

# ORGANISING FOR QUALITY

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### Responding to this consultation

These should be e mailed to [consultations@cafcass.gov.uk](mailto:consultations@cafcass.gov.uk), or sent by post to Chelsey Bonehill, Policy Manager, CAF/CASS National Office, South Quay Plaza 3, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, 189 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH. All responses should be received by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2007.

## A letter from Anthony Douglas

12<sup>th</sup> December 2006

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Dear colleague

I hope you find time to read and comment on *Organising for Quality* and a revised draft of the proposed National Standards for CAF/CASS. These papers are being issued to all CAF/CASS staff and a small number of key external partner agencies. They build on the Every Day Matters consultation. An update report on that is also attached.

Our work is enduringly important to all the children and families we serve. Like you, I believe the work we do day in, day out, makes a positive difference to the lives of children and young people. Evidence of how best to make a contribution to positive outcomes is growing, with the publication in the last few years of major new research findings. The proposed National Standards seek to incorporate that knowledge into a stronger framework than we currently have.

*Organising for Quality* contains a set of proposals intended to help us successfully meet the challenges we face over the next few years. That will be a tough time for all of us in the public sector, with resources under further pressure. The consultation paper proposes ways in which we can move towards being able to offer a guarantee of immediate constructive involvement in all the cases referred to us, as well as being able to guarantee the highest quality service throughout a case where that is needed. In order to do that, some ways in which the organisation works will need to change as will some working practices.

I am prepared to change in whatever ways are needed. I know you are too.

The consultation period ends on 28 February 2007. Do please let us have any suggestions for approaching the future differently, or if you have further comments on any of the National Standards, they will be as welcome as previous comments were – those comments helped to shape this version, as we endeavour to find the best possible version of the Standards to run with from next April.

Best wishes,



**Anthony Douglas**  
Chief Executive

# ORGANISING FOR QUALITY

## 1. Executive Summary

CAFCASS has developed a new practice and organisational model aimed at delivering better outcomes for children and young people using the family courts.

The proposals outlined in this paper are a response to the need to put more CAFCASS time and resources into practice development, thereby improving the service we deliver.

*Why do we need to change?*

- We need to drive up our practice standards, our standards of supervision and the management of practice in order to improve outcomes for children and families
- We must continue to make the efficiency savings required of us by central Government
- Demand for our services is continuing to rise faster than our resources and radical steps must be taken to ensure we can absorb this
- We need to put more resources into the front-line and develop national standards in order to ensure that we are providing a consistently high quality service across the country.

*Key areas of change:*

The practice and organisational model has been developed to put the greatest percentage of our resources possible into our front-line services. This will deliver new services to practitioners such as:

- More support for front-line practitioners in their work, including an expansion of support to gain a specialist PQ award
- Access to a national mentoring scheme
- More practice support and supervision
- Access to a Practice Advice Line
- Better sharing of good practice models
- A reduction in bureaucracy, through a simplification plan.

We need to operate more efficiently as an organisation and create savings in some areas in order to put more resources where they are needed most – in front-line services. We plan to do this by:

- Establishing a National Business Centre to handle some routine administrative processes and transactions

- Improving our IT systems
- Creating manageable workloads for staff and paying more competitive salaries where these fall short of the market level
- Introducing performance budgeting for local services (April 2008)
- Bringing in a bonus system to recognise and reward excellence.

## **What changes will you see?**

### **For Service Users**

We want to maximise our contribution to positive outcomes for the children and families we work with. We plan do to this through developing a stronger performance culture, seeking more feedback from Service Users and revising the complaints procedures to make them easier to use.

### **For Practitioners**

We will support our practitioners by increasing the amount of support and supervision they receive on complex cases, including more training for supervisors in a reflective supervision model. Practice supervision, observation and appraisal will become a much stronger part of the operational culture.

### **For Service Managers**

The Service Manager role will be refocused so that more time (70%) is spent with staff in teams on cases. The remaining time (30%) will be spent externally on local inter-agency working. Lower staff - management ratios will be possible through the introduction of 'practice supervisors' to directly support service managers.

### **For Business Support Staff**

The new roles established in the business support review - administration manager, office manager and administrator - will be implemented. Business support services will be reconfigured into the National Business Centre model.

### **For CAF/CASS**

The proposed new structure is designed to support our priorities and emphasis on practice development. Key points are as follows:

- Regional teams will remain in their current shape until at least April 2008.
- 11 Regional Directors will reduce to 5 Operational Directors
- 10.6 Regional Business Managers will reduce to 4 National Business Managers
- By 2010 around 30 new service areas will be established, replacing the 10 current regions. Each new service area will be run by one or more Head of Service (depending on size)

- The following service areas will be established initially: London (4 sectors); Birmingham; North and South Tyne; Durham and Teeside
- New change programmes in the West Midlands and Yorkshire and Humberside, in addition to those in London and the South East, are already underway. The remaining regions are required to implement practice development programmes by January 2007.

### **When will this happen?**

All programmes will be phased in between April 2007 and March 2010. A three-year programme is a realistic timescale to deliver the scale of change proposed.

### **Process**

Senior managers in CAF/CASS will work closely with service user groups, stakeholder groups, trade unions and professional associations throughout this process of change, which will continue to be coordinated by the National Change Programme Manager.

A development centre will be set up for post-holders in the management groups affected by change.

An impact assessment of the whole programme on service users and staff will be carried out regularly.

### **How will we know when practice has improved?**

We plan to audit our services and each individual practitioner and manager between April and September 2007 to establish the baseline level. Internal inspection teams will be used. A repeat audit will be carried out annually, the first one being in September 2008. Service users will be involved in the process. That way, we will know whether practice has improved, stayed the same, or worsened. External inspections will also play a part.

## **2. Key Proposals**

### **Practice Development**

1. The introduction of 'practice supervisor' roles
2. Development of a clear National Practice Model
3. Expand CAFCASS' early intervention work
4. Accredited report gatekeepers
5. A new post of Head of Knowledge, Learning and Practice Development (KLPD)
6. Within the KLPD function, a lead manager system to be introduced for each key area of practice
7. A Practice Advice Line to be piloted
8. New research into practice posts
9. Practice guidance to become shorter and sharper based on practice tips
10. As an extension of quality assurance, to accept representations from service users during a case, albeit with safeguards

### **Staff Development**

11. Accreditation for practitioners and managers
12. A new leadership and management development programme
13. A valuing staff programme to improve staff satisfaction and to foster a stronger corporate culture
14. Support all existing FCAs to complete a specialist PQ award
15. Establishment of a national mentoring scheme
16. An online Business Academy to develop the skills of business support staff

### **The new organisational model**

17. A reduction in the number of senior management posts
18. Refocusing of Service Manager roles (para. 20)
19. Use of specialist frontline FCA roles (para. 23)
20. Five Operational Directors to replace 11 Regional Directors
21. Four National Business Managers to replace 10.6 Regional Business Managers
22. By 2010 the ten regions to be replaced by 30 service areas run by Heads of Service
23. Four regions to have change programmes

### **A National Business Centre**

24. Developing a National Business Centre to handle some routine administrative processes and transactions
25. Evaluation of whether national functions can be more efficiently delivered via further devolution or via the proposed National Business Centre

### **Raising performance**

26. Performance budgeting for local services by 2008
27. Establishing a bonus system to recognise and reward excellence
28. Use of 'performance improvement teams' to raise standards
29. Corporate in-house services to develop clear Service Level Agreements with local teams
30. New FCAs to hold a specialist PQ award
31. Identify a baseline level of practice in CAF/CASS through an audit of all practitioners and managers
32. Use of a differential model of supervision, providing support where it is needed most.

## 3. ORGANISING FOR QUALITY

### OVERVIEW

1. *Organising for Quality* is a consultation paper being issued on 12 December 2006 throughout CAFCASS and to a small number of key external stakeholders. The consultation will end on 28 February 2007. It builds on the 2005/6 CAFCASS consultation - *Every Day Matters*.
2. A progress report on the *Every Day Matters* programme is enclosed at appendix 1 which shows how account has been taken of the major points raised in the consultation. Also enclosed at appendix 2 is the latest working draft of the proposed new CAFCASS National Standards. The proposed National Standards remain subject to consultation, so further comments are welcome.
3. The proposals are a response to the need to put more CAFCASS time and resources into practice development, thereby improving the service we deliver, as well as continuing to make the efficiency savings required of us by central Government. As demand is continuing to rise faster than our resources, radical steps must be taken to ensure both objectives are delivered simultaneously.

### MAIN PROPOSALS

4. To put more resources into the following priority areas:
  - 4.1 More support for front-line practice and practitioners in their work
  - 4.2 More knowledge learning and development programmes
  - 4.3 Paying more competitive salaries where these fall short of the market level
  - 4.4 Creating manageable workloads for staff
  - 4.5 Better IT
- By:
  - 4.6 Reducing the overall number of senior management posts

- 4.7 Introducing the role of practice supervisors as an enhanced responsibility for some Family Court Advisors with supervisory skills who do not wish to progress into management, to directly support Service Managers. Where Service Managers are supported by practice supervisors, the Service Manager will remain fully accountable for the allocation of work and staff appraisals.
- 4.8 Introducing performance budgeting for local services in April 2008, with benchmarks based on high quality and low unit costs.

### **London Change Programme**

"In 2005 (1 January to 31 October) London region allocated 14.6% of Section 31 cases (care and supervision) within 2 days of referral and 10.3% of cases took a further 3-7 days to allocate. Comparing the same 10-month period in 2006, 18.9% were allocated within 2 days and 14.6% were allocated in 3-7 days.

In London, the average time awaiting allocation was 21 days for a care case in 2005 compared to 17 days in 2006. Section 31 cases taking longer than 28 days to allocate in 2005 was 31.7% compared to 21.6% in 2006.

Since the London Change Programme initiatives were put in place (1 June to 31 October), the average time awaiting allocation has dropped to 13 days for care cases and only 9% of cases were waiting more than 28 days.

Expenditure in London rose by 6% in 2004/05 and 4% more in 2005/06. In the current financial year, we are projecting to spend 6% less.

We still have a long way to go, but we have also come a long way in just a few months, which shows that a step change in performance can be achieved."

*David Stephens, London Region*

- 4.9 Bringing in a bonus system to recognise and reward excellence
  - 4.10 Developing a specialist National Business Centre to handle an increasing number of routine administrative processes and transactions.
5. To maximise our contribution to positive outcomes for the children and families we work with, by introducing the following programmes:
    - 5.1 Over and above generic competences, accrediting all practitioners and managers in specific and/or specialist areas of work, through a baseline assessment linked to competences which is then reviewed through annual appraisals and contract reviews for self-employed contractors, carried out by accredited managers

- 5.2 Being clearer about our role in all areas of our work and spelling that out in an unambiguous National Practice Model
- 5.3 Instituting a leadership and management development programme – for practice to improve, management has to improve as well
- 5.4 Through stronger performance management and quality assurance measures, ensuring adherence to CAFCASS National Standards
- 5.5 A valuing staff programme to ensure higher staff satisfaction and engagement, which makes buy-in and compliance that much easier to achieve

### ***Valuing staff, offering opportunities and new ways of working***

Katrina Durrans, currently based in Durham and working for National Office, began working for CAFCASS a couple of years ago as a temporary administrator. She later worked full time but in a part-time capacity as both senior administrator (0.5) and Children's Rights Participation Officer (0.5).

Katrina says when she joined CAFCASS as an administrator she hoped she would have the opportunity to move into Children's Rights and when the position was advertised her Service Manager encouraged her to apply with the possibility of working 'split' or 'hybrid' roles.

Katrina says: 'One of the advantages in having two different roles was that it enabled me to expand my knowledge and understanding of different areas of the organisation. It was also great because I was able to share my experience with the team at Hebburn and feed into them what was happening nationally in Children's Rights.'

Katrina now works full-time in the Children's Rights service.

6. To continue improving performance in the following key areas:
  - 6.1 Further reducing delays in our allocation of work through a major expansion of early intervention services

### ***Norfolk Early Dispute Resolution***

Service Manager Sarah Parsons and her team ran a pilot Extended Dispute Resolution (EDR) programme between June 2005 and April 2006 in Norwich – covering two County Courts. Eastern region has the lowest number of private law cases referred for s7 reports and consequently, the best rate in the country for dispute resolution.

The aim of EDR was to encourage parents who were in the process of separation or divorce to take responsibility, negotiate arrangements and to try and improve their communication concerning their children.

EDR provided the opportunity for the family to meet with two FCAs at the CAFCASS office for four two hourly sessions, usually weekly. A short report was then prepared for the Court summarising the sessions and any agreement reached.

During the pilot 37 families were referred to the programme representing 36% of the number of potential CAFCASS Section 7 reports. Of the cases referred over 78% reached an agreement at the end of the process. In excess of 90% of cases were completed within the six week period but due to the numbers referred it was not always possible to offer an immediate appointment.

The response of the children indicated that 90% wanted to be involved in the process and 71% felt that the sessions were helpful. This scheme has been evaluated and you can read this at [http://cafweb01/intranet/downloads/extended\\_dispute\\_resolution\\_final\\_evaluation.doc](http://cafweb01/intranet/downloads/extended_dispute_resolution_final_evaluation.doc).

The process has proved to be cost-effective both in direct financial terms with lower costs for CAFCASS – but also in the use of court resources. In addition many parents were able to reach a win-win solution as opposed to the court imposed win-lose model that frequently occurs during adversarial proceedings. The success of the pilot has resulted in the scheme being extended to all courts in Norfolk and adopted as an integral element of the team's practice.

- 6.2 Use of in-house performance improvement teams to raise the standards of poorly performing services. Continuous improvement from current baselines will be the basis for this programme, not pursuit of unrealistic targets.
- 6.3 Sharing good practice models more systematically through a revamped intranet and other tools.

### ***Bristol and Bath Interviewing Children Scheme (ICS)***

The Interviewing Children Scheme (ICS) started in February 2005 as a result of a number of factors in the private law area:

- The Private Law Programme
- Local pressure, including a backlog of Section 7 reports
- The development of the Children's Rights agenda, both within CAFCASS and externally

Trevor Simpson explains how he and his team have incorporated ICS into their existing court duty systems. "When the parties attend court for the first directions hearing, a court duty officer sees them. What we try to do is see whether it might be appropriate to shorten the process and meet with the children (at this stage we will only see children who are aged 9 and above).

If the adults agree to the children being interviewed and the relevant checks have been done the case is adjourned for two weeks. Parents are expected to sign up to the principle of listening to what the children have to say about their situation.

The FCA who interviewed the parents at the court will see the child so that there is continuity. A responsible adult accompanies the children to the interview with the FCA - maybe a family friend who is seen as impartial. The children's views are sought as to what they want said to the parents and the courts and we make it clear that it is not a secret conversation.

When the case goes to court the FCA will advise the parties and the judge about what the child has said and makes a recommendation as to what should be done. The parties decide whether they accept the recommendation and will come to an agreement or whether they are going to still contest the case.

The innovation in the ICS is that we avoid going down the reports route and are able to help resolve a case in 2 weeks, rather than pursuing the lengthier Section 7 report.

The usage and take up of ICS has increased by 50% this year. The decrease in Section 7 reports is almost exactly proportionate to the number of ICS cases we've had. In general ICS helps to free up our resources and crucially helps to reduce conflict. We will be working on our feedback mechanisms from parents and children but judges and solicitors say they like it."

### ***North Tyne Court Conciliation Service (CCS)***

Denise Todd, Service Manager for Newcastle talks about her team's work to reduce family conflict. She explains, "With the exception of Prohibitive Steps Orders, emergency situations and very serious cases, all first applications to court are automatically referred into the CCS.

The court sends out the invitation letter, which has led to high participation rates and importantly high service user satisfaction. We see the respondent first (in line with the comments made in the private law inspection) and then the applicant. We see them on separate days for safety reasons.

They have a first appointment at the CAFCASS office in most instances. The purpose is to provide them with information and identify the key issues. We also discuss the results of the police and social services checks with each interviewee.

At the end of seeing both we file a full risk assessment including assessment of emotional harm. Have the issues been resolved? What are the issues remaining? We attend the First Directions Hearing with the report we've written and go to the pre-court slots with the parties and their solicitors (15 minutes) and then the 15-minute meeting with the judge.

We have a dedicated team of FCAs involved in CCS. They are all volunteers who are on secondment to CCS.

The project has been a great success and we are working on several new developments:

1. A new interview form that will be semi-structured so that both interviews will cover the same questions
2. A case recording system (which is compatible with the existing CAFCASS case management system) so that we can list cases in their entirety
3. The Family Resolution Pilot Project in Sunderland ran parent information meetings. These discussed the impact of parental conflict on children and what happens in court. They mixed a range of respondents and applicants but not from the same case. This had a huge psychological effect on people, especially the applicants who softened a bit by hearing about other people's experiences and they became more amenable to change. This is a new approach which we are trying to incorporate into our scheme."

6.4 Reducing bureaucracy where this can be cut without affecting performance via simplification plans e.g. by reviewing the usefulness of many corporate meetings and using an outcomes-focused approach to management

6.5 For corporate services like HR, Legal Services, Communications and Finance, developing Service Level Agreements (SLAs) between the corporate centre and local services, based on two-way requirements.

7. Only change what needs to be changed, for the following reasons:

7.1 We need to build on current achievements, in a process of continuous improvement. Successfully absorbing rising levels of demand for services, particularly in public law, with continuing resource constraints, is one of many such achievements we can demonstrate, and which we have reported on in our last Annual Report to Parliament.

### ***Initial Response Team - Kent***

An increase of Public Law Cases in the order of 25% in the last year combined with a fixed budget led to unacceptable delays in the provision of services to children and the appointment of guardians from CAFCASS in the Kent area.

Tony Smart and his team in Maidstone decided to change things to provide a better service. He says, "We wanted to eradicate backlogs entirely but given the recent upsurge in cases we needed to find an interim solution. We started with the Initial Response Team in September and our aim is to provide a duty practitioner at all first directions in ICO, Secure Accommodations and EPOs. We will continue to review the results but we have already significantly increased the number of care cases that are being allocated within two days and it is helping us to prioritise."

7.2 Time and space is needed to ensure our performance management and quality assurance systems are properly bedded in

- 7.3 In limiting change to what is essential, we also recognise the distrust and dislike of excessive change within the organisation, and the need to win hearts and minds for further radical change, especially if morale is to be as high as it needs to be to carry out the enduringly taxing and complex front-line social work we do with children and families
- 7.4 The impact of high levels of demand on already overstretched staff is increasingly noticeable and worrying, and is one of the main reasons for a need to concentrate on core business and clear priorities. The complexity of our work with many children and young people, where there are no easy answers or solutions, means more time rather than less is needed in many cases. We find many children and young people are in great and often concealed distress. Whilst this is a generalisation, it is the day-to-day experience of our work. We will continue to do all we can to bring about positive change for these children and young people. We have to develop the most effective national practice model through which to do this. We also have to find a different way of managing our limited resources, in order to give sufficient time to the highest priority cases.
- 7.5 It is also recognised that a lot of change we need to make cannot be made unless partner agencies in the family justice system change too e.g in developing local collaborative law services. Co-ordination of change programmes across organisations is just as important as it is within individual organisations. A shortage of resources is common, so using the resources of the whole family justice system to best effect will be vital in the next few years.

### ***Wigan Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Pilot***

Julie Skorupka, Service Manager at Bolton is working with the IRO Manager for Wigan to implement a process where the Children's Guardian will involve the IRO in their final meeting. Julie says they have taken on board this recommendation from the Childcare Proceedings Review and are committed to taking forward this initiative in the best interests of the child. "It is an important step where the Guardian can essentially hand-over their insights from the proceedings to the IRO for their post-court role and confirm details for future planning, timescales and what the child can do if they have issues."

The Bolton office is planning to run the IRO pilot from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007 for six months and will review it on a regular basis.

## PRIORITIES

8. In recent years, despite a standstill budget, we have recruited more practitioners and administrators, and slightly fewer managers, which demonstrates a continuing commitment within CAFCASS to place as many resources as possible in front-line services. Despite this, demand continues to rise at a rapid rate, requiring us to re-think what we can and cannot do. The thrust of this paper is to put more supervision and management time into supporting front-line practice, within the following system of priorities, which have been deliberately linked to policy developments in public and private law services:

- 8.1 Continuing to work intensively from the start to the end of public law proceedings in cases, with a single lead practitioner from beginning to end, where the assessments and care plan before the court are not fit for purpose

### ***Leeds Public Law Pilot***

“The local authority was particularly keen on working with us on fast tracking. This involves getting cases through courts quicker and holding more roundtable meetings with social work teams and advocates in relation to care proceedings. It means being sharper in identifying the issues, what assessments are needed, and whether you need experts. The particular cases we are focusing on are cases that are already well known to the local authorities.

We are also working on forging closer ties with the IROs. The intention is to facilitate an introduction between the guardian and the IRO in order for them to work more closely together and to hand over the care plan at the conclusion of the care proceedings. The planning is going very well and we anticipate it will fit into the new ideas on consultation and on the ways in which care cases are managed.”

**Lynn Chippindale – Service Manager, Leeds**

- 8.2 Quality assuring good local authority work with a lighter touch, but always fulfilling our statutory responsibilities and always complying with Court Rules

### ***Liverpool accelerated discharge procedure***

**Aim:** To speed up the court process in dealing with local authority (LA) applications to discharge care orders in appropriate circumstances.

**Benefits:**

- significant reduction in overall time spent on the case by the court, LA and Children’s Guardians
- the need for only one (final) hearing

- LA has to get documentation ready before issuing the application, leading to earlier disclosure without the need for a directions hearing attended by the parties, legal representatives, social workers and the guardian  
- to secure uniformity of practice all such applications will be allocated to HH Judge Wallwork for a pilot period of six months.

- 8.3 Standard 2.3 of the proposed National Standards sets out the CAFCASS commitment to allocate all public law cases for active intervention within 2 days. In some cases, the lead practitioner (children's guardian) will be supported by a family support worker and by an administrator working in a case progression role, a role also being developed in the Courts Service (HMCS) so that the corporate resources of CAFCASS are used to best effect to support case management. This will support the twin objectives of immediate allocation and practitioner continuity throughout cases. Tasks suitable for the Family Support Worker, like monitoring the outcomes of contact sessions, will be defined on a case by case basis by the lead practitioner (the Family Court Adviser).
- 8.4 Brokering safe high-quality agreements in private law cases where this can be achieved, always based on a good assessment and case analysis.

### ***London Family Group Conferencing work***

Family group conferences are being piloted in CAFCASS' London region.

While in-court conciliation, dispute resolution and mediation meetings generally focus on the parents, this model recognises that families rely on help and support from a wide network of people. Anyone who can help parents to make the best decisions about their children – such as family members, friends or social workers – may attend family group conferences. Children are encouraged to attend and can have their own support worker.

“We are delighted with the outcome of this project,” says Service Manager Zafer Yilkan. “So far, in all but one of the cases the family has successfully agreed on a plan that they feel happy and comfortable with.”

Specially trained, independent co-ordinators chair the conferences. Crucially, however, the families are the decision makers and the core part of the meeting is private family time. The decisions are filed with the court as the agreed family plan and judges invited to make a consent order.

- 8.5 Basing longer-term work in private law cases on a clear case plan, and either directly providing or commissioning the right service to promote the best outcomes for the individual child or children concerned. Again, family support workers will support this work, working to a lead CAFCASS practitioner on a defined basis in each case.

### ***The Family Support Worker Role***

Nickie Stoker is a Family Support Worker in Plymouth. She tells us what it's like:

"The family support worker role is evolving and is focused on problem solving. It complements that of an FCA very well and seems to be a very positive resource within our team. FCAs refer cases to me and we work closely together. The cases vary but include supervising and reporting on contact, drawing up and overseeing contact plans and direct work with both children and parents. In addition, I hold a number of Family Assistance Orders. The next development with the role is within the Pre-Court Dispute Resolution Scheme where I will provide children and young people with information and will establish how they would like their views represented.

Since being in post I have attended the New Starter Foundation training which I found extremely useful as it gave me an overview of CAFCASS and the role of the FCA. I have also been fortunate enough to have a very supportive team and have been able to shadow others and learn from them. In the future I'd like to undertake the relevant training to become an FCA."

- 8.6 Where resources are too few in a particular area to allow for all private law work to be carried out, case plans will be prioritised in line with the assessment and analysis made in each case.

### ***Removing obstacles in early dispute resolution: Southport***

Alan Sanders, an FCA in Southport, describes how he keeps dispute resolution moving forward by using a case planning system:

"In the past, if there was no agreement by the first dispute resolution meeting, it would go to a section 7 reporting process which takes 16 weeks. What we've been doing instead is using the case planning system. I'll put together a case plan and this can take 4, maybe 6 weeks. During this time I will try to work out what has to happen to the case to help it move forward.

It seems to work well, is more user-friendly and gives children and families a much clearer idea of what is going on."

9. The practice framework set out in Paragraph 8 will form the basis of the CAFCASS national practice model. The following programmes will support the push on practice development:

- 9.1 Supporting all existing FCAs to complete a specialist PQ award. A start has been made with a £55,000 grant from DfES and a £25,000

grant from the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) this year. This will enable us to support a further 15 FCAs towards gaining a PQ.

- 9.2 All new FCAs recruited externally will be required to hold a specialist PQ award, or to demonstrate they are working towards one, unless there are exceptional circumstances locally.
- 9.3 Family Support Workers will be supported to develop professionally.
- 9.4 The accreditation system will ensure that cases are allocated to practitioners with the requisite skills and competencies, and supervised by managers with the requisite skills and competencies.
- 9.5 Report gate-keepers will also be accredited, so they work to common standards and principles
- 9.6 The knowledge, learning and development function, and the practice development function, will be combined, under a new Head of Knowledge, Learning and Practice Development (KLPD), supported by a Practice Development Network Manager, working alongside the existing Knowledge Learning and Development Network Manager. This function (KLPD) will develop a more integrated approach to practice development i.e., ensuring the lessons learnt from complaints and quality assurance programmes are built into training programmes and supervision and mentoring frameworks, and leading on all aspects of practice development.
- 9.7 The current knowledge learning and development (KLD) network, which has been successful in coordinating programmes around the country, will be built upon in the expanded KLPD function. Each part of the country will be resourced to do this equally.
- 9.8 Within the KLPD function, a lead manager system will be introduced, so that a manager is designated as the national specialist for each key area of practice. The lead role in practice development for a specific area of practice will also include a lead commissioning role for training in the specialist area, to ensure all training programmes are the best, most up to date possible and pitched at the right level.
- 9.9 A Practice Advice Line will be piloted, making use of an internal Register of Experts, to ensure practitioners have access to on-the-spot specialist advice. This will be modelled on the CAF/CASS legal helpline. Care will be taken to augment line management, not to be confused with it.
- 9.10 A national mentoring scheme will be established as part of ensuring all practitioners have access to structured peer support

### ***The Suffolk Buddy System***

Judith Hubert, Service Manager from Ipswich explains the Suffolk Buddy System: “We decided to create a buddy system to develop a more cohesive group and build a stronger team identity. We’ve created three mixed groups of home workers and public and private law practitioners, each with six members. They meet every two to three months to share practice ideas, to learn about both public and private law and to discuss case issues. It’s really helped people get to know each other and has been a great support service. The groups are organised on a geographical basis so that people don’t have to travel very far to meet up and can discuss issues particular to the area, including the workings of the court and local authorities.”

- 9.11 A small number of research into practice posts will be established, for practitioners or managers to combine practice with research which itself supports practice development in CAF/CASS. Links are being made with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to work in partnership on this programme.
  - 9.12 We will change our style of practice guidance to a brief practice tips model on specific issues, and will move away from the production of lengthy documents and unnecessary forms and templates. If practitioners are being asked to write concisely and analytically, the organisation must lead the way in that and be more interested in content than process. Practice tips will be developed through a ‘CAFpedia’ programme, modelled on Wikipedia, in which the best ideas and points from around the organisation form the basis for published guidance, which is moderated by the lead manager for the specialist area or issue to ensure corporate and legal compliance. Longer guidance will still be necessary for some complex issues which cannot be easily reduced or condensed to bullet point guidance. However, the best way for staff and contractors to provide an excellent service is not to look in manuals, but to work to a set of shared values. The development of stronger shared values will be central to the entire programme set out in this consultation paper.
- 10.** Work is underway with the courts, judiciary and local authorities, with a view to establishing clearer protocols about the work CAF/CASS must do as a priority within the public law protocol, the private law programme, and its adoption work. An emphasis will be put on role clarity. The public law protocol is currently being revised, and a review of the implementation of the private law programme has recently been carried out. An example where clarity will be especially important is the decision to refer work to us at a First Directions Hearing in private law cases, following an initial assessment and analysis. Cases are still being referred inappropriately where there is little more we can do, especially in long-running cases where the issues have long been clear. With limited resources, it is essential CAF/CASS time

is taken up working on the highest priority cases where there is a demonstrable need for our involvement.

### ***Focusing CAFCASS expertise where it is needed most***

Mike Lisser, Service Manager in Walsall, is working on an informal scheme to reduce the need for unnecessary reports. He explains how it worked on one particular case:-

“A request for an addendum report was made within 4 weeks of the first report being filed. The report stated that the parents had agreed substantial contact to the applicant, although it fell short of what the applicant wanted. The report identified that the difference between the two positions carried no welfare implications for the children concerned. The issues could easily be resolved through evidence in court and could have included questioning the original CAFCASS report author if the court considered this necessary. On this basis I wrote to the court advising of our position. The next stage is to meet with the judiciary and other key stakeholders to seek consent on how we may embody the above principles and understanding within a local practice agreement.”

11. Another example of partnership working is a project we are engaged in with the Courts Service to reduce the amount of time CAFCASS practitioners waste waiting in court for a case to come on. The results of this will become clear in the New Year, and is likely to include practitioners being able to use HMCS facilities whilst in court buildings. Each agency in the family justice system is experiencing the same gap between demand and resources, so inter-disciplinary teamwork is essential if combined resources are to have the greatest effect. Cases in family justice are just as hard as they are in other areas of the public sector where inter-disciplinary working is standard, like youth justice services and community mental health services. CAFCASS will promote teamwork approaches through from the local to the national.

## **Developing the National Business Centre Model**

12. A National Business Centre, based on 4 sites, will replace the current ten regional business support services. The current investment in the IT network, systems and new kit will enable a considerable number of support functions to be carried out through the Business Centre. With good, modern IT, it is highly inefficient to carry out basic administrative functions, transactions and processes like data inputting from over 100 local sites. A Business Centre could, for example, scan in, process and input basic data on all C1s, including carrying out initial checks, before e mailing them to individual teams for a Service Manager to allocate and for practitioners to start work on cases. All letters including initial letters with copies of the appropriate leaflets could be mailed out to service users from the Business Centre to ensure consistency. The four sites would be a North of England Business Unit; a Midlands Business Unit; a London, Eastern and South East

Business Unit; and a South and South West Business Unit. Each unit within the National Business Centre model would run one or more national specialist functions e.g, property, procurement, legal services, health and safety etc.

### ***The case for a National Business Centre – Ofsted’s experience***

Other organisations with a national remit and local delivery have moved towards the approach CAFCASS is considering. When Ofsted took over the responsibility for the regulation and inspection of childcare from local authorities in 2004, it initially serviced this workload through a structure of 10 regional centres. It soon became clear that while the centres were resourced similarly, the demand for service fell disproportionately, with London the Midlands and the North West experiencing high demand. Ofsted reorganized the business into three regions North, Midlands, South, supported by a National Business Unit (NBU). The NBU functions as the first point of call for public and provider enquiries and deals with all initial applications from those wishing to register as a child minder or nursery. Cost per application handled has been reduced and centralizing applications has improved the processing rate and the quality of management information.

### ***C1s – How a National Business Centre model might work for CAFCASS***

All C1s are posted or faxed to the centre within 24 hours of receipt. The C1s are then entered onto the CMS system, scanned and e-mailed to a local office. Police checks are undertaken via a direct link to the Police National Computer and other agency checks are completed by letter or e-mail as appropriate. Staff in the business centre focus on a group of teams or regions and so become fully familiar and liaise closely with their group of courts, local authorities and solicitors as well as local Service Managers.

13. A Business Academy will be established to support the skills development of business support staff. This will be an online, knowledge-based academy, run as part of the CAFCASS Knowledge, Learning and Practice Development network. A partnership with an experienced external specialist provider will be sought.
14. The success of the National Business Centre will depend on changes to the working practices of practitioners and local business support teams running in parallel, including practitioners becoming IT literate in ways like managing e-mails, word processing and updating case information directly onto our Case Management System (CMS), to improve our ability to run the organisation as effectively as possible.

## **Expanding our commissioning function**

15. Our commissioning role and capacity will be further developed, in a move supported by DfES who have granted CAF/CASS ring-fenced funding to commission contact support services in private law cases. Joint commissioning of some services will also be explored across different geographical areas, some large, some small. We will continue to provide some contact support services ourselves as part of the mainstream caseloads of Family Court Advisors and, increasingly, Family Support Workers

## **HOW WILL WE KNOW WHEN PRACTICE HAS IMPROVED?**

16. We plan to audit our services and each individual practitioner and manager between April and September 2007, to establish the baseline level. The recent audit of domestic violence practice within CAF/CASS will be built on. Internal inspection teams will be used. A repeat audit will be carried out annually, the first one being in September 2008. Service users will be involved in the process. That way, we will know whether practice has improved, stayed the same, or got worse. External inspections will play a part too.

## **WHAT CHANGES WILL ANYONE SEE?**

### ***Change for service users***

17. We will aim to provide more of the right services, which make a contribution to better outcomes for individual children and young people in our public and private law cases, and add value to what others are doing. Our performance monitoring will develop measures for this, including feedback from service users. Feedback will be obtained by business support staff as part of their role development to include more elements of customer care with business support responsibilities.
18. We will also accept representations from service users during a case as part of the CAF/CASS quality assurance process, rather than directing complainants to challenge our assessment in court. Of course they will still be able to pursue this course if this is their wish. This change will be written into revised complaints procedures and is in line with new DfES published guidance on complaints handling (DfES, September 2006). Care will be taken to ensure work being carried out to tight court deadlines is protected from unwarranted and unreasonable disruption.

### ***Change for Practitioners***

19. Practitioners achieve continuous improvement and refine their skills through having the time to think about and reflect on their work. In a busy

organisation, opportunities to do this are limited so must be allowed for in workloads and in the way the organisation works.

A rights and responsibilities framework is proposed to support this objective:

### ***What practitioners can expect of CAFCASS***

- 19.1 CAFCASS will guarantee access to immediate case consultation through line management, similar to the popular Legal Advice line, but through more immediate availability of supervisors, supplemented by the Legal Helpline and the Practice Advice Line
- 19.2 CAFCASS will ensure a mentor is available to practitioners where an appraisal indicates this as a useful support or development need
- 19.3 A differential supervision model will be used, based on a light touch model with high performing staff, and an intensive model with staff whose work needs extra support and direction. Supervisors will be trained to give reflective supervision.
- 19.4 Practice supervision, observation and appraisal will become a much stronger part of the operational culture
- 19.5 CAFCASS will guarantee to support all current staff to gain a specialist PQ Award, through expansion of our existing Sponsorship scheme, funding permitting.

### ***What CAFCASS can expect of its practitioners***

- 19.6 Practitioners will complete their work on cases to the highest possible standard in the time allowed
- 19.7 They will self-assess and self-regulate the time spent on work, and its quality, on behalf of CAFCASS
- 19.8 They will work at all times within the framework set out in CAFCASS National Standards

### ***Change for Service Managers***

- 20. The Service Manager role will be re-focused so that 70% of the available time is spent in teams with staff and with cases, including performance management and budget management. The remaining 30% will be spent externally on local inter-agency working. Work outside of this will be carried by the management system above them. Time in meetings will be drastically reduced, and all meetings, internal and external, and the time they take, will be subject to scrutiny for their purpose and outcomes. A new protocol will support this, focusing on alternative ways of handling issues, better chairing of meetings, greater use of phone and video conferencing and better team briefing, as examples: in other words, applying the same expectation about better use of time to managers as that expected of practitioners.

21. Lower staff management ratios will become possible through the designation of some FCAs as practice supervisors for part of their week and part of their workload, up to a maximum of 50% of the working week. Time will be released for FCAs through changes in working practices. As part of the strategic pay review, Service Managers will be paid competitively taking local market factors into account, so that their pay differential with FCAs who receive an enhancement for extra responsibilities is maintained.

### ***Change for Business Support staff***

22. The roles established in the business support review, of admin manager (spanning offices), office manager (one person in charge), and administrator, will be implemented. These roles will evolve over time, particularly to incorporate more customer care roles with local service users. A development programme for administrators, who wish to move into front line family support roles, and have prior experience and are willing to become suitably qualified through a sponsorship arrangement, will also be put in place. This programme will be part of the overall reconfiguration of business support services into the National Business Centre model. The precise numbers of admin managers and office managers needed in each current region will be determined as part of developing the new structure proposed in this consultation paper.

### ***Specialist roles***

23. As services in CAF/CASS continue to be devolved further to the front-line, so some practitioners and administrators will be designated as specialists e.g., FCA (practice supervision), FCA (inter-country adoption), Administrator (MIS), Administrator (Property). Specialisms may be part of a workload or the whole workload, depending on need. The purpose of a shift to greater specialisation is to raise standards where a specific expertise and competencies is the essential element of an excellent service.

### ***Proposed structure to support the priority system and emphasis on practice development***

24. Local teams will remain the unit of service delivery throughout CAF/CASS and no changes are being made to the structure of local teams, although some proposed adjustments to roles are set out as a key element in this consultation paper.
25. It is proposed that regional teams and regional boundaries remain as they are, until at least April 2008, to allow for continuity whilst the wider programme of change gets underway, but with 11 Regional Directors reducing to 5 Operational Directors, and with 10.6 Regional Business Managers reducing to 4 National Business Managers. Each Operational Director will be managed by a Corporate Director, and each National Business Manager by either the Corporate Director, Operational Director or

Head of Business Development who will be working as a change team to lead on putting the National Business Centre in place. Corporate Director portfolios will change in this and other ways to support the new arrangements.

- 26.** Operational Directors will each oversee a small number of regions, in conjunction with new Heads of Service. Similar roles will be established for the new National Business Managers. This represents a further shift to portfolio working, matching expertise and skills to situations. This number of senior managers (3 Corporate Directors, 5 Operational Directors and 4 National Business Managers) will then remain the same for the duration of the change programme as to go further will reduce capacity below the safe minimum for a large national organisation like CAF/CASS.
- 27.** A clear time-line will be produced for the first six months of the programme, but the programme will be delivered flexibly beyond that as it is neither realistic nor sensible to be precise about the sequence of changes which will be needed in 2008 or 2009. Some changes will take longer to deliver than others, for reasons it is impossible to predict entirely in advance. The time-line will be updated on a regular basis. The first 3 priorities will be to appoint the new Operational Directors and National Business Managers: to appoint Office Managers as Phase 1 of implementing the Business Support Review; and to clarify the numbers of specialist Service Managers who will be needed and the geographical areas they will cover in future e.g, complaints, knowledge learning and development, quality assurance, and contract management. 2007/8 will primarily be a transitional year.
- 28.** By 2010, around 30 new service areas will be established, to replace the ten current regions. They will put the corporate management of services much closer to service delivery than can be achieved through the current regional offices. Heads of Service will be more accessible to Service Managers than Regional Directors have been able to be. New service areas will be small enough to be local and large enough to be viable. They must first pass the test of being more coherent than the regional arrangement they will replace, and each current region will need to establish the right structure to deliver improved outcomes within the national framework.
- 29.** Each new service area will be run by one or more Heads of Service, depending on the size of the area. London for example will need four Heads of Service, on a sector based model (North East, North West, South East and South West), the North East of England will need two, and Birmingham will need one. Both Heads of Service and Service Managers may either cover a geographical area or a specialist area of practice or management, within an existing region or across regions. Flexibility and locally-determined and locally-relevant models are more important than a one-size fits all approach to structure. How the service works in Cornwall matters most to service users and staff there, not how the CAF/CASS service works in Northumberland. An outcomes-focused structure makes sure good

outcomes are delivered throughout England, and is not structure-driven. However, all national organisations need a relatively uniform structure, so that the same job is carried out in a similar way around the country. The structure of CAF/CASS will be based on smaller service areas by April 2010, but having first ensured the local structure is the one to deliver the right local outcomes.

30. The following local service areas will be established in the first phase of this programme: London (4 sectors); Birmingham; North and South of the Tyne and Durham and Teeside. These areas are either recruiting for permanent Heads of Service, or have acting Heads of Service in place. The purpose of the new Head of Service role is to take on full responsibility for general management duties and responsibilities, thus leaving Service Managers freer to spend more time on practice development, efficiency savings on cases, and local inter-agency working.
31. Four regions will have mandatory change programmes where the degree of change needed is substantial, whether this is in terms of practice development or delivering efficiency savings. These regions are London, the South East, the West Midlands, and Yorkshire and Humberside. London and the South East already have change programmes under way, and these will continue, at least until April 2008. Change programmes in the West Midlands, and in Yorkshire and Humberside will start early in 2007. The objectives for these are currently being defined.
32. The remaining regions will be able to pursue more of a developmental approach to regional change, although all are being required to put their own practice development programme in place by 1 January 2007. An example of a different approach is that being taken in the South West, focusing mostly on skills development and utilisation.

### ***South West Regional Team Development***

The South West Regional Team wanted to take stock of the services they provide to local offices and the national office. The review was carried out because the team feels it can do more than it currently does due to the high skill levels of team members.

The team reviewed a whole series of working practices from staff training to ensuring management information on CMS reflected what was happening on the ground. Andrew Dawe, South West Business Manager explains what they intend to do next, "We came up with a whole series of ideas about how we can improve the way we work. This is currently being drawn up into an action plan for implementation in the New Year."

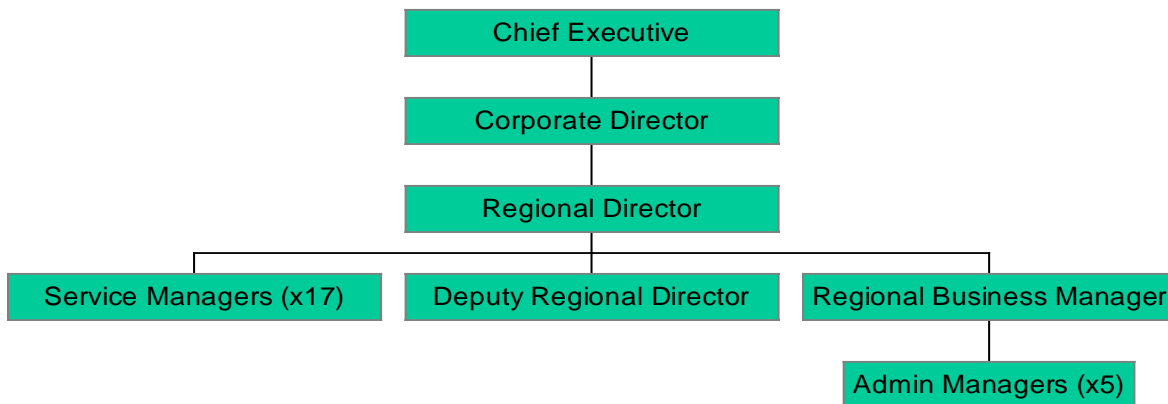
33. Revised structures will be worked out region by region within the overall national framework. The parameters for this are as follows:

- 33.1 In consultation with senior managers, each region will be obliged to develop a new structure with the right mix and scope for the region of Heads of Service, Service Managers, FCAs (practice supervision), Admin Managers and Office Managers
- 33.2 Costs of the new structure must be no greater than the current structure and must deliver the practice improvements and changes set out in this consultation paper
- 33.3 A clear transition programme must be drawn up, to show how existing programmes will remain unaffected during the process of change

### How the new structure will work?

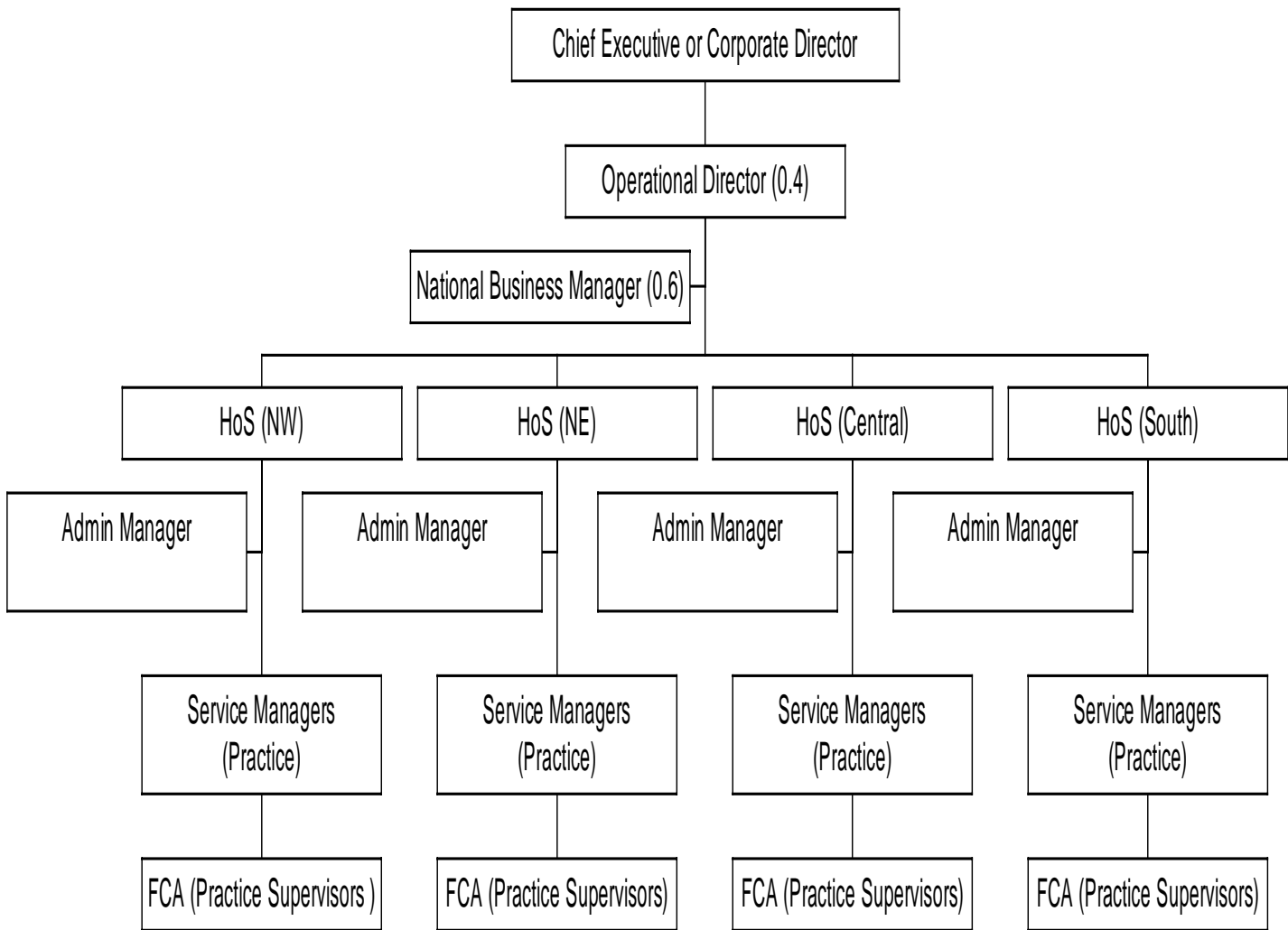
- 34. Those regions with acting Heads of Service will firm these up into permanent posts, through the standard recruitment process, including an assessment centre, by June 2007. This affects London, the North East of England and Birmingham. Regions with designated change programmes will move to a new permanent structure as part of that change programme, and will have this in place by April 2008. This affects Yorkshire and Humberside, the West Midlands and the South East. The remaining regions will adopt the national model by April 2010, some earlier, some later.

Structure in London before London Change Programme



NB Deputy Regional Director shared some supervisory and management tasks with the Regional Director.

## Possible new structure in London after the Change Programme



Admin Managers will be managed by the National Business Manager

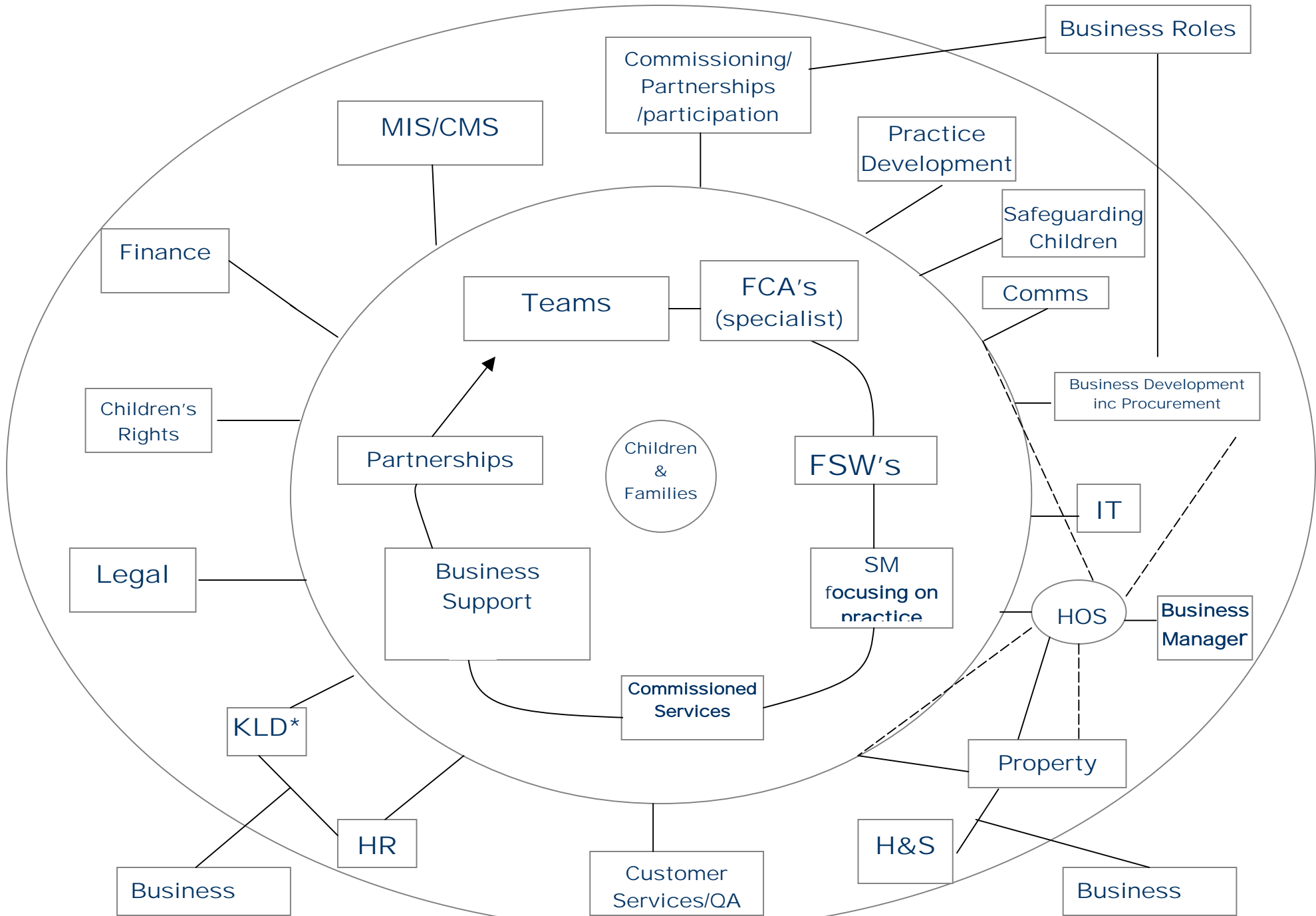
Some Service Managers will be generic, some specialist

### **A new structure for London**

The indicative structure set out above would formalise and build on changes already made in the London Change Programme. The key shift is from a centralised service to a sector-based service covering North West, North East, Central and South London respectively. Each sector would be run by a Head of Service, supported by an Admin Manager. Some Service Managers would specialise in particular aspects of service delivery, given London's diverse needs and population. One or two, along with a lead Head of Service, would handle external liaison, ie, with the 33 London Local Authorities, the NHS in London etc

- 35.** Where a Service Manager or Regional Director vacancy arises, regions will fill that vacancy in a way that conforms to the requirements of the national model.
- 36.** Running the new structure in some regions alongside the existing structure in other regions for up to 3 years risks a degree of confusion. Care will be taken to clarify the line of accountability at any one time, and to ensure no region or local service is left rudderless. Core CDG will continue to comprise the CEO and Corporate Directors. Extended CDG will comprise core CDG, the Operational Directors, Heads of Profession and the National Business Managers. Heads of Service will meet with extended CDG on a regular basis as well as reporting to an Operational Director, or, in exceptional circumstances, to a Corporate Director. The underlying principle of any structure is that all individuals have a clear role, a clear reporting line, and know the part they have to play in delivering the targets of the organisation they work for. In CAF/CASS at the moment, role clarity is the bigger issue, and this will be the main focus.
- 37.** The purpose of the new structure and the vision behind it is to release more leadership and management time in the organisation to support front-line practice. This has to directly translate into giving Service Managers more time and fewer tasks. The starting point is for Service Managers to re-focus their time as set out in this paper, and for their Heads of Service to assume responsibility for everything else. The date for this switch will be 1 June 2007. It will then be the responsibility of the 5 Operational Directors, working with Heads of Service where those are in place, and with specialist corporate managers including the Chief Executive and Corporate Directors, to devise a radically slimmed-down bureaucracy for CAF/CASS. This will be a major programme in its own right, but one that is vital to the vision of making better supported practice a reality. Other programmes, such as designating a small number of FCAs as Practice Supervisors, will need to be made simultaneously if the span of responsibility for Service Managers is to be effectively reduced.
- 38.** Every current national function which was devolved to regional offices as part of the National Office restructuring is being reviewed to determine whether it should be further devolved on to local services, in full or in part, because it could be run more efficiently that way, or whether it should be run in future through the new National Business Centre. The reason existing regional offices will remain in their current form until at least April 2008, is to ensure business continuity. Regions are the main units of accountability in CAF/CASS at present, and the shift to local service areas as the new units of accountability, run in conjunction with the four-site National Business Centre model, needs a careful migration from one to the other, if the integrity of budgets, performance information and audit requirements are to be protected at all times.

**Putting children and families at the heart of the new structure**



***Posts created and deleted in the new structure***

**Posts deleted**

Regional Directors (x11)

Regional Business Managers (x10.6)

**Posts created**

Operational Directors (x5) (recruitment ring-fenced in the first instance to existing Regional Directors) indicative salary £65K

National Business Managers (x4) (recruitment ring-fenced in the first instance to existing Regional Business Managers) indicative salary £45K

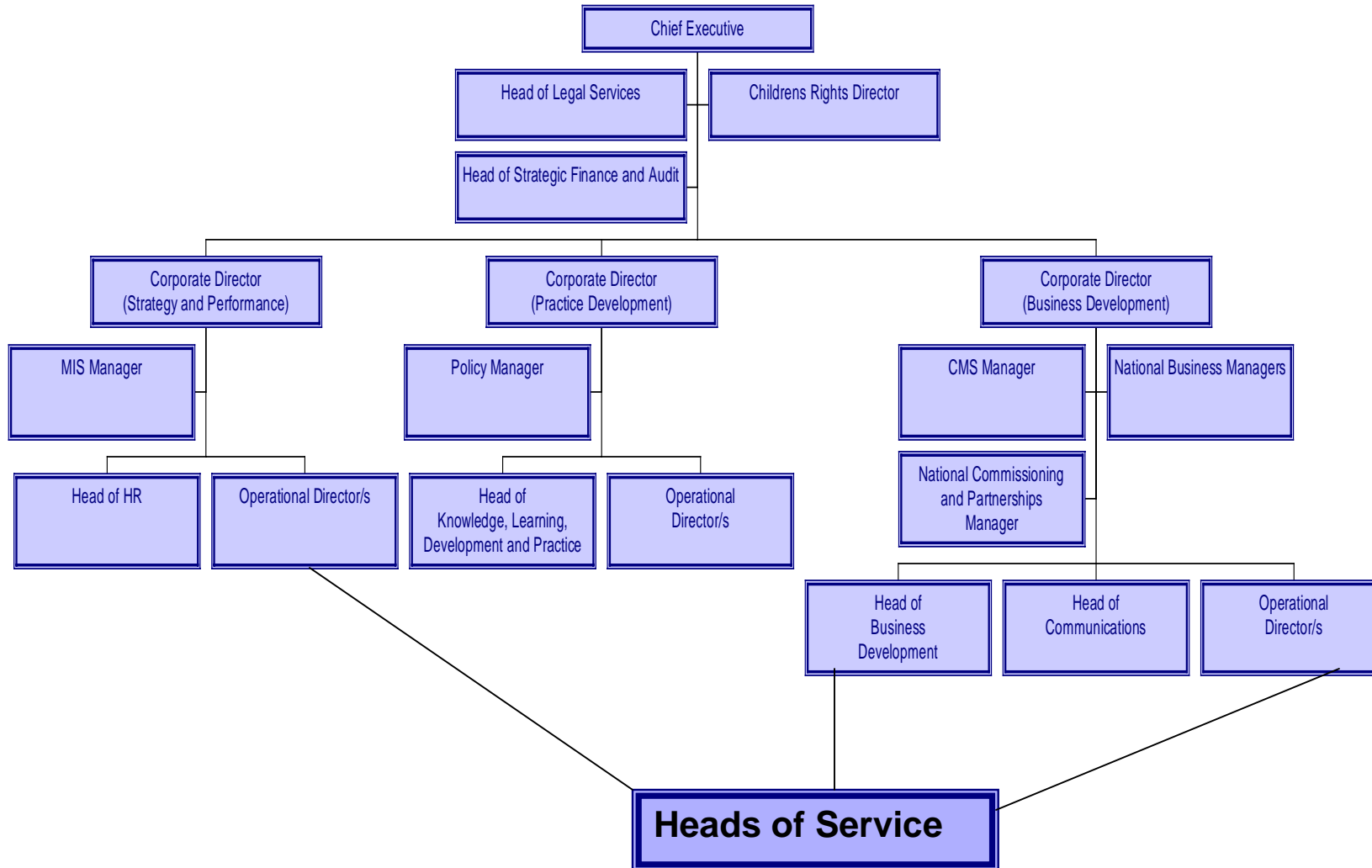
Head of Knowledge, Learning and Practice Development (indicative salary £65K)

Practice Development Network Manager (indicative salary £40k)

National Commissioning and Partnerships Manager (DfES funded)



# Proposed Senior Management Structure



## DELETED v NEW POSTS

	WTE	Salary	Cost	TOTAL (Incl on costs)
Regional Director	11.00	56,375	620,125	742,476
Business Manager	10.60	43,050	456,330	546,364
SAVINGS	21.60		1,076,455	1,288,840
Operational Directors	5.00	65,000	325,000	389,123
National Business Managers	4.00	45,000	180,000	215,514
Head of KLPD	1.00	65,000	65,000	77,825
PD Network Manager	1.00	40,000	40,000	47,892
COSTS	11.00	215,000	610,000	730,353

SAVINGS (558,487)

*Net savings to be re-cycled into practice development and efficiency savings*

- NB1:** Existing Deputy Regional Directors are likely to be matched to Head of Service posts when these posts are established in their region.
- NB2:** Existing Deputy Business Managers are likely to be matched to Admin Manager posts
- NB3:** Corporate Directors, existing Heads of Profession (Legal; Finance and Audit; Human Resources; Communications; Business Development) and the Childrens Rights Director remain unaffected by these proposals as their posts were recently established as part of the National Office restructuring after a similar process of change. It is that process of change that is now being extended to existing regional arrangements, which have never been fundamentally reviewed.
- NB4:** Full savings from the restructuring of senior management will be achieved when all HR processes such as redeployment, retirement and voluntary redundancy are completed where applicable. Any additional new posts needed at any point during the programme will be contained within existing staffing budgets.
- NB5:** There are additional costs associated with the overall changes and programme set out in this paper. They include the costs of establishing a Business Academy, the Practice Advice Line, setting-up the National Business Centre, and the enhancements to FCAs for practice supervision which in turn is predicated upon Service Managers maintaining their pay differential with FCAs as part of the Strategic Pay Review. The change assume various re-alignments within the budget, starting in 2007/8, then continuing in a sequence through the next two financial years after that.

This will be a complex re-alignment, and what is being consulted on is the principle at this stage, with the detail to follow in the implementation plan to be drawn up immediately after the consultation ends.

## Re-alignment of spend

With a heavily constrained revenue budget and with the requirement to deliver further efficiency savings across the public sector, we must make some difficult choices about how we spend our resources. If we are to protect front line service delivery and invest in this area, we need to identify how this can be achieved at no extra cost, whilst delivering improvements in the quality of the services we deliver. The following summarises the areas we are targeting for investment and where the efficiency savings can be released to deliver this investment.

Areas for further investment/redirecting resources to		Areas for efficiency/redirecting resources from	
<b>Practice Supervision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More Service Manager time</li> <li>• More accessible practice guidance</li> <li>• Practice Supervisors</li> <li>• Mentoring</li> </ul>	<b>Releasing professional time</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family Support Workers</li> <li>• Business Support staff in the case progression role</li> <li>• Reduced waiting time in courts</li> <li>• Reduce time in meetings</li> <li>• Reducing “non-value” added time spent on cases</li> <li>• Specialisation of roles</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge Learning and Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PQ</li> <li>• Leadership Management Programme</li> </ul>	<b>Procurement savings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-tendering of outsourced contracts</li> <li>• Review and renegotiation of contracts</li> </ul>
<b>Practice Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance improvement teams</li> <li>• Report gatekeeper role</li> <li>• Practice Advice Line</li> <li>• Research into practice posts</li> <li>• Internal inspection and audit</li> </ul>	<b>Administration savings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business centres</li> <li>• Specialisation of administration roles</li> <li>• Case Management System (CMS)</li> <li>• Reduction in bureaucracy</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Pay Review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competitive salaries (especially for Service Managers and practitioners)</li> </ul>	Setting budgets differentially	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmarking against the most efficient teams</li> </ul>

## Resources

39. From 1 April 2008, the formula for allocating resources to local services will switch from the number of cases, to unit-cost budgeting. Local budgets will be set at the same levels as the very best in CAFCASS, and development programmes will be put in place to ensure that when a revised budget is set for a local service, the lower budget is phased in over 12 – 24 months to allow for working practices to adapt where they need to.
40. Weighting will be given in the new resource allocation formula to the needs of some areas where the overall workload can objectively be shown to be more difficult and time-consuming e.g where caseloads contain a higher average percentage of sibling groups; or where a high use of interpreters and translators is necessary
41. A bonus system will be introduced for high-performing teams and individual practitioners who hit performance targets. The focus of this programme will be 'Rewarding Excellence'. High performance needs rewarding and poor performance needs challenging more effectively in CAFCASS. The detail of how the bonus scheme will operate is being developed.
42. Changes in working practices combined with unit cost budgeting will release sufficient savings over the next 2-3 years to go towards funding the Strategic Pay Review and other essential programmes like the PQ programme.

### ***Changes in working practices***

In 2005/6, CAFCASS received 6,613 referrals for s31 care cases. On average, we spend 133 practitioner hours per case. If we are able to reduce the time spent on the average case to that of the most efficient, which is currently approximately 100 hours, without reducing quality, this will release direct savings of at least £6 million which can be re-directed into an increased level of front-line service delivery.

43. The Strategic Pay Review will be part-funded from other programmes such as the increase in Family Support Workers relative to Family Court Advisors on a one or two per team basis. Family Support Workers will hold some private law cases themselves and will joint work others with Family Court Advisors. The model for how this will work has been developed in some teams already including our Plymouth team.
44. We will be seeking continued part-funding of the National Change Programme from our sponsoring Department, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), to build on their support in the current financial year.

45. We will also continue to press our case hard with DfES for more resources, particularly to cover inflationary costs year on year and additional demand for our services where this can be demonstrated. We say this despite an acknowledgment of the very real funding pressures facing the public sector as a whole over the next few years. Failure to fund CAF/CASS properly in future years will have serious repercussions for the vulnerable children we work with.
46. In-year funding is available from DfES in the 2006/7 financial year for a small number of early retirements and voluntary redundancies, where these will make the service more efficient and effective as a result. As the proposed reduction in staff is restricted to a small number of job roles, staff from the following groups have been invited to express an interest in taking up this offer: Regional Directors and their PA's, Regional Business Managers, Service Managers, Admin Managers and Senior Administrators. Priority will be given to any staff directly displaced within these proposals. Criteria for selection for early retirement or redundancy have been established. In order to switch resources into priority areas, the 275 jobs within these groups are expected to reduce by around 50 to 225 by 2010. Budgets will be set annually to reflect these reductions.

### **When will this happen?**

47. All programmes will be phased in between April 2007 and March 2010. A three-year programme is a realistic time-scale to deliver the scale of change proposed. The aim will also be to allow these changes to be fully implemented without any further changes of direction, as these are deeply unsettling for all concerned. This also recognises that change is taking place already in local services, often at a rapid pace, in response to circumstances locally. National corporate change on top of this can often seem disempowering, so should be kept to a necessary minimum. The emphasis will be kept on ensuring that all changes have a neutral or positive impact on the front-line.

### **Process**

48. A development centre will be set up for post-holders in the management groups affected by change.
49. A Leadership and Management development programme is being put in place, in partnership with an approved HEI. An externally accredited qualification will be developed. In CAF/CASS, leadership and management are inseparable, and one without the other is of little value. This programme will build on the Action Learning Sets in place already and will play a key part in the culture change process in which an action learning model is used much more in practice development throughout CAF/CASS

50. An impact assessment of the whole programme on service users and staff will be carried out regularly.
51. Senior managers in CAFCASS will work closely with service user groups, stakeholder groups, trade unions and professional associations throughout this process of change, which will continue to be coordinated by the National Change Manager.

## **Conclusion**

52. CAFCASS can approach the future in a measured way with confidence. We are at the heart of the way in which the family justice system is changing and developing. Much of our work is world-class and excellent in every respect. Some of that work is not recognised within CAFCASS for its excellence and we need to recognise excellent work and use it for teaching purposes in practice development programmes. Equally where our work falls short, we are determined to raise our game.
53. This paper sets out a programme for CAFCASS to deliver in full by 2010. During that time, we will be working on a CAFCASS 2020 programme, as all organisations need to plan for changes in their services to keep pace with changes in society. In our work, it is rapid social and economic change we need to keep up with, which is reflected in the way families live and are constituted, and in the way children and young people themselves are changing and developing, particularly as citizens.

## ***Responding to the consultation***

These should be e mailed to [consultations@cafcass.gov.uk](mailto:consultations@cafcass.gov.uk), or sent by post to Chelsey Bonehill, Policy Manager, CAFCASS National Office, South Quay Plaza 3, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, 189 Marsh Wall, London E14 9SH. All responses should be received by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2007.

## EVERY DAY MATTERS: OUTCOMES OF THE MAIN PROPOSALS

The following is a list of proposals contained within Every Day Matters along with an outcome for each proposal.

EDM proposal	Outcome
1. Allocating every case within 2 days by April 2007	This remains a key target. Backlogs have reduced, despite demand continuing to rise at a greater rate than we are resourced for. New duty and initial response services are increasing our capacity to respond within 2 days to referrals, and this target will be reached as soon as possible, unless demand continues to rise at current levels without any increase in resources
2. Triaging each case and completing an initial assessment and case plan within 4-6 weeks	A number of teams have shifted onto this way of working, and discussions continue with the senior judiciary and other partners in the context of the Care Proceedings Review and the review of the Private Law Programme. We have dropped the word triage and replaced it by initial screening (within the safeguarding policy framework), and proposed National Standards on early intervention and case planning, which have been out to consultation
3. Intensive work in the first six weeks of every case	This links with two above and with the proposed National Standards, although we will not over-commit resources early in a case where it is more productive to commit them later ie, after specialist assessments have been concluded
4. Work on cases proportionately	This is a key part of the National Practice model being developed, and is also reflected in the proposed National Standards. Practice development programmes will develop clearer guidance and training on this where needed
5. More use of professionals meetings, advocates meetings and Family Group Conferences	Written into National Standards, being implemented in some regions, and being discussed at the Rules Committee e.g. advocates meetings in private law cases
6. More use of adjournments in private law cases, for extra casework or extended dispute resolution	Continuing to grow strongly in local inter-disciplinary practice, with more DR/EDR schemes being launched every month

EDM proposal	Outcome
7. Consideration of a voluntary early retirement and redundancy scheme	Still in consideration in connection with possible changes to the future structure of CAF/CASS about to be consulted on. Scheme would be restricted to supervisory and management post-holders where numbers need to be reduced over the next few years
8. Reducing the number of offices by 2008/9 through an increase in flexible working	Large IT development programme in place using one-off money from DfES in the 2006/7 financial year. Property strategy consulted on and being implemented. It will probably take until 2010 to fully deliver
9. Expecting all practitioners to be IT-literate by April 2007	Proposal being taken forward as part of the major overhaul of IT kit and the development of CMS. Stronger performance management of this programme is needed.
10. Changing admin roles to business support roles	Being taken forward through the Business Support Review
11. Reducing non-front-line back room costs	All efficiency savings required of us to date by Government in this area have been delivered
12. Providing some services regionally rather than locally, like a call centre	Some services will be provided through a National Business Centre, making best use of improved IT and telephony.
13. Diversifying the workforce to employ family support workers and to commission more services	Family Support Workers being recruited in all regions with a target of 1 per team asap. Other diversified roles being considered as part of the Workforce Strategy
14. Enhancing some practitioners posts to give extra practice supervisory responsibilities	Being taken forward in the overall proposals for the development of the structure of CAF/CASS
15. Changing Service manager roles to Head of Service roles	Heads of Service now being recruited in some regions. Acting HOS in place in others. Extent of the change to be set out in a consultation paper on the whole of the CAF/CASS structure, to be published in December 2006

EDM proposal	Outcome
16. Providing the minimum necessary, maximum affordable service	Being taken forward through the work on National Standards
17. Spend more time on direct work, and less time on reports	Being taken forward through practice development programmes between now and the end o the programme in 2009
18. Reduce unproductive time practitioners waiting in court	Joint project between CAFCASS and HMCS established, led by 2 CAFCASS Regional Directors
19. Strengthen liaison between administrators in CAFCASS and local HMCA admin teams	Being taken forward, but needs more structure put around it and to be incorporated into local business plans
20. HMCS to supply papers quicker in some courts	Liaison with HMCS about this has been successful and this will be written into the new private law programme
21. Produce best Practice Guidance for children in court	To be built into the work programme for the Practice Development Team
22. Give oral evidence where possible	Happening more in some courts, and will be taken forward in discussions with the senior judiciary and by the Practice Development team and in KLD programmes
23. Use letters to court, and shorter reports in many cases	Focus is on concise, analytical reports which meet the needs of individual cases, more than a standardised number of pages or shortness for shortness' sake. Is being taken forward through workshops in some regions and in practice development programmes and KLD programmes
24. Use reciprocal arrangements (between teams) more	Not being taken forward as a proposal. Situation remains that this needs to be discussed between teams on a case by case basis
25. Later life judgments are needed	Currently the subject of a DCA consultation report. CAFCASS involved in the thinking and planning. New National Standard for contested private law cases being developed.

EDM proposal	Outcome
26. Judges should protect CAF/CASS officers from hostile cross-examination	Being discussed with the senior judiciary and professional associations representing lawyers. Protocol to be drawn up, initiated in the first instance by CAF/CASS
27. Fuller use of e-mailing etc to be made	To be taken forward within the work programme of the National Business Development team
28. Shifting resources from public law work into private law work	Not being proceeded with formally, and the allocation of resources to be left to local managers who have to manage variations in demand i.e. in the last year, public law demand has risen by 25% in some areas, so the shift proposed is simply not possible when demand levels are so unpredictable and unstable
29. Roll out the lessons from high-performing teams to other teams	Work is being done on how to measure 'high-performing' in a robust way, in order to implement this proposal coherently. Good practice examples are posted regularly on the CAF/CASS intranet and there is excellent collaborative working within regions and across regions in areas like sharing work in times of pressure, and in sharing best practice
30. Extend the DR model to other areas of our work	Some interest in this but will need a clear practice model to be applied in public law and adoption work. This will be taken forward by the Practice Development team
31. Escalate disagreements with local authorities through respective managements	Still being taken forward on a case by case basis, but team-to-team meetings have been held with specific local authorities where there have been concerns about a cluster of cases
32. Work positively with the Every Child Matters agenda	CAF/CASS has been closely involved in a number of areas of policy development within DfES/DCA/senior judiciary and will continue to be. National policy developments within CAF/CASS are also in line with the ECM agenda and will continue to be

EDM proposal	Outcome
33. Set up high cost case review arrangements for SECs	These have all been set up within regions, albeit on a slightly different basis depending on the number of SECs. Specialist contract managers are now in place in all regions
34. Changing our name to a simpler one	Not being taken forward. Felt to be a distraction, as well as an expensive change which could not be justified
35. Draw up national Minimum Standards	Proposed Standards consulted on. Revised version to be consulted on again
36. Gap analysis of all teams to be carried out	Being started with a self-assessment in advance of the HMICA public law inspection in early 2007. Model to be developed for this by the Corporate Director (Strategy and Performance)

## Appendix 2



### **CAFCASS NATIONAL STANDARDS**

National Standards set out what service users, partner agencies and practitioners in the family justice system can expect from CAFCASS.

These Standards update the 2003 CAFCASS Service Standards and Principles, and will be phased in from 1 April 2007. Before then, they are being piloted in the North East Region.

The Standards will continue to evolve for a further two years after April 2007, either as staff are trained in particular Standards, or as resources become available. **The date for full implementation is most likely to be April 2009. Standards to be implemented in April 2007 are marked with an asterisk.**

The Standards are safe national minimum standards. Full attainment of some Standards will be dependent on the support of other agencies in the family justice system. Adherence to the Standards will be monitored through a small number of performance indicators being developed.

### **VISION STATEMENT**

#### **CAFCASS will**

1. Put children first.
2. Keep children as safe as possible.
3. Ensure each child has a voice that is heard, understood and respected in the family courts, in a way that is consistent with and responds to each child's wishes, competence and understanding.
4. Start with the child and stay with the child, throughout the life of cases<sup>1</sup>.
5. Be clear about the needs, wishes and feelings of individual children in family court cases, as the core business of CAFCASS.
6. Make a contribution to securing the safest, high quality outcomes possible for each child, and evaluate this contribution after a case is closed.
7. Respect the importance of family life and family members for each child.
8. Respect the diversity and individuality of each child and family.
9. Throughout the organisation, keep the focus on front line services.
10. Maintain our independence and objectivity at all times in all circumstances.

NB: Child is used throughout to refer to children and young people

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<sup>1</sup> Voice of the Child in Care Blueprint Report (2005)

# STANDARDS

## Standard 1: Safeguarding

### Value statement

CAFCASS' primary purpose is to safeguard the welfare and represent the interests of each child or young person referred to us. This means CAFCASS will safeguard against harm, safeguard a child's right to maintain important attachments, safeguard a child's right to fully participate in our work with them, and safeguard a stable and secure life for the children and young people we work with as far as we can.

Safeguarding work will take place within the framework of the DfES definition, set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006): - 'the process of protecting from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances with the provision of safe and effective care which is undertaken so as to enable children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully'.

- 1.1 CAFCASS will continuously analyse and assess the risks to individual children in all family court cases referred to us until our involvement ceases.\*
- 1.2 The CAFCASS safeguarding policy framework, including toolkits such as that for Domestic Violence, will be followed at all times.\*
- 1.3 CAFCASS will be explicit about its safeguarding focus, and the specific risks to a child that we are working to eliminate. This applies to our role in public law cases where we are critiquing local authority work, and to our role in private law cases where we carry out a primary social work role.\*
- 1.4 A continuous risk identification process will be applied to all cases, using a unified risk assessment tool in which all staff are trained.

## Standard 2: Early intervention

### Value statement

CAFCASS believes that it can offer most to children and young people through becoming involved in cases as soon as we are made aware of them.

- 2.1 CAFCASS will provide an early intervention service, based on allocating cases to practitioners within 2 days in public law cases, and when the results of safeguarding checks are received in private law cases.
- 2.2 All incoming referrals will be screened on the first working day of receipt.\*

- 2.3 CAFCASS will allocate each case to a lead practitioner for the duration of the proceedings. The lead practitioner may be supported by other CAFCASS staff on individual cases on an a basis defined by the lead practitioner.\*
- 2.4 When and where needed, duty systems will be used to support the CAFCASS early intervention standard in the first few days of a case.\*
- 2.5 Early intervention in a public law case involves reviewing and quality assuring of the assessments undertaken and commissioned, and the care plan proposed by a local authority, highlighting the additional steps or action needed.
- 2.6 Early intervention in a private law case means supporting parents and carers in dispute to make a safe and 'built to last' agreement for the future care of their child/children. Where this is not possible, a case plan identifying future work needed and a recommended legal framework for this will be submitted to court.\*

### **Standard 3: Case planning**

#### **Value statement**

Case planning is a continuous process. Case plans will be drawn up as early as possible, following an initial analysis. The case plan will address how a CAFCASS intervention will be applied to each case and will set out how the case will be reviewed regularly in line with CAFCASS guidance on case planning.

- 3.1 An analysis of the needs, wishes and feelings of each individual child will be made in all cases, giving due consideration to all elements of the Welfare Checklist, and taking account of relevant research evidence and case law.\*
- 3.2 Each case analysis will draw on the assessments of other agencies, where these are available.\*
- 3.3 Relevant equalities and diversity issues will be integrated into the analysis and case plan for individual children, based on culturally competent social work practice. Where these issues are not explicitly addressed, the reason for not doing so will be made clear.\*
- 3.4 Case plans will be reviewed regularly for effectiveness.\*
- 3.5 The case plan and analysis will be updated if and when circumstances change significantly.\*

### **Standard 4: Active intervention and case management**

#### **Value statement**

CAFCASS work will comprise an evidence-based intervention for each child, whatever the case nature or type. Each intervention will have a clear goal of effecting beneficial change for children. The initial analysis will highlight the key

issues for the child and the case plan will identify the appropriate level and type of intervention needed. The level of service provision on each case will never fall below the minimum necessary, and will be the maximum affordable, taking all the cases needing our help into account,

- 4.1 Case plans will set out the evidence-based intervention proposed on behalf of individual children.\*
- 4.2 All CAFCASS interventions will comply with family justice system time—scales such as the judicial protocol in public law cases, which will in future include a specified timetable for each child (NB, this takes account of ‘constructive delay’).\*
- 4.3 Intervention in cases will be proportionate, as well as evidence-based.\*
- 4.4 All CAFCASS reports will be focused, and built around a well-argued independent case analysis. CAFCASS reports are interventions in themselves when written as a catalyst for change, yet a report is only part of the intervention, and complements other work defined in the case plan.\*
- 4.5 Reports will contain clear recommendations, helping the court to make the best decisions in the interests of the child. The intended outcomes for individual children within each recommendation will be clearly set out.\*
- 4.6 Private law cases will be subject to differentiated case management, not a standard filing time for written reports.
- 4.7 Needs Wishes and Feelings statements may be filed in court, normally alongside a current s7 report, based on the needs of each individual case, and always with the child’s consent.
- 4.8 A CAFCASS intervention will neither duplicate work done well elsewhere nor take on the responsibilities of other organisations. It will highlight gaps in service provision where children’s welfare is impeded as a result, and seek to close those gaps by persuading the relevant parties, such as local authorities in public law cases, to take appropriate action.\*
- 4.9 Cases will be returned to court for Directions where such advocacy and negotiation fails.\*
- 4.10 Our proposals for the future in public law cases will be formally handed over to the manager with overall responsibility for looked after children and the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO).

## **Standard 5: Children’s active involvement**

### **Value statement**

CAFCASS will ensure that all children are seen and their active involvement in all aspects of their case is promoted, in a way that is consistent with and responds to each child’s wishes, competence and understanding. CAFCASS will work with the children and young people using its service to develop a shared values framework with those children and young people.

- 5.1 Children will always be seen, including in extended dispute resolution programmes (private law) and case planning (public law). The only exceptions to this are where a CAFCASS practitioner acts in the role of Reporting Officer in adoption proceedings; in short court-based dispute resolution appointments where no further assessment or continuing work is required; and in unavoidable circumstances, such as where the child is out of the jurisdiction or too ill to be seen. The reason for not seeing a child will be recorded on the case file.\*
- 5.2 Direct work with children and young people will be consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as reflected in the Qualities for Children's Services standards developed by the CAFCASS Children's Rights Service.\*
- 5.3 Through evidence giving or a written CAFCASS analysis, CAFCASS aims to be the voice of the child in court when the child cannot speak directly.\*
- 5.4 CAFCASS will be alert to and sensitive to the pressures on children who may have been coached to give a false or rehearsed story for a specific purpose.\*
- 5.5 As far as possible, children will be protected from any involvement or exposure in a case in which they are likely to become more vulnerable as a result.\*
- 5.6 Where a child requires support from services outside of CAFCASS then, with parental and, if appropriate, child consent, a referral will be made.\*
- 5.7 CAFCASS will ensure that the outcome of each case will be fed back to the child sensitively.
- 5.8 All CAFCASS records will be retained until a child is 22 years old, and we will provide counseling for any child, young person or young adult who wishes to find out about their history and how their case was handled.\*
- 5.9 Children will be actively involved in the overall development of CAFCASS services, including in the recruitment of staff, the provision of training, and in quality assurance work. (NB Initially the CAFCASS Young Peoples Board will do this).\*

## **Standard 6: Quality of Service**

### **Value statement**

CAFCASS aspires to excellence in every aspect of its work and commits itself to being a learning organisation, to applying the learning from research to service delivery, and to continuously improving the quality of its service to children and families, including regular evaluation of its services. CAFCASS also commits itself to ensuring sufficient resources are allocated to achieve this Standard.\*

- 6.1 CAF/CASS will satisfy itself that each member of staff, including those with managerial and supervisory roles, has the core and specialist competences to fulfill the responsibilities of their post to CAF/CASS standards.
- 6.2 CAF/CASS will supervise, support, train and develop each member of staff in order to enable them to work in a way that meets CAF/CASS standards – *no practitioner will be left alone with a case.*
- 6.3 Staff will participate fully in CAF/CASS' performance management and quality assurance processes in pursuit of this Standard.\*

## **Standard 7: CAF/CASS as a public sector business**

### **Value statement**

CAF/CASS aims to be a high-performing, effective organisation, making the best possible use of modern technology

- 7.1 All staff will be supported to become competent in all IT matters relevant to CAF/CASS business.\*
- 7.2 CAF/CASS will provide relevant online and multi-media services to children and families.
- 7.3 Optimum use will be made of secure, encrypted video-conferencing: telephone conferencing: office visits, and will make the most efficient use of its property assets.
- 7.3 CAF/CASS will provide its staff with the best tools in its power to do the job, to raise skills and confidence, including decent IT and credible, manageable practice guidance.
- 7.4 Bureaucracy will be reduced to the essential minimum – a process is a means to an outcome, never an outcome in itself.\*
- 7.5 Where CAF/CASS commissions a service for children and families, it will be commissioned on a best value basis.\*
- 7.6 CAF/CASS will seek to play an active part in the broader development of services for children and families in England including through joint commissioning and joint provision of services where appropriate.\*

## Standard 8: Customer Care

### Value statement

CAFCASS aims to operate the highest standards of customer care, internally and externally, at all levels, and in all aspects of its work.

- 8.1 CAFCASS will inform service users, including children, family members and carers, about its role at the earliest possible stage of involvement so as to reduce the risk of a clash of expectations, e.g. through use of written agreements and contracts.
- 8.2 CAFCASS will provide service users with regular and timely information about its work on their behalf.
- 8.3 CAFCASS will at all times observe recognised confidentiality principles and make clear when information will be shared.\*
- 8.4 CAFCASS will actively seek the views of service users, children, family members and carers, including those received through complaints, and use them to improve services. The views of children and young people through the use of programmes such as Viewpoint will be obtained.
- 8.5 CAFCASS will respond in a timely way to all concerns and complaints within the timescales set out in the CAFCASS complaints procedures, striving at all times to resolve concerns and complaints if possible.\*
- 8.6 Written information will be provided for children, proportionate to their age and understanding, as well as to their parents and carers. Contemporary formats will be used and the information will be provided in the relevant accessible language. Plain language will be used in all documents, including in court reports. Interpreters and/or translators from approved services will be used where required.
- 8.7 3<sup>rd</sup> party information will only be used in court reports if its use and accuracy have been checked with its originator. Where it is not possible to validate the information, the hearsay rules applicable to family proceedings must be followed.\*

## Standard 9: Partnership and multi-agency working

### Value statement

CAFCASS recognises the inter-dependence of partner agencies in the family justice system and that to be successful, collaborative working is essential. CAFCASS believes that multi-agency working produces the greatest reduction in delay, best case management, most coherent listing and time-tabling of cases, pro-active dispute resolution between agencies, and the quickest improvements to case plans for individual children when these are needed.

- 9.1 CAFCASS will work jointly with all family justice partner agencies in the best interests of individual children, without compromising its independence from them.\*
- 9.2 As one agency amongst many, CAFCASS will support the development of integrated children's services in England, and will play a full part in this.\*
- 9.3 CAFCASS will apply partnership working principles to its work with children, families and carers.\*
- 9.4 Multi-agency protocols for information sharing and other key areas will be developed and maintained.
- 9.5 Partner agencies will be involved in developing and monitoring the CAFCASS National Standards in order to develop a stronger shared understanding of what constitutes effective interventions and practice.

## **Standard 10: Leadership, accountability and governance**

### **Value statement**

CAFCASS regards strong leadership, and good governance as important principles underpinning its vision and in how these standards will be taken forward.

- 10.1 CAFCASS will work to good governance principles as set out in CAFCASS codes of conduct and practice and in external ethical codes such as GSCC standards, to which all staff and contractors will be expected to adhere.\*
- 10.2 CAFCASS will promote respectful relationships in work, in which all members of staff, contractors and partner agencies are viewed as equally important, with a vital inter-dependent role to play.\*
- 10.3 Relationships with interested stakeholders will be managed in line with the principles set out in Standard 10.2.
- 10.4 All CAFCASS work will be conducted in accordance with its own equalities and diversity strategies, for which leadership and accountability at every level of the organisation will be continuously demonstrated.\*
- 10.5 All standards, policies and procedures will be assured through CAFCASS quality assurance systems.\*
- 10.6 Where change in the way it works is needed, CAFCASS will strive to change at the right speed and manage the change well through mechanisms such as impact analysis.\*
- 10.7 CAFCASS will contribute to joint leadership on the issues faced by the family justice system.\*
- 10.8 CAFCASS will include children, families and partner agencies in its governance arrangements, through its Children and Young Peoples Board and its Participation Boards.\*