

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SUB-GROUP

Summary of Key Issues

Members are requested to:

- Note the progress made by the Workforce Development Sub Group
- Endorse the use of a questionnaire to identify activities required to refresh the Workforce Development Strategy
- Support in principle the proposal to develop an Intranet page

Purpose

To outline the work and progress of the new Workforce Development Sub-Group

Background

In developing Oxfordshire's Workforce Development Strategy, the overall aim continues to be to enable and equip the Children and Young People's workforce to deliver high quality services and to be able to respond flexibly to the Every Child Matters agenda to improve outcomes for Children, Young People and Families. Board members will be aware from an earlier report that a key element of Oxfordshire's Strategy was identified as follows:

To further develop multi-agency training

Key Priorities

Through ongoing dialogue between members of the sub group and Shared Services, the concept and detail of the workforce strategy has been further developed with a view to achieving the following workforce objectives:

- Training

The sub-group have addressed the possibility of relaunching the Children's Induction Standards Workbook across agencies making it available to all those joining the children's workforce. A range of Common Induction Standards have already been identified by the Children's Workforce Development Council which are suitable for application in a range of settings across the One Children's Workforce. The standards indicate a common basic level that everyone in the workforce needs to reach. Funding from the Children's

Workforce Development Council had subsidised the original publication of the Oxfordshire Children's Induction Standards Workbook. As part of the drive to embed a common set of skills and knowledge throughout the One Children's Workforce Oxfordshire's NHS Primary Care Trust will be piloting the Workbook with a cohort of approximately 30 new recruits starting in January 2009.

- Workforce Learning and Development

The intention of the Learning and Development Plan is broad at this stage because we do not have all the necessary information, we are still in the process of getting appropriate representation for parts of the workforce to help us identify gaps in learning and development.

In addition the identification of important activities to finalise the Workforce Development Strategy will also become apparent following a survey of the workforce using a Children's Workforce Development Council questionnaire which will focus on those aspects of workforce reform that are crucial to developing a "One Children's Workforce". The information collated via the questionnaires will enable us to understand areas for potential workforce improvements.

However, for the present the plan will build on the work of the Common Induction Standards Workbook developing an Induction training programme that directly supports the workbook. The Learning and Development needs of the Children's workforce will need to be reviewed in the light of forthcoming guidance following the recent investigations around the case of Baby P. The plan is now being progressed and there will be flexibility in terms of needs as they arise during the course of the year. It is acknowledged that HR can and should play a key role within Oxfordshire's developing workforce strategy. Our HR Business Partner with Shared Services has been charged with the responsibility of addressing the HR implications of forthcoming new guidance.

- Communication - development of an Intranet page

To raise the profile of workforce development and its role in meeting the Children's services agenda the launch of a Workforce Development internet page in 2009 is proposed. It would encompass overarching multi-agency development, part of which could be in the public domain and part password protected to allow access to more detailed information by colleagues. It would present opportunities to publicise training and other

workforce opportunities. This facility will widen training opportunities for some groups within the workforce and will include a previously unavailable web based version of the Children's Induction Standards Workbook. In addition to providing training information the website will be used to publicise aspects of Oxfordshire's Workforce Development Strategy inviting feedback. A paper will be presented to the Board with further details with respect to "hosting" once further discussions have taken place involving ICT.

Recommendations

Members are requested to note the progress made by the Workforce Development Sub Group to date.

Members are requested to endorse the use of a questionnaire to identify activities required to refresh the overall Workforce Development Strategy.

Members are requested to support in principle at this stage the proposal to develop an Intranet page.

Sian Rodway
Lead Officer, Planning, Performance and Communications
01865 815498
sian.rodway@oxfordshire.gov.uk