CYP specific policy which will contribute to improving outcomes for children and young people	- Ability to develop, communicate and gain ownership for a clear vision and direction - Ability to focus on the overview rather than the minutiae - Highly developed oral, written and presentation skills
Partnership and inter-agency working	- Strong working knowledge and understanding of the principles of change management - Understand the dynamics of conflict - Understanding the discrete cultures, values and principles and how these affect working practices - Understanding of budgetary and political levers to help drive change - Understanding of the issues facing local government and wider sectors and their implications for planning and service delivery - Knowledge and understanding of the opportunities of collaborative working, e.g. Sustainable Communities	- Ability to lead/broker the change process - Ability to build effective teams and relationships which are not dependent on single portfolios, service areas or hierarchies - Ability to build a culture that seeks to raise children's aspirations and expectations - Ability to develop trust and shared purpose / values - Ability to inspire and influence others to commit and to contribute to inter agency working - Ability to negotiate to achieve mutual agreement - Ability to lever change through use of budgetary / political tools - Ability to use 'emotional intelligence' to win hearts and minds
Strategic management	<u>Securing accountability and being accountable</u> - Strong knowledge of public services legislative, policy and accountability frameworks to underpin multi-agency working, (and knowing where to go for the detail) - Knowledge of the principles and practice of quality assurance systems - Knowledge and development of processes to identify and manage risks (anticipation and awareness) as well as escalate and deal with concerns	- Ability to effectively prioritise issues facing the local area, and wider region - Effective use of political levers to manage accountability across a broad range of partners - Ability to maintain the focus and drive behind continuous improvement - Ability to provide clarity in roles and responsibilities in provision of services in context of differing performance regimes
	<u>Financial management</u> - ~~In depth knowledge of business planning~~	- Effective use of financial levers to manage accountability across a broad range of partners - Financial creativity through pooling of budgets to achieve

- In depth knowledge of strategic budget management

Role Requirement	Knowledge	Skills and Abilities
	and fiscal responsibility - Knowledge of leadership systems to ensure value for money of service provision - Knowledge and understanding of risks and their management - Prioritisation and effective use of resources	outcomes for young people
	<u>Analysis, evaluation and decision making</u> - Detailed knowledge of local trends, local need and gaps in provision - Knowledge of appropriate management information and measures to develop, assess and improve performance / standards - Assessment of risk	- Ability to engage wider staff to identify root causes and shape and deliver service standards - Reflective, lateral and analytical thinker - Ability to make clear judgements to move issues – make decisions about what is/is not important
The corporate and political dimension	- High level knowledge and understanding of local political and democratic structures - Knowledge and understanding of boards/structures beyond the LA/Government - High level of knowledge of national political context and development	- Ability to establish positive relationships with elected Members - High levels of political astuteness - common sense, ability to read the rules, be alert to how people/politicians will react. - Ability to engender wider support for the ECM agenda - Ability to set and deliver realistic objectives in accordance with Members' priorities - Ability to effectively manage the reputation of the local authority with its key stakeholders, partners and with national government - Effective management of media to promote the local area and manage negative press - Ability to operate and negotiate delivery of strategies across departments and with the partnership
Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children :	- Knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children at all stages - including protecting children from deliberate harm, health and safety issues, bullying, racist abuse, meeting the needs of those	

Knowledge and Skills Framework		
Role Requirement	**Knowledge**	**Skills and Abilities**
	with medical conditions, providing first aid, meeting the needs of drug and substance misuse, providing effective school security. - Knowledge of performance indicators to review directorate performance - Understanding confidentiality and data sharing issues	
Intelligent commissioning	- Understanding and knowledge of 'intelligent commissioning' which reflect the principles of the DCSF guidance. - Understanding risk and reward approaches of contracting and commissioning - Understanding of the use of commissioning in diverse contexts	
Workforce development	- Knowledge of strengths, weaknesses and gaps within leadership and management structures - Knowledge of effective workforce development strategies - Knowledge of how to build and manage multi-disciplinary teams and joint appointments - Knowledge of how/where to develop appropriate partnerships	- Instilling and creating drive and motivation - Upholding parity of esteem between different professionals - Nurturing different professional skills/knowledge - Encouraging reflective professional practice - Coaching and mentoring to develop others

ANNEX C
MODELS OF CHANGE

Case Study 1: Model of Change

1) Changes made
- The Children Services Directorate incorporates Children, Young People and Families
- DCS appointed T2 managers with a strong commitment to the change process and who were 'complementary and supplementary' to one another to manage the scale of change
- Bringing in ADs with wider experience although majority LA background. Two of T2 directors from non-LA backgrounds (health and youth offending service)

Wider management portfolio
- Broader remit of T2 posts reflected in the integrated services directorate which was expanded to include the following posts at second Tier level:
  - Director Learning Services (Enjoying & Achieving)
  - Director Inclusion, Voice and Influence
  - Director Commissioning Policy & Performance
  - Director Resources and Access
  - Director Borough Wide Services (Health)
  - Director Locality Services (Safe)
  - Director Targeted Services (Positive Contribution).
- T2 managers plan and operate in relation to the 5 ECM outcomes
- Establishing 7 locality teams to deliver integrated services. Locality team managers are being recruited from a range of disciplines and will be managing multi-disciplinary teams (managing staff from 4 agencies working to different terms and conditions). The Director of Locality Services will line manage the locality team managers and is working closely with the Director of Borough Wide Services on the appointments
- Silo working and lack of joined up working being addressed by reorganisation of CYP directorate. Providing opportunities for collaboration and joint working in a way not done before. Need for T2 managers to be 'less single minded as a manager' and more outward looking. Increasingly their 'heads are above the parapet' and they are involved in 'environmental scanning' (i.e. looking, along with the DCS at what the future priorities within the LA will be)

Greater partnership working
- Greater partnership working reflected in the creation by the DCS of a Joint Leadership Team (JLT), including: Deputy DCS, all T2 managers and key senior managers from partner organisations (council, PCT, hospital foundation trust, fire and rescue service, police and voluntary and community sector)
- JLT chaired by the DCS and member of JLT assigned to strategic lead on each ECM outcome area. Team meets fortnightly
- T2 managers regularly working with colleagues from other services and questioning how those services operate. Need to understand how other services operate structurally and operationally and the language of other services, as well as being prepared to give up power to the partnership - 'partnership is more than inviting people to meetings' (partner manager)

Increased political and corporate engagement/responsibility
- Introduction of fortnightly meetings between Lead Member for Children's Services and T2 managers
- T2 managers submit 6 monthly reports to LMCS on key priorities, issues and concerns

Case Study 1: Model of Change

- Increased corporate responsibility for T2 managers linked to wider remit/role e.g. Director Learning Services no longer just working with schools as now has post-16 responsibility including colleges 'no longer answerable to 1 master'

Greater strategic working
- Reflecting need for greater delegation and less involvement in operational activities. More reliant on others – have to be prepared to relinquish power
- Need for T2 managers to be more outward looking and less service focused

2) This is what has been done to support change

- Partnership/integrated working
- Leadership team modelling change agenda for rest of the workforce and replicating practitioners work within the LA e.g. TAC
- JLT providing experiential learning and opportunities for T2 leaders to gain skills via joint working with other sectors
- Case work methodology used as a powerful learning tool at all levels (including JLT) providing opportunities for systemic change leading to earlier intervention and prevention and better quality services
- Jointly funded roles at T2 and T3 and combined teams to look at particular issues such as CAF
- Extended leadership team meetings for T3 managers across all agencies
- Fortnightly or monthly one to ones between T2 and T3 managers providing opportunities for support in developing multi-agency working e.g. T2 managers providing direct support for T3 managers developing multi-agency teams
- Integrated services used as a focus for all T3 manager events
- University providing management development courses designed specifically for the LA focusing on leadership and partnership work

Wider management portfolio
- Peer coaching: every senior manager identifies a peer with whom they can talk through particular issues and suggest alternative strategies – seen as valuable in providing opportunities for T2 managers to be involved in creating vision rather than articulating responsibilities
- Regular one to ones between DCS and T2 managers providing opportunities to discuss training needs and filtering work
- Directors conduct Performance and Development Reviews (PDRs) of other directors providing cross-fertilisation of ideas
- T2 managers attended courses to develop particular knowledge areas

Political and corporate engagement
- PDR processes helps all staff understand their contribution to council and corporate objectives, aware of 'golden threads'
- Regular opportunities for T2 officers to deputise for DCS in fulfilling political and corporate responsibilities
- Council wide projects led by T2 managers
- T3 managers regular meetings with T2 managers focusing on the corporate and directorate agenda and providing them with opportunities to feed into those processes
- T3 management development programme (council wide programme) – all T3 managers were required to go through a programme which tested key corporate

Case Study 1: Model of Change

management competency sets and highlighted areas for development. The output was a report to use with the individual's line manager to develop a bespoke action plan

Other actions supporting the change process
- Performance clinics for T1 and T2 leaders
- Training provided by VSC for T2 leaders
- Use of Action Learning Sets

3) This is what is planned to support future change

Partnership/integrated working
- Built in three additional posts to assist in the management of locality managers (focus on quality & performance)
- The possibility of 'innovation workshops' where key managers from partner organisations come together to explore challenges and issues
- Looking to provide joint training focusing on commissioning so aim to provide common understanding of commissioning/procurement
- LA and PCT leaders are developing a 'culture change course' for locality managers and team leaders (T3). This 'Organisational Development Programme' is currently being devised jointly by the Workforce Development Manager and the Head of Learning at the PCT
- This programme will provide a mixture of face-to-face learning, virtual discussion, action learning and resources. Initially the programme will provide a toolkit for locality managers (T3) and team managers (T4) but will be rolled out to other levels at a later date
- The toolkit focuses on providing managers with the change management skills required for integrated working, it will also be used to identify skills gaps and provide support to ensure those needs are met.
- It is envisaged that initially there will be a two day induction programme on core aspects of the role, followed by a one day follow-up session three weeks later. Then two Action Learning Set days will be provided which will be flexible dependent on the needs identified by participants. The programme will also provide an on-line network with resources and forums for support

Political and corporate engagement
- The LA is currently reviewing its Corporate Management Development Programme

4) Challenges identified

Wider management portfolio
- Resulting in difficulties for T2 managers understanding what their core responsibilities are, trying to meet the information demands of wider portfolio was seen as challenging

Partnership/integrated working
- Delays in implementing changes impacting on the effectiveness of delivery e.g. re locality teams having to brief people again, revisit the principles 'ok with the big picture but still unsure how this was going to operate on the ground' (partner manager)
- T2 and T3 managers are/will be responsible for managing teams of staff with a range of different terms and conditions which will be challenging in terms of both

Case Study 1: Model of Change
operational leadership and strategic vision • Partnership working, by its very nature, requires some abdication of power, T2 managers require skills similar to those of the DCS in relation to influencing people they do not directly have control over but may be responsible for • Technical ICT issues are impacting on the effectiveness of integrated working e.g. LA and health ICT systems incompatible • A concern that mindsets might not be changing in some areas and that changes were happening round the fringes not changing mainstream services • Conflict with corporate structures when developing training programmes for staff from a wide range of services. The following example was provided by way of exemplification someone from PCT heading up a locality team would not be identified on HR structures because not on council pay roll – still separate employers even if are a virtual single organisation – so have to conform to separate employers' structures and job evaluation rules

Case study 2: Model of Change

1) Changes made

- The Children Services Department (CSD) brings together the former Education and Social Services Departments. CSD also incorporates adult, community and family learning - provision of which is managed through the Adult and Community Learning Unit. Although Adult Services (AS) forms a separate department within the Council, senior management teams from CSD and AS meet quarterly
- A strategic decision was taken by the LA to appoint a DCS from a background of social care. Education was already a strength of the LA and it was felt that this appointment would raise the profile of social care, enable the implementation of change in the service and support the successful integration of the Social Services Department with Education to form CSD. The DCS brought with them the vision of placing the 'child at the centre' and has used this vision to focus CSD and its partners, encouraging them to be focused on outcomes and the ways in which these objectives can be achieved
- Despite the size of this two Tier authority there are only three officers at Tier 2. Co-ordination of policy and implementation of change takes place at Area and District level. (see Wider Management Portfolio)
- Although at first sight two of the three T2 posts seem to reinforce old boundaries there were particular considerations for the LA in their appointment
  - Deputy Director for Education and Inclusion – appointed from a strong background in education and well regarded in the area. The LA would not risk de-stabilisation of a strong schools sector and needed someone who would give schools reassurance about and recognition of their role within the emerging agenda as well as taking opportunities to introduce the changes needed
  - Deputy Director for Children and Families – appointed from a strong background in children's services provision – practice and administration. The LA needed someone who would strengthen the social care sector, steer integration and strengthen its management
  - Assistant Director of Performance and Resources – has both national and local government experience and has overall responsibility for liaison with the Primary Care Trust (PCT), developing the Children and Young People's Plan (C&YPP), taking forward CSD work under the Local Area Agreement (LAA) and the development and implementation of the Workforce Development Plan

Wider management portfolio
- The DCS has made a shift in approach to their role now that the strategy is bedding down. They have moved from being the 'salesperson' (very hands on, meeting and greeting, selling the strategy to partners and reassuring them about their place in that strategy) to a strategic (both local and national) and corporate role. Although links with partner organisations are maintained through Chairing the Partnership Management Board as well as involvement in CAMHS there is now greater delegation for partnership working and delivery to T2 level
- All T2 officers are strong managers who perform at corporate level. This has supported the move of the DCS into a more strategic role. However, they have remits which go wider than their immediate fields of expertise which require them to have a greater breadth of knowledge than previously. One consultee commented that their consideration of issues in their own field was now impacted by exposure to issues in another. For example, how the educational achievement of children can be impacted by their social conditions
- The size of the LA means that co-ordination and implementation of change takes place through a number of Area Directors at 3rd Tier level. There are four Area Directors for Education and Inclusion and three for Children and Families. A large number of District Managers work to these Area Directors to implement change. In order to test whether

integration of delivery is possible at district level a post has been created to represent jointly the areas of education and social care and is currently being evaluated

Greater partnership working

- The Children and Young People's Standing Conference and Children and Young People's Partnership Management Board were both established by CSD with its partners in 2005. The Conference is chaired by the Lead Member for Children's Services, and the Management Board by the DCS
- District Councils are represented on the Partnership Management Board and have played an important role in the development of the Partnership, the CYPP and the LAA. Each District Council has identified an officer with a District lead for children
- Representatives of the three headteacher conferences are also on the Partnership Board as are two representatives of the voluntary sector. This was a key objective for CSD to ensure the close involvement of both sectors in development of the Trust

- Partners are also represented on a number of sub-groups which report to the Conference and Management Board:
  - The Local Area Agreement Board and Executive
  - The CAMHS Trust Board
  - The Local Safeguarding Children Board
  - The Teenage Pregnancy Partnership Board
  - The Drug and Alcohol Action Board
  - The Youth Offending Team Management Board

- The LA's CPA reported 'good multi-agency working which is child-centred'. The commissioning model for CAMHS was found to provide a good example of partnership working to improve outcomes for children
- Partnerships between health and education and with the voluntary sector were areas for improvement. The first had been impacted by a huge restructuring of the PCT. This has now been completed which gives better opportunity for future liaison and co-ordination
- The second is being addressed through the formation of a LA funded post in the voluntary sector to support an 'Alliance' of children's voluntary organisations. The Alliance is working to improve communication, information streams and sharing of best practice across the voluntary sector. It is also working with CSD and the wider Partnership to strengthen lines of communication between the statutory and voluntary sector. There are quarterly meetings between the Alliance's steering group and the DCS which supplement other routine meetings between the voluntary sector and officers in CSD

Increased political and corporate engagement/responsibility

- The county operates a system of Cabinet governance. There is an Executive Lead Member for Children's Education Services and one for Children and Families. These Lead Members work closely with officers within CSD and are integral to the decision making process. There is a Children and Young People's Select Committee. The Lead Member for Children's Education Services chairs the Children and Young People's Standing Conference
- All T2 officers are strong managers with previous backgrounds at local and national level. They take on a corporate role as well as specific to the CSD. They represent the CSD at meetings with Lead Members/elected members and at some corporate boards and liaise directly with key partner groups to implement change. They are responsible for the 'intelligent commissioning' of services with partners in the Trust

Greater strategic working

- The Local Area Agreement (LAA) is seen as key in linking delivery to the priorities and outcomes in the CYPP. The aim of the LAA is to bring together local partners in order to

Case study 2: Model of Change

achieve better outcomes for communities. These outcomes are in four blocks: children and young people; healthy communities and older people; safe and strong communities and economic development.   The county's LAA is based on eight priority outcomes, which support the priorities in the CYPP:

- improve the life chances for children and young people
- deliver first class support for business, promote skills and workforce development and address barriers to employment
- improve the co-ordination of transport and access to services across the County
- improve access to housing and accommodation
- tackle crime and anti-social behaviour recognising the harm of drug and alcohol misuse
- promote and improve the health and well-being of people
- use material resources more efficiently
- empower local people to have a greater voice and influence over the decision making and the delivery of services.

- It is planned that in time both will link with the developing strategies for Sustainable Communities and the Regional Improvement Efficiency Plan (RIEP)

2) This is what has been done to support change

Partnership/integrated working
- Strategic management groups bring partners together
- Adoption of a 'child-centred' approach guided by the ECM outcomes and the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Re-structuring of key partner groups is improving the potential for better partnership working and communication e.g. PCT reduced from seven to one organisation; County Constabulary has created six operational command units for Community Safety/Public Protection teams, three of which are co-terminus with county boundaries; the Learning and Skills Council restructured into four partnership teams
- With the Connexions grant diverted to the CSD in April 2008 a specification for Integrated Youth Support Services (for which this LA was a pilot) has been drawn up between the two organisations
- There is a Senior Managers' Forum which is considered a powerful tool to lead the process of re-engineering dual roles and encouraging integration
- Evaluation of a joint post at district level to judge potential for more integrated working at point of delivery
- Multi-agency induction on the work of CSD and training for the Common Assessment Framework forms part of the LA's training framework

Wider management portfolio
- T2 officers have taken the view that it is their own responsibility for accumulating the knowledge needed to widen their expertise. This has been done through both formal and informal meetings with colleagues; national and county policy papers; meetings with partners and briefings on partners' work; talking to colleagues within 'personal networks; using conferences and ADCS events to discuss issues and listen to others' experiences
- A network of CSD 2nd Tier officers facilitated by the Government Office meets four times a year and provides 'a helpful forum to exchange ideas and learn together'

Political and corporate engagement
- Only one officer at T2 expressed the need for more help with operating within the political arena
- The strategic approach being taken at county and regional level to bring action plans

Case study 2: Model of Change
together to support the objectives for the CYPP (see Greater Strategic Working above)

3) This is what is planned to support future change

- Although the authority has a comprehensive Learning Zone and the authority's performance management system includes development of competencies to develop the individual, little of this work is focused on the senior management levels. The Chief Executive has now commissioned work on a leadership development programme to support succession planning and skills development at corporate level
- The CSD's own Workforce Development Strategy is in development and is focused on facilitating effective multi-agency working at 3rd Tier level and below. It will link with the integrated qualifications framework being developed by the CWDC
- There is the potential for the RIEP to help communication and multi-agency working across the County and region. Draft proposals currently under discussion include:
    - Action learning and shared networks to build partnership capacity
    - Peer challenge and assistance with targeted support in response to particular difficulties
    - Member and officer skills development on empowerment, engagement and commissioning
    - Strategic workshops with voluntary and community partners to build trust and confidence
    - Web-based information and toolkits to help create LAA/LSPs

4) Challenges identified

Partnership/integrated working

- Need to continue to find opportunities to break down barriers and foster closer integration
- Partnership with health and voluntary sector need strengthening
- Size of LA has the potential for fragmentation of approach if integration of functions not achieved
- Need for further expertise in intelligent commissioning of services from partners
- Delays with implementing Workforce Development Strategy have impacted on effectiveness of integrated working

department for
children, schools and families