



Workforce Strategy

“The greatest binding and uniting factor (for Cafcass staff) has been and remains for many, their commitment and enjoyment of the work being done on behalf of children and families.”

Anthony Douglas, Chief Executive, Future culture and structure of Cafcass
(November 2005)

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SECTION 1

1.1 Introduction

“ In building a great institution there is no single defining action... no one killer innovation, no solitary luck break, no miracle moment. Rather our research showed that it feels like turning a giant, heavy flywheel. Pushing with great effort – days, weeks and months of work, with almost imperceptible progress – you finally get the flywheel to inch forward... You keep pushing and with persistent effort you eventually get the flywheel to complete one entire turn. You don’t stop. You keep pushing in an intelligent and consistent direction and the flywheel moves a bit faster. You keep pushing and you get two turns... then four... then eight... the flywheel builds momentum... you keep pushing... thirty two... a hundred... moving faster with each turn... a thousand... ten thousand... a hundred thousand. Then at some point – breakthrough! Each turn builds upon previous work, compounding your investment of effort. The flywheel flies forward with almost unstoppable momentum. This is how you build greatness.” (Good to Great and the Social Sectors, Jim Collins 2006).

The social care workforce nationally has been undergoing transformational change in recent years, with a range of reforms and significant investment. The Care Standards Act 2000 put in place key structures to improve the quality of social care services. This included establishing the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI), the General Social Care Council (GSCC), a Training Organisation for Personal Social Services (Topss; now superseded by Skills for Care (SfC)), the Children’s Workforce Development Council (CWDC) and the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE). Cafcass is actively working with all of these agencies and has a seat on the Board of CWDC.

Cafcass is a unique specialist organisation, with a remit to champion and safeguard the interests of children involved in family proceedings, through advising the family courts on what it considers to be in the best interests of individual children. It is the biggest single employer and contractor of social workers in England.

The Options for Excellence Review of the social care workforce¹ (jointly led by DfES and Department of Health) develops a vision for the social care workforce in 2020 and seeks to improve the quality of social care practice. Cafcass must meet the challenges and priorities set out in this review and this workforce strategy seeks to do this in the context of our work.

¹ Options for excellence – Building the Social Care Workforce of the Future
www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/RS00025/

Following our consultation paper in November 2005, *Every Day Matters*, we have launched a new set of National Standards, which, update the 2003 Service Standards and Principles, and are in operation from 1st May 2007. The standards are safe national minimum standards, which all staff and contractors will be required to comply with, and require some changes to working practices.

A new consultation paper, *Organising for Quality*, launched in December 2006, builds on *Every Day Matters* and sets out to define the time and resources needed to deliver the practice improvements previously set out and takes account of the efficiency savings required of us by central government over the next three years. Both these documents can be found on the Cafcass intranet and website.

Implementing these proposals brings challenges, as the roles of all staff and the main tasks they carry out will evolve in a number of ways. Many of these changes are taking place across the whole of the social care workforce, not just in Cafcass or in any one single agency.

A workforce or people strategy is critical to the success of organisational transformation and cultural change. *“Transformation involves a complex series of processes and organisational change and cannot happen unless people at all levels lead, manage and anticipate reform.”* (Local Government Pay & Workforce Strategy 2005).

We need to ensure that Cafcass is in the mainstream of changes in the way the family justice system develops as set out in *Every Child Matters*, the Children and Adoption Act 2006, the Children Act 2004, the *Care Proceedings Review*, the new *Framework for Private Law Cases* and the latest Joint Inspectors’ report on arrangements to safeguard children.

The 150 Local Authorities in England have a duty to consult with all organisations providing children’s services in their area and produce local workforce strategies. As Cafcass is currently organised as ten regions, it has proved difficult and resource intensive for us to be involved in any meaningful way with this arrangement, particularly in London.

We have begun planning for the next three years. This workforce strategy sets out a vision for how our workforce can develop to support our enduring vision of providing a world-class service, which is excellent in every measure.

The rest of this section sets out the scope, strategic aim and vision of the strategy, and the views of children and young people.

- Section 2 provides background to the strategy, the major workforce challenges and information on workforce numbers.
- Section 3 identifies the actions that will support the delivery of our objectives and meet our challenges.
- Section 4 sets out monitoring and review and consultation arrangements.

- Section 5 provides an appendix – a strategy implementation and monitoring tool.

1.2 Scope

Cafcass is a large national organisation and carries out a complex function, requiring experience, knowledge, and practice that is informed by evidence. Our professionally qualified social work staff called Family Court Advisers, (FCAs) work only in the family courts. Examples of matters that may be decided by family courts are:

- when children are subject to an application for care or supervision proceedings by social services (public law); in these instances our FCAs act as Children's Guardians
- adoption applications (public law); in these instances our FCAs act as Reporting Officers or Guardians
- when parents who are separating or divorcing can't agree on arrangements for their children (private law); in these instances our FCAs act as Children and Family Reporters or as Guardians ad Litem, if separate representation of the rights and interests of the child is required (Rule 9.5 cases).

A small but strategic national office and business support staff, locally based in our 103 offices, provide support to the core functions of the organisation through strategy and policy work, legal support, IT, management information, HR, finance, estates and general management and administration.

Our workforce strategy covers all of our staff and contractors. We firmly believe that the services we deliver, whether face-to-face work with children and families, work with our partners and stakeholders or our back office operations, all make a valuable contribution to a good outcome for our service users. Failure in any one aspect can lead to unhappy experiences for those who engage with us at one of the most difficult times in their lives.

1.3 Vision

Our vision is to have a skilled, valued and accountable children's workforce drawn from all sections of the community, which:

- strives to achieve the best possible outcomes for all children and young people and to reduce inequalities between the most disadvantaged and the rest
- is competent, confident and safe to work with children and young people
- people aspire to be part of and want to remain in, and where they can develop their skills and build satisfying and rewarding careers
- parents, children and young people trust and respect
- will make a positive difference to the lives of children.

1.4 Strategic aim

Our strategic aim is to ensure that we have the visionary leadership, organisational flexibility and sufficient people capacity required to deliver improved services, greater efficiency and better customer focus in the service we provide.

We want to have:

- the right people, in the right place, with the right mixture of skills, attitudes and behaviours
- a workforce which promotes participation from service users and stakeholders
- partnership working across the workforce and with other professionals and sectors
- a professional workforce where all workers are trained, skilled and appropriately qualified held accountable for their actions and committed to delivering an excellent standard of service, including ongoing development opportunities(CPD)
- support and commitment in delivering Cafcass vision and objectives.

1.5 Key workforce objectives

We have identified three key objectives with a number of supported actions, which will seek to address our concerns and to realise our vision and strategic aim. Progress will be monitored via the strategy-planning matrix, which is set out at **Appendix 1**. Our three objectives are:

1. to ensure that the shape, skills and capacity of the workforce is right to deliver our services
2. to be recognised as an organisation that genuinely equips its people and is an employer of choice
3. to develop our leadership capacity so that it supports organisational and staff improvement and effective delivery of services.

1.6 The strengths based approach

The desired outcomes for children as outlined in *Every Child Matters* could be met through a 'social model' of care.² This model looks at individuals in their personal, family and community context, bringing their strengths, capabilities and resources to bear on their own situations and the barriers to the outcomes they want. It looks at the local support networks as well as the publicly funded services and need to help them to stay independent, in control and engaged with the wider community.

The model supports earlier interventions that can focus on extra support to reinforce individual and family coping strategies. On a wider scale, the social model is committed to principles of anti-discrimination and social justice and to

² Annexe B in Options for excellence – Building the Social Care Workforce of the Future
Workforce Strategy
June 2007

recognising and using the strengths of individuals and communities within a rights and responsibilities framework.

The model requires a workforce that is flexible and multi-skilled to respond to the needs of individuals, as well as being reflective, practical and solution focused. It needs to move from a 'person-centered' to a 'strengths based' approach to practice.

1.7 What do children and young people think?

Viewpoint feedback: What would your perfect Cafcass worker be like?

Viewpoint is a confidential, fun, interactive computer program for children and young people, used to gain their views on the service they have received from Cafcass. Some comments received over the past year about what the perfect Cafcass worker would be like were:

“My perfect Cafcass worker would be true, honest and respect my decisions and also understand what I request. “

“Helpful, sympathetic, happy, understands your situation and understands what you want. “

“Kind, able to understand me, my feelings, and what I want to happen, someone I can talk to and someone who will listen to what I want to happen.”

“Very understanding and to listen to how I feel.”

“Helpful, sympathetic, happy, understands your situation and understands what you want.”

“My perfect Cafcass worker would be kind, polite, someone who respects me and my family and someone who listens to what I got to say.”

About Social Workers – A Children’s Views Report³

Some extracts from the recent study of children’s views of social workers:

A good social worker is:

- “someone you can contact easily and who then takes action on things”
- “someone who can spot when you are crying out for help”
- “someone who will act on the child’s concerns and not wait until the worst has happened before taking action “

Poor social workers “tend to speak to carers about you rather than to you – carers’ aims and your aims aren’t always the same and do clash”.

³ About Social Workers - A Children’s Views Report³ Dr Roger Morgan OBE *Children’s Rights Director*
July 2006

“I’d rather talk to someone I feel comfortable with, who keeps in mind they are working on your behalf, rather than side with the government who they work for”.

“Social workers are too keen on the word ‘no’ – if one kid falls off a horse, no other kids can go on a horse”.

“Always be on time, and ring if you’re not going to be”

Social workers should fully discuss important choices like changing placements with the young person before deciding anything – “talk to the young person to get it right first time rather than getting shunted every which way”.

“Speak to us in language that we understand, without using long words or explanations you can’t always follow.”

“They could tell you the truth and if it is bad, talk about it”.

SECTION 2

WHERE ARE WE NOW – AN AUDIT

3.1 Overview

We are currently organised as ten regions. We devolved a range of functions to the regions in 2005–2006 and our devolution programme will be extended further, replacing the existing regions by up to 30 local service areas by 2010. The move to smaller units of service delivery, which brings services closer to the point of delivery, will require workforce changes, particularly the confidence to handle more tasks in teams locally.

Within the broad national picture there are particular issues, which we will need to resolve. Some are structural, such as, how should services that are currently regionally based, such as HR, KLD or complaints, be delivered to smaller units? Concerns relating to our workforce broadly fall into four main strands:

- **an ageing workforce**
- **competing for staff: shrinking numbers, increasing salaries**
- **diversity**
- **an emerging development gap.**

While there are regional variations around recruitment, retention and diversity issues, age and workforce development issues are universal across Cafcass. A detailed analysis of each of these concerns is set out in section 2.2 to section 2.5.

Our social care workforce comprises a mixed economy of 1,261 employed Family Court Advisers (FCAs) (FTE = 1149.7) an additional flexible workforce consisting of employed staff on a Bank scheme and with approximately 500 active self-employed contractors all of whom are managed by 127 first line managers (FTE = 121.4)⁴. Unfortunately, at present we do not have age and diversity data about our self employed contractors (SECs). The majority of our SECs are located in London and the South East, with smaller numbers in Eastern and the South West and the rest scattered throughout other regions. We also employ a small number of Family Support Workers who undertake a range of task applying a range of skills in direct work with children and families.

Our FCAs and self-employed contractors (SECs) hold a social work qualification and are registered with the GSCC. Additionally they have a minimum of three years' post qualifying experience, although on average the experience is around seven years.

First line managers are a critical tier within Cafcass and are key to the major change programme already underway. While many first line managers have excellent practice knowledge, relatively few have been able to take up the opportunity of management training. This is particularly so with staff who

⁴ Figures are as at November 2006

transferred into Cafcass at the outset. Around 10% of this group have used the Cafcass sponsorship scheme to gain a relevant management qualification. A higher proportion of those joining Cafcass more recently have management qualifications.

Cafcass has established⁵ draft competences for managers which accord closely with the Management Standards Centre generic standards for leadership and management.⁶ A specific national induction programme is now provided for all new managers.

Cafcass has also provided some management training but no overall externally accredited programme. Inputs so far have included:

- management of change training for about 50 managers
- supervision training for four managers who have gone on to undertake “Training the trainer” courses in November 2006⁷
- briefings on specific subjects such as contract management, recruitment and selection
- sponsorship of some managers to undertake formal qualifications (about 10%).

In addition, a comprehensive performance management and quality assurance framework has been established to support managers.

We now employ 484 (WTE= 425.69) business support staff in the regions and national office. They carry out a wide range of business support functions and vital support required to keep the organisation’s engine running smoothly. Their work underpins the efficient and cost effective delivery of Cafcass’ services. In the regions and local offices, there are a range of job roles such as Business Manager, Regional PA, Admin Manager, Senior Administrator, Administrator and Business Support Officer. The tasks they carry out are a mixture of traditional administrative duties (reception duties, typing of reports, liaising with courts for papers, etc) and some specialist finance, MIS, estates and health and safety functions. A recent review of business support structures and the proposals in *Organising for Quality* set an agenda for further development of business support roles to take advantage of modern business processes and the increasing focus on customer service.

With the implementation of the Case Management System (CMS), the move towards IT competency for all staff, and the changes in how we work with children and families, there are a range of opportunities to significantly reshape business support and develop some new roles. The review has also identified their KLD needs such as management development for those with managerial responsibilities and the need for an induction programme for all

⁵ Service manager competences available on the intranet

⁶ GSCC, op cit, para 19.

⁷ Cafcass is using the model of supervision in social care developed by Tony Morrison endorsed by the “Managing effective supervision” unit developed by HZ Management and Training Consultancy for Skills For Care in August 2005, revised in 2006.

new administrative staff, which covers the statutory roles and duties of Cafcass and its financial, IT and risk management systems. There are no significant recruitment or retention issues in relation to our business support staff.

A broad breakdown of our business support staff as at 30/6/07, which includes customer service functions, is as follows:

Job Group	FTE	Headcount
Administration Manager	41.97	44
Admin & Senior Admin	263.35	307
Business Manager	8.6	9
Other Business Support	88.49	92
Total	402.41	452

A summary of all our staff as at 30/6/07 is as follows:

Job Grade Code	FTE	Headcount
Board	0.09	12
Senior Manager	42.6	44
Service Manager	122.26	127
Family Court Adviser	1103.57	1214
Family Support Worker	23.46	28
Self Employed Contractors*	Approx 200	500
Bank Scheme*	0	117
Admin Manager	41.97	44
Admin & Senior Admin	263.35	307
Ancillary Staff	3.99	12
Support Staff	88.49	92
TOTAL	1689.78	2497

* Used flexibly according to demand

2.2 An ageing social care workforce

Sixty one percent of our employed FCA staff are over the age of 50, and replenishing our levels of staff at the point of retirement is one of the key issues we need to address. While Cafcass' interim retirement policy sets a default of age 65 for retirement, new age discrimination legislation means that employers now give employees advance notice of retirement and that they can ask to work for longer. This is currently considered within Cafcass if supported by a business case. This makes forecasts for retiring staff very fluid and complicates planning.

Our projections to 2011 show that at a minimum, 119 FCAs will reach retirement age by 2011 representing 10% of the workforce. This figure will clearly be higher as a total of 298 FCAs (24.6% of total workforce) will be over the age of 60 and considering retirement.

Many of our older FCAs are not IT literate and may require additional support in trying to implement modernisation of our services. We are confident that we can expect our older workers to demonstrate a real capacity for learning new IT skills, given that it brings personal benefits to them and to the children and young people they work with.

2.3 Competing for staff: shrinking numbers, increasing salaries

The national average for our turnover is 5.2%, which we recognise is low compared to local authorities, although this has increased (4% as at December 2005). We do know from in-house research we carried out with our FCAs that there is a high level of satisfaction with the job itself and FCAs tend to stay in the job because of this. A regional breakdown for FCA turnover and vacancies is as follows:

Region	Headcount Figures as at 31/03/2007			FCA Vacancies as at 31/03/07
	Leavers in 06-07	FCAs in Post	FCA Turnover	
EA	4	89	4.04%	9.9
EM	3	107	2.74%	2.5
LO	7	155	4.38%	5
NE	5	90	5.56%	0
NW	12	212	5.47%	7.3
SE	5	74	6.60%	1.73
SO	4	68	5.63%	3
SW	3	111	2.62%	3.5
WM	14	135	10.14%	3
YH	9	186	4.66%	7
Totals	66	1227	5.20%	42.93
National Average Turnover 5.20%				

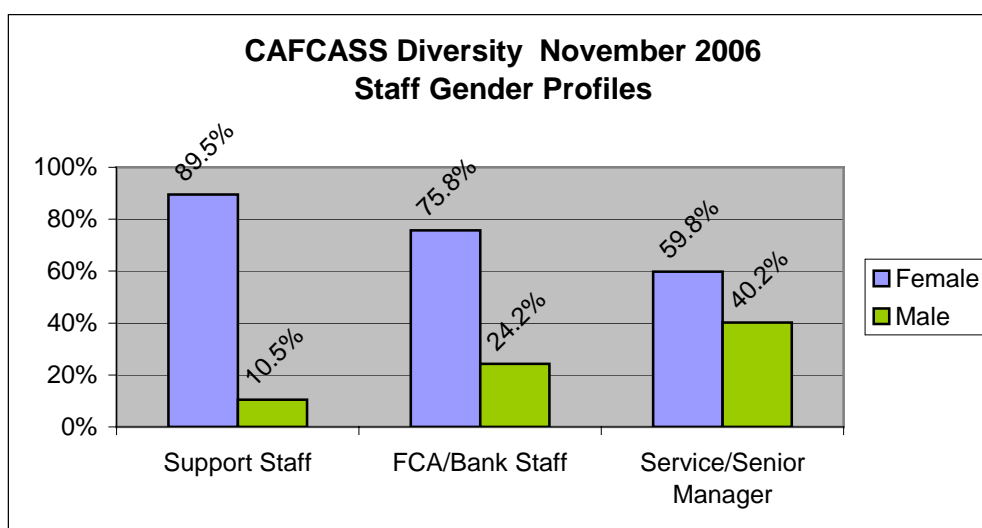
Predictably, London, South and the South East have the high levels of turnover. However, since last year, the West Midland in particular but North West and North East and Yorkshire and Humberside too have become new areas of concern for us, where turnover is associated with retirement of an ageing workforce. In some areas we are now competing with ever increasing local authority salaries, which in some instances are nearly £6,000/£7,000 higher than for our equivalent staff. We are also finding it difficult to recruit in pockets of the country such as Kent, Sussex, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, where despite advertising repeatedly we are not been able to fill vacancies. The gap between some local authority salaries and ours is too wide for us to match and has put our staffing levels at risk.

In London, the high turnover rates and large numbers of agency workers in local authorities impacts on our work. This brings with it a risk that our Guardians take on tasks that should have been completed by the local authority social worker. This is a contributing factor to the length of time it takes to complete a case and therefore our backlogs.

It is important to recognise that our essential criteria of three years' post qualifying experience in a child protection setting means that we are competing for staff with local authorities and others in the statutory sector. This has been a fluid market for some years with many more social workers now working as agency social workers. We would welcome and support a national review of social work salaries, along the lines of teachers and nurses, to avoid unhealthy competition between employers over the same group of social work staff.

2.4 Diversity

Cafcass' social care workforce is primarily a white, female workforce over the age of 50. The table below shows the make up of our staff in three categories. They show that over 75% of our social care employees are female. This has particular implications for us in our private law work with fathers. However, women dominate the wider children's social care workforce and this is an issue for the government's recruitment campaign.



As of November 2006 9.4% of our FCAs are of black and ethnic minority (BME) origin (119 FCAs). Around 7% of our first line managers (nine employees) and 11.9% of Senior Managers (five employees) are also of BME origin. Of our business support staff, 12.2% are from BME communities. Most of these employees are based in London, West Midlands, East Midlands and South East. However here too, they are not represented at the same rates as that of the local population. In comparison, the 2005 intake of social work students had 32% registered as BME students.

The huge diversity of service users in many parts of the country (such as in London, Birmingham and Manchester) contributes to the complexity of our work. We need to routinely work through interpreters and working successfully with them is a skill we are still acquiring. We also need to think about recruiting staff who can speak some of the main languages we encounter. A recent inspection on how well we are meeting our duties under the Race

Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 highlighted that our front line practice in relation to our black and ethnic minority service users continues to have gaps in quality and this is a key area we need to address.

Seven percent of all employees have said they have a disability. We are monitoring staff disability, but do not at this time have a breakdown by job role. We have however ensured any new offices we have acquired or any refurbishment to existing offices are DDA complaint. We have put our Disability Equality Scheme in place with active involvement of disabled staff and service users, and this builds on the Social model of disability. Review meetings are planned throughout each of the three years to ensure progress against the action plan.

2.5 An emerging development gap

Training and development for staff has been patchy in the past five years. A good modular programme has been rolled out to ensure staff from different backgrounds of public and private law, were trained so that they could work flexibly between the two specialisms. Other professional development opportunities are currently provided for practitioners through commissioning external and internal trainers to deliver courses identified. However a standstill budget for two successive years 2005/06 and 2006/07 meant that we had to prioritise considerably on what we could deliver. Despite this, we invested in the training and development of our staff and earmarked £50,000 for sponsorship in 2006/07. The following table gives a breakdown of those employees who were awarded sponsorship in 2006/07.

	FCAs	SMs	HR	Business support staff	Business manager
No. Sponsored	19	7	2	9	2
Female	17	7	2	8	2
Male	2			1	
White	18	4	2	9	2
BME	3	3			

The Leitch Review of Skills⁸ asks every employer to make a Skills Pledge and says: *A major campaign, with public and private employer champions, will encourage employers to make a 'Pledge' that every relevant employee be enabled to gain basic and Level 2 equivalent skills. With key employers leading the way, the 'Pledge' [can] deliver significant early progress against the world class objectives at Basic Skills and Level 2.*

Cafcass as an employer has signed up to the skills pledge and we will work towards identifying those Business Support Staff who do not meet level 2 and support them to achieve it.

We have also developed a five-year Knowledge Learning and Development (KLD) strategy and within that we have prioritised the development and roll out of a post qualifications (PQ) framework for our social care staff. The

⁸ Final Report (Dec. 2006). p.20, §61 (edited).

table below shows our current levels of post qualification awards amongst our employed staff. This amounts to 37% of our Service Managers and 21.7% of FCAs and first line managers. Given that our staff are providing expert advice to courts and critiquing local authority care plans, we must ensure that this proportion increases steadily to secure our credibility as a service and as an employer:

Awards	FCAs	First Line Managers
PQ1	78	13
Child Care Award (CCA)	36	9
PQ Award in Social Work (PQSW)	38	8
Advanced Award in Social Work (AASW)	26	9
Practice Teacher Award (PTA)	86	8
Total with PQ awards (by headcount)	264	47

(As at January 2006)

The Department of Health has confirmed that the funding mechanism for PQ awards is through the central government financial settlement to local authorities, but no Department of Health funding is available to enable Cafcass to develop PQ awards together with HEIs, or to fund staff to actually gain such qualifications within the funding review. We have estimated our costs, as being over £2.5 million over the next three years which presents a substantial challenge for us.

In addition, targets for local authorities to ensure a set number of social workers achieve PQ awards have recently been removed. Therefore, the money they receive for this is no longer ring fenced. This is likely to lead to the fund being used more generically and may impact both on the development and viability of PQ courses if there is not enough of a critical mass. Our role and purpose essentially requires that our staff should have higher levels of qualification and training in order to assure local authority work with confidence.

We have spent a lot of time and energy in working up proposals with HEI's but our numbers alone cant make up the course, given our limited funding and capacity. We have been working with our partners at the Children's Workforce Development Council, with HEIs and with our sponsorship team at the DfES, to raise awareness of this issue and to resolve it. We were able to access some money for around 15 staff to begin this qualification and hope to gain more in the forthcoming year.

SECTION 3

How we will deliver our key workforce objectives

This section sets out the actions we will take to help us to meet our three key workforce objectives and to realise our vision and strategic aim. A summary of the actions is available at the end of each section.

Objective 1

3.1 To ensure that the shape, skills and capacity of the workforce is right to deliver our services.

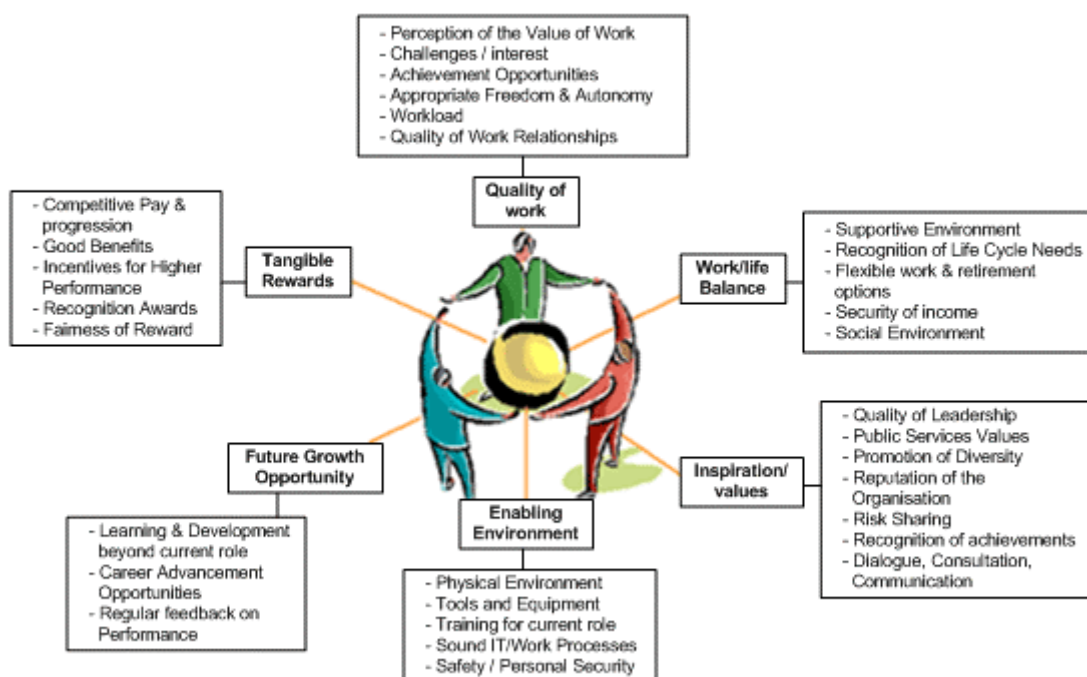
Cafcass occupies a unique position in the delivery of social care. Many social workers aspire to work for Cafcass as part of their career development. Equally, the nature of our work means that the administrative and support services need to be highly skilled and committed to improving outcomes for the children we work with.

Recruitment, retention and total rewards

We know that a significant number of our staff may choose to retire over the next five years. We also know that our workforce profile (white, female) does not match the census information. This situation presents a positive opportunity to reshape our workforce to deliver our future changes and we will plan positively for it. We will both support this group of staff through retirement planning and explore how we can utilise their experience and skills through part time/sessional work and as trainers. We will also use each vacancy as a positive opportunity to review roles within teams and to decide what skills are needed to deliver the service and who could best deliver them.

There are pockets in the country that have persistently found it hard to fill vacancies. We will address our recruitment and retention issues through a competitive benefits package and a strategic pay review to determine what salary levels are required in which parts of the country. A key aim is to develop a total reward environment which shows that it is not just pay that matters but also other elements such as the development opportunities that staff have, their working environment, flexibility, home-working, the variety of work, pensions scheme, non-pay rewards, etc. It is useful to communicate to staff and potential recruits the full value of the total rewards they receive.

The Public Service Total Reward Framework⁹



© Hay Group

Although getting our pay levels right is important, there are several other things we can do to secure future skills. We will:

- work with local authorities and CWDC to get social workers to see a job with Cafcass as part of career progression
- increase the numbers of practice learning placements across Cafcass to encourage future interest in our work and to support social work education
- promote our work through the media, conferences, recruitment fairs and other public opportunities
- promote secondments and placement exchanges with local authorities for learning and development, but also to promote our work to encourage career progression.

A student's experience: *Fiona Brown was working for a Fostering Agency as a Resource Worker in Sutton, London. From her experience of one-to-one work with children in care who had experienced difficult times she decided to become social worker and study for an MSc Social Work qualification at the Royal Holloway University. Thanks to the University's links with Cafcass her second year work placement as part of her course was at the Archway Cafcass Office for a 100-day placement. Most of the work she's been involved with has been in private law work, but she has been given opportunities to shadow public law and adoption cases.*

Fiona says, "this has been a positive experience and it's a great confidence boost to be able lead on a case and interview parents, children and young people. I've really valued the opportunity to get directly involved in case work."

⁹ 'The Total Rewards Toolkit, developed by Hay for the Cabinet Office Pay and Workforce Reform Team

Our recruitment code of practice recognises that in order to provide a world class service to the children and families that we serve, it is vital that we recruit and retain people who share our aims and values and have the skills and abilities to perform effectively at all levels. It is also vital that existing staff are committed to the values and vision within our frameworks, strategies and policies. We must not settle for less.

Workforce planning

Cafcass operates in an increasingly diverse environment. We must understand who our service users are in every part of the country we work in. We can only do this by *first*, looking at our local census information and *second*, monitoring the use of our services. Alongside this we need to listen to our service users and their experience of the service we provide. Only by doing this *routinely*, will we begin to shape our workforce to provide a service that is relevant and meets and exceeds expectations.

Each local area must, as part of its annual business planning cycle, set out its workforce plans. This means understanding past demand and future projections, carrying out an analysis of need within the context of our remit, and matching this against existing skills, the profile of staff and services available in the organisation. Self employed contractors should be asked annually to indicate how much time they intend to offer Cafcass and along with employed hours available, an estimate should be made of workforce availability. Gaps must be identified and these should form the basis of an action plan, which sets out how the challenges will be met. We will provide guidance and tools for local managers to support them in this task. Good-quality HR information is vital to underpin the understanding of future needs and we will invest in getting robust workforce in place.

Working with a diverse community in Bradford: *Bradford has a very diverse population, with a large Asian Muslim community. The majority of the 45 staff in the Bradford office undertake a mix of public and private law cases. For the past year final placement social work students have been working in the team. Strong partnerships have also been maintained with a growing range of voluntary groups, in particular with Muslim faith advisers, which has been welcomed by all grades and staff.*

It is estimated that approximately 25% of Section 7 reports prepared by the office involve members of the Asian community. In recognition of this there are two posts designated as Cafcass Support Worker/Interpreter, but who are a regional source. The office has a full time receptionist with Asian language skills.

Remodelling workforce and new ways of working

Organising for Quality sets out a number of different proposals for management and practice improvement roles in our core and support functions, to be implemented over the next three years. The proposals intend to create smaller local areas, reduce senior management posts, refocus the Service Manager's job so that it supports front line practice and raises performance, and strengthen the quality of practice through a range of practice supervision roles and Family Support Worker (FSW) posts (one per team). It also signals the creation of a National Business Centre, to streamline business and administrative functions. A range of posts, including Area Business Managers, General Managers, Admin Managers, Office Managers and Administrators will support this direction. The key outcomes we want to achieve are to ensure local teams are properly managed and that we get to the safe 1: 12 supervision ratio for FCAs/FSW through the early establishment of these roles.

We will designate staff as specialists once they have demonstrated achievement of core competences in their role through an accreditation process: eg FCA (practice supervision) or FCA (inter country adoption) or Administrator (MIS), Administrator (customer services) or Administrator (quality assurance), etc. We will ensure that there are clear job descriptions, roles and responsibilities for all new roles and that accountability is properly established.

We recognise that a 'one size fits all' approach does not offer local solutions or flexibility, both vital ingredients for a responsive service. A 'menu' of jobs and roles will allow managers to pick and mix the best service for their local needs. In this way we will build local capacity to achieve our strategic objectives and ensure that our staff can extend and develop into roles required by our future change programme. This will be supported through appropriate training where necessary.

The role of an Administrator (case progression): Where there are backlogs and delays such a role will be able to mirror the recently appointed case progression officers in court. They will ensure that each case has the necessary papers and information, is tracked and followed up for outstanding tasks and provide the co-ordination necessary to meet the target dates.

The role of the General Team Manager: (a case study)

The retirement of Service Managers (SM) and introduction of Practice Supervisors allows us to take a critical and creative evaluation of the traditional SM role and how best to manage front line services. The role requires good liaison, organisational and managerial skills, including day to day issues not directly related to practice such as allocation, travel claims, booking annual leave, duty and court rota's managing waiting lists etc. these are generic skills and tasks and don't require a social work qualification to fulfil them. Indeed some Admin managers have taken on many of the tasks previously attempted by SMs. The General Team Manager would always be supported by a Practice supervisor, who would focus on ensuring the social work practice remained of a high standard. Three way appraisals with the practitioner would ensure accountability.

We must consider new ways of broadening our pool of available workers and employees. We can either do this by commissioning services or by recruiting specifically, where we don't always have necessary skills to provide the depth of care needed. The issues that bring us into contact with families in the court setting are increasingly complex and sometimes we will need to rely on specialist skills, for example drug and alcohol expertise, or communication with a child with profound learning disabilities or a child psychologist, to ensure that the overall quality of our work remains high.

In recent years there has been a marked shift to commissioning of social care services from a wide range of providers in the private and voluntary sectors. Effective commissioning can be a crucial means and an effective lever to influence the shape and size of the workforce and the skills and competencies required to deliver desired outcomes for service users. The Children and Adoption Act 2006 will give us powers and duties to commission contact services. We have appointed a National Partnerships and Commissioning Manager who will support the development of our commissioning skills sufficiently to undertake this task as well as commissioning specialist skills in teams. "The skills that commissioners need include data analysis, needs assessment, user engagement, strategic thinking, influencing/negotiating, procurement, market analysis, service remodelling, workforce development, financial management, legal awareness, partnership working, project management and leadership."¹⁰

We have a small number of Family Support Workers (under ten) who do not hold a social work qualification but have related qualifications and/or are experienced workers who work alongside our teams to support the direct work we do with families. This has been a positive strength in these teams and we have successfully recruited a number of similar posts in other parts of the country, which attracted massive external interest from practitioners from a variety of disciplines and with many years of direct work experience already. Their contributions demonstrate that using other related childcare qualifications can enrich the work of the team and enhance the experience of our service users. An example of their work is to gather information through direct work with children to contribute to the FCA's assessment of the family being presented to court. We will extend this role incrementally throughout Cafcass.

We have a number of business support staff who have expressed an interest in pursuing the Family Support Worker role as a development for them individually. However, few could compete with the external competition at this current time. This strategy proposes a positive alternative, which is strengths based, develops skills further, uses existing knowledge and skills to the fullest advantage for our services to children and families.

¹⁰ Options for Excellence – Building the Social Care Workforce of the Future.
Workforce Strategy
June 2007

Using the personal best of staff. *Katrina Durrans, currently based in Durham, 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 team.

Increasing capacity, improving productivity

We want our local teams to increase their capacity to improve some key aspect of our work, for example quality assurance, customer service and engaging our service users and stakeholders more locally

The changes to our IT systems, the move to modernise our practice and our systems throws up new challenges for our business support staff as their jobs and functions are changing. Some staff now specialise and many are trained in aspects of administration, customer service, IT, business support, MIS etc. We will support them to extend their skills and spend some of their time more directly with service users, for example by ensuring service users are made welcome and have the information they need, acting as an interpreter where they have a language skill, or gaining feedback from service users, stakeholders and partnerships, individually, through focus groups and through Viewpoint. They could routinely gather diversity monitoring information during first meetings held in the office or provide play and child minding during interviews. The list is not exhaustive and in many offices business support staff are already undertaking some aspects. We will extend this way of working to all offices.

If Business Support staff are, however, interested in developing their skills as a Family Support Worker, they could be supported to apply for appropriate training through our sponsorship programme. 'Growing our own' alongside new skills being recruited is a good way forward. This clearly fits within our Knowledge Learning and Development (KLD) strategy as one of the pathways for career development, which can be added to the development opportunities for business support staff within their profession. We will develop a scheme which outlines how this can be achieved.

Supporting career development: *Vicky Timmins, Regional PA in the East Midlands, is about to commence the final semester of a two-year HND in Business Management, which will lead to a BA in Business and Management after a third year of study. The KLD Sponsorship Group has*

funded 75% of the funding needed for the 2006/07 element of the course. The modules she has undertaken, which include data analysis, business systems and management, have supported her working at a more strategic level as the PA to the Regional Director. Vicky says, "Being in the role I am, the section on research has proven particularly interesting in that through the university I have access to background information on many topics. I also pick up tips as to useful websites and books to read ~ I don't think I have ever read so much! I am sure I have developed personally... I am much more knowledgeable. I now understand better what motivates people and how best to support my colleagues."

Organising for Quality makes proposals about ensuring that local teams are funded in line with demand for local services. Our teams will need to be able to work at the levels of efficiency and effectiveness of our most productive teams, maximise the benefits of our staff's experience, and be more able to deliver new ways of working. We need to be able to get to grips with the work quickly, always work with a child focus, respect diversity, carry out focussed work to change attitudes and write succinctly. Our KLD strategy supports this stance and we are committed to training all our existing FCAs to achieve a post-qualifying award, budget permitting. New FCAs being recruited will need to have this qualification as essential criteria.

Local teams will need to take a lead on this locally within the context of diversifying the workforce and approaching the overall local budget differently, ie fewer FCAs, more FSWs, some hybrid posts, some commissioned time from specialists, use of volunteers, etc. There will be different solutions for different local areas, which will be informed by a thorough understanding of local needs and existing services and identifying the gaps.

Organising for Quality looks at the issue of productive time closely, maximising the time spent by our staff on "core activities, that is, activities that are integral to the delivery of improved frontline services" (*Productive Time Measurement Guidance*, Office of Government Commerce, 2004).

We will make better use of staff time. It is not about getting staff to work harder, but about enabling staff to work smarter, spending more time on where it matters for them and for service users. Practical options for improving productive time are very wide-ranging. They include streamlining processes, better use of technology, greater staff mobility, flexible working practices and tackling the multitude of reasons that can cause staff productivity to suffer.

Shared services

Nationally we are part of the DfES family and as such must explore and, wherever viable, develop partnerships to share services. Typically this would be for services such as IT, HR, payroll, communications, etc. When identifying gaps in our own services or infrastructure, a key question to ask ourselves is: who else does it and can we do it with them? The guiding principles to enter

into such a partnership would be increased efficiency, value for money and effectiveness. A successful example of this is our library service, which is provided by Barnardo's and which they also provide to their own staff. Setting up our own service would have cost nearly three times our contract price. The partnership has the added value of shared vision and values and the potential to develop expertise together.

Actions – Objective 1:

1. Each local area must as part of its annual business planning cycle, set out its workforce plans.
2. Provide guidance and tools to local managers to support them to write workforce plans.
3. Improve the quality of HR/workforce data.
4. Ensure that there are clear job descriptions, roles and responsibilities for new roles and that accountability is established.
5. Achieve key outcomes of safe 1: 12 supervision ratio through the early establishment of new roles.
6. Develop our commissioning skills.
7. Diversify local teams to include specialists FCAs and Administrators through accreditation, Family Support Workers and recruit and commission skills and services to create a multidisciplinary skill base within teams.
8. Develop a scheme for Business Support Staff which develops them into FSW roles.
9. Complete a strategic pay review, which includes pay, terms and conditions, benefits and related aspects, to ensure we have the best workforce to deliver our service.
10. Secure interest in Cafcass as an employer and as a career option by working in partnership with local authorities, government offices and the CWDC and extending our practice placements.
11. Increase the number of practice placements for students who are our potential future workforce.
12. Continue to promote Cafcass through the media, conferences, recruitment campaigns and other public opportunities
13. Ensure all new FCAs and SEC's have a PQ award.
14. Improve 'productive time' through the use of technology, greater staff mobility and flexible and improved working practices.
15. Explore and, wherever viable, develop national partnerships to share services.

Objective 2

3.2 To be recognised as an organisation that genuinely equips its people and is an employer of choice.

Securing the right workforce is crucial: ensuring staff are properly equipped, supported and developed to the best of their ability is the next building block of this strategy.

Performance management and Continuous Professional Development

We will work in a way that builds on the strengths of individuals and use them in the best possible way to realise Cafcass' goals and ambitions. This approach will also improve staff motivation as it engages and develops the personal best of every member of staff.

A key factor in successful organisations is a robust performance management framework, which is implemented at every level of the organisation. This means that every individual understands the corporate objectives and can identify the part they play in achieving them. We will ensure that every staff member receives an annual appraisal as is their right, which provides an honest and open assessment of their performance and sets challenging but realistic targets, which will help Cafcass achieve its objectives. This will be supported by a set of generic competences for all staff and technical competences for the various job roles, many of which are already in place and which we will continue to develop and review as job roles change. A personal development plan for each member of staff will help to inform local and national knowledge learning and practice development plans. We will ensure Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for every member of staff through appraisal, including meeting our commitment to the skills pledge for all our Business Support staff to achieve basic skills and a Level 2 qualification. We will also ensure that all staff receive one to one support from their line manager and that FCAs receive practice supervision to ensure their work is reflective and of a high standard.

We remain committed to delivering our Knowledge, Learning and Development strategy, which provides a framework to ensure our staff are equipped with the necessary skills.

Portfolio working

Within Cafcass, we have a small strategic national leadership team consisting of the Chief Executive and three Corporate Directors (CDs), each of whom hold a flexible portfolio of roles based on individual strengths to maximise performance. Another example is the portfolios held by HR Advisers. This model has worked well and we will mirror this model throughout the organisation. This means breaking down traditional barriers of regional boundaries and being flexible enough to take collective responsibility for the work we deliver at one level, but at another accrediting individual strengths and expertise to deliver our services to a high standard. This model will also allow us to more easily define our skills gaps and to fill these through recruitment or commissioning.

Supporting staff

Both *Every Day Matters* and *Organising for Quality* set out new ways of working which will absorb the increasing demands being made of our services

while our budget stands still. We will ensure that all our staff are properly equipped to take on new roles and functions within the proposed structures, through:

- more manageable workloads
- more supervision and management support for front line practitioners
- a mentoring scheme and provision for Action Learning Sets
- better IT
- structural changes such as a three Corporate Support Teams which will create business efficiencies.

Sickness levels in Cafcass are broadly comparable to other public sector organisations. But we are not complacent about this. We will proactively manage staff engagement to ensure that each individual member of staff is achieving their personal best, is sufficiently challenged and is making a contribution towards the achievement of corporate objectives. We will encourage a good work-life balance for all staff through a new policy, which includes aspects such as flexible working, different types of leave, career break, etc. This, we believe, will ensure that staff enjoy the experience of work, it will reduce stress related absence and contributes to good morale.

We already have a very well used Employee Assistance Scheme and an analysis of its use is telling us that we need to find better ways to support our black and ethnic minority staff. We will ensure better induction, identify support through appraisals and sponsor staff support groups for BME staff and those with a disability. A recently set up Black Managers Support Group has a very constructive agenda offering support to its members and also supporting the work of the organisation to be aware of the impact of disadvantage. Similarly our disabled staff have developed links with the National Disability Staff Support Network, NDSSN, a support group for disabled staff in the probation service. We will build on these as a model for other support groups.

Our home-workers can often feel isolated and disconnected from the work of their team and Cafcass as a whole. It is vital that we find ways of engaging and supporting them. We will carry out a review of home working to ensure that flexible ways of working also provide best value for both the employer and the employee.

Good employee relations

Our first staff survey was carried out at the end of 2006 and this represented an important and positive step for Cafcass. We will listen to what staff have said collectively. There are some difficult messages arising from this survey and it will require thoughtful work right across the organisation to generate an improved level of mutual trust. Perhaps the most noticeable element within the survey results is the three way split for many questions – with a neutral position often taking a full third. We are deeply committed to providing more opportunities for staff engagement and participation over issues of concern to us all.

Additionally we will carry out a staff survey every two years as a health check. We acknowledge the tensions in our relations with the Unions emerging as a result of the change agenda and will work hard at restoring this through agreeing common principles about the values and vision for the service. We must modernise in line with other public sector organisations and if we are to keep pace then we must broaden the areas of common agreement between the Unions and Board and Management.

Equally it is vital that all our workforce, employed and self employed contractors, commit to the values and vision of Cafcass and the direction set out in its frameworks, strategies and policies. Dissent and challenge should be pursued in a mature way through internal processes rather than through public criticism, which damages the credibility of the organisation and colleagues working within it.

Underpinning good employee relations is a responsive, knowledgeable and intelligent Human Resource team and Cafcass will ensure this is in place. *Organising for Quality* sets out a future direction for Business Support and the HR will organise itself along similar principles of efficiency and effectiveness. The current service is devolved to regions with a small management team at the centre. We will ensure that a good standard of service is maintained, whatever the future structure as the regions change shape and responsibility is devolved to the 30+ local units. To maintain professional CIPD standards will be a key objective.

Health and safety and sustainability

As set out in our property and IT strategies, we will promote good health and safety practices in our offices and modernise working practices and IT equipment, so that all staff have the tools they need to do their job. This may sometimes mean different solutions for different people or groups of staff, in particular ensuring staff who are disabled or have special needs are properly resourced.

We want to be an exemplar employer and embed the principles of sustainability into our strategies and policies and culture as our corporate social responsibility. "Sustainable development means finding ways to improve people's quality of life without damaging the environment, without storing up problems for the future or transferring them to other parts of society or other countries."¹¹ We will develop a sustainable development strategy, which will aim for better value for money and reduce our carbon footprint through robust environmental management and practices and more sustainable properties. We believe this is vital in making a contribution to a better outcome for the future of the children we work with and we will work with DfES to achieve this.

¹¹ DfES Departmental Report 2006. The Department is committed to achieving the targets set out in the *Framework for Sustainable Development on the government Estate*.

Working with partners

It is vital that Cafcass is visible as a key partner and player in the children's services workforce. We will build on the work we have started to work with other organisations such as Options for Excellence, Skills for Care (SfC) and the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) to ensure we keep up to date with latest developments, contribute to national thinking and benefit from resources available through these organisations. The appointment of a Head of Knowledge, Learning and Practice Development in 2007 demonstrates our commitment to strengthen our position in the network.

Actions – Objective 2:

1. Proactively manage staff engagement and in particular support BME and disabled staff through induction, appraisal, personal development plans, mentoring and staff support.
2. Ensure Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for every member of staff through appraisal, including our commitment to achieve a Level 2 qualification for all our Business Support staff.
3. Developing a system of all staff having a flexible portfolio of roles based on individual strengths to maximise performance.
4. Develop and implement a work-life balance policy.
5. Carry out a review of home working to ensure flexible ways of working provide value for employer and employee.
6. Write a staff engagement strategy which specifically addresses the issues arising out of the staff survey
7. Carry out a staff survey every two years.
8. Improve relations with Trade Unions to broaden areas of agreement.
9. Develop a culture where all staff are committed to values and vision of Cafcass.
10. Maintain a good standard of HR service during structural changes to the regions.
11. Ensure good health and safety practices in all offices.
12. Ensure all staff are properly equipped (IT literate, etc) to carry out their job.
13. Develop a sustainable development strategy, which will embed the principles of sustainability into our strategies and policies and culture.
14. Work with external organisations (SfC, CWDC, Options for Excellence, etc) to strengthen our position and benefit from being part of the children's services workforce.
15. Appoint a Head of Knowledge, Learning and Practice Development in 2007/08.

Objective 3

3.3 To develop our leadership capacity so that it supports organisational and staff improvement and effective delivery of services.

Customer focused leadership

Strong leadership and management is vital in our drive to create a learning organisation, one that is properly equipped and has the capacity to deliver our services. Some of the new qualities, skills and expertise required of leaders across public services to drive reform and improve service delivery include a greater focus on the user or customer and on cross-sector partnerships and procurement.

The Public Services Leadership Consortium (formed in 2005) sponsored research by Professor Ivan Robertson (of Robertson Cooper Ltd) and Elisabeth Henderson (of Henderson-Jones) into the qualities required for customer focused leadership, and the learning required to develop those qualities. They identified a common set of leadership qualities and key learning areas for public sector leaders which include:

- *How to assess and analyse who the customers are, what drives customer satisfaction and what they value about the service. This includes methods and approaches to facilitate taking the customer's perspective, and how to encourage staff to identify with the customer's experience.*
- *How to re-align whole organisation systems and processes to deliver better customer focus. This includes means of working across complex partnerships and landscapes from a radical customer perspective.*
- *How best to enhance the motivation and well-being of staff to deliver excellent customer service, including the concept of the 'satisfaction mirror' and the underlying evidence in support of it, the aim being to align employee and customer satisfaction.*
- *How to develop and use entrepreneurial skills of commercial awareness, innovation and flexibility to procure services across a complex service delivery landscape, optimising opportunities for better value to the customer.*

Management development programme

We will provide a comprehensive management development programme over three years for our first line managers, which will equip them to play a full role as key players in promoting and managing culture change to a high trust and respectful organisation, motivating staff and providing entrepreneurial, supportive leadership

The programme will consist of an accredited management qualification within the Post Qualifying (PQ) framework approved by the General Social Care Council¹², Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to include ongoing coaching and mentoring, and organisation specific developments. It has been developed in accordance with the Skills For Care Leadership and Management Strategy:¹³ and seeks to fulfil recommendation 9:

“All first line managers who do not have a relevant management qualification and are not covered by the Registered Manager Awards should be registered for the agreed management qualifications”.

The Local Government Pay and Workforce Strategy outlines the following skills that managers and the workforce need to develop or acquire to ensure they are able to achieve continuously improving, efficient services:

- organisational development and change management
- business process redesign and analysis
- performance, productivity and people management
- customer relations management
- project and financial management
- procurement and client side management
- partnership working and community engagement
- managing and promoting diversity
- maximising use of technology.

The management development programme will seek to address these as well as ensure that we are able to offer effective practice supervision to improve the service to children and families. Any such programme should be employer led and Cafcass is fully committed to such a key development. We have been successful in gaining CWDC funding for the initial development work and will be seeking to do the same to fund the ongoing three-year programme.

Rewarding achievement

We will bring forward proposals in the Strategic Pay Review to recognise excellent individual performance, probably by way of a salary stretch point. We are also creating a number of additional responsibility posts in the new Cafcass structure, which recognises individual skill and expertise that people have but will also give more career progression options. For example, FCA's to take on additional practice supervision responsibilities, and some office managers to take on a wider brief. We intend to bring in an annual awards ceremony at which excellent performance can be recognised and known about throughout Cafcass. In line with most other organisations, we will retain a performance related pay scheme for senior managers. A new staff engagement strategy, being prepared in 2007/08 in consultation with staff and trade unions, will develop a small number of further initiatives aimed at

¹² Specialist standards and requirements for post-qualifying social work education and training, Leadership and Management, GSCC, November 2005

¹³ Leadership and Management Strategy Employer's Guide, Recommendation 9, Skills For Care, October 2005.

recognising and rewarding excellent performance and significant contributions to the development of Cafcass services. Overall, while greater income is always welcome, we will work to strengthen the “psychological contract” between employer and employee – i.e. making it clear to our staff that what they do matters.

Talent management and succession planning

Our approach to talent management will allow the best staff at each level – employee, manager, head of service or corporate leader to move on through the ranks. We have competences in place for most of our main job roles and these are on the intranet. It allows employees to see what skills and responsibility are required to move up through professional groups in Cafcass. We will ensure that training is listed to help “signpost” ambitious people in the right direction. We will develop coaching and mentoring schemes, which are proven methods of supporting talented people. Diversity will be at the heart of our talent management strategy and we will develop those with the talent and commitment that reflects the diversity of the communities they serve.

Cafcass’ ageing workforce is predicted to increase the number of senior post-holders retiring over the next five years. We will need to identify successors for these roles. Another driving issue is our relatively flat organisational structure. This means that fewer employees are gaining the strategic skills needed for senior positions. We will launch a succession-planning scheme¹⁴, which will identify people who are considered good prospects for senior manager positions. The candidates will be given access to development training and coaching and will be encouraged to apply for suitable jobs when they become available – although positions will still be advertised in line with equal opportunities.

Succession planning in West Midlands: *The experience of this region and others is that recruiting to Service Manager posts is difficult. The numbers of applicants is low and after short-listing there is a high drop out rate. In some cases repeat advertising has brought no greater success. A new broader and longer term approach is being explored, which includes acting-up/growing our own. Many FCAs wish to move into management, but feel that there is no current path to allow them to develop the necessary skills and sufficient experience to be able to compete with existing managers from other agencies. A programme to develop management skills internally could produce managers who know the business and who can be supported as they develop their management skills. A suggested path for this region is to plan for some Service Manager posts to use this pattern. Criteria for selecting those for acting up include previous experience as a supervisor (through practice teaching), some representative activity for the team and/or for Cafcass and a positive reference from their existing managers. Ideally some management*

¹⁴Succession planning is typically defined as “a process by which one or more successors are identified for key posts (or groups of similar key posts), and career moves and/or development activities are planned for these successors.” In other words, succession planning is about preparing organisations for likely or inevitable changes now, in order to minimise challenges later. A scheme for around 20 people would cost approximately 10-15K.

training would be provided during the six to nine month period, at the end of which the permanent post would be advertised internally and externally and all those acting up would be automatically short listed.

In addition to nurturing existing people, Cafcass will look at bringing in new talent and will invest in graduate recruitment in finance, IT, HR and business support posts. Graduate schemes are an essential way of growing our own and will require the support of the senior management team and the trade unions.

Investors in People

We will work towards achieving the Investors in People (IiP) Standard to help us to improve the way we work.¹⁵ Our staff are our greatest asset, and if we are to succeed everyone has to perform well. To achieve this, people need the right knowledge, skills and motivation to work efficiently. The IiP Standard is a business improvement tool designed to advance an organisation's performance through its people. IiP status brings public recognition for real achievements measured against a rigorous National Standard and helps to attract the best quality job applicants.

Actions – Objective 3:

1. Commission and implement a three-year leadership and management programme for first line managers.
2. Encourage talent within Cafcass and signpost training to support ambitious people.
3. Develop and coaching and mentoring scheme, and ensure diversity is central to this.
4. Develop a valuing staff award scheme.
5. Develop a succession-planning scheme to address retirements in management posts over the next five to ten years.
6. Develop a graduate recruitment scheme for some business support posts, eg IT, MIS and finance.
7. Achieve the Investors in People Standard

¹⁵ Developed in 1990 by a partnership of leading businesses and national organisations, the IiP Standard helps organisations to improve performance and realise objectives through the management and development of their people. Since it was developed the Standard has been reviewed every three years to ensure that it remains relevant, accessible and attractive to all. The most recent review was completed in November 2004. For more info go to www.investorsinpeople.co.uk

SECTION 4

4.1 Monitoring and review

Monitoring and evaluating our performance against our objectives is critical to our understanding of whether we have delivered or not. It also helps to ensure that our objectives remain relevant and challenging.

Progress against this strategy will be monitored through CDG and ECDG meetings. In addition, progress will be reported to Board and published in the annual report.

Priorities and targets will be reviewed and developed against consultation responses to this strategy and over time.

4.2 Having your say

It is important that all Cafcass staff feel ownership of our Workforce Strategy. It has always been intended that the Strategy should be a living document, responding to changing priorities, acknowledging achievements and outlining the development of support mechanisms. Many staff and stakeholders were consulted in drawing this strategy up, and some comments were received which have been incorporated into this final version. Ongoing comments are welcome and you can do this either individually, or as a team or region by directly emailing Sherry.Malik@Cafcass.gov.uk or Jabbar.Sardar@Cafcass.gov.uk

APPENDICES – APPENDIX 1

STRATEGY PLANNING MATRIX

Obj.1	To ensure that the shape, skills and capacity of the workforce is right to deliver our services	Corporate Sponsor	Lead Person	Timescales	Progress
1.1	Each local area must, as part of its annual planning cycle, set out its workforce plans.	Sherry Malik	James Hyde and HR Advisors	March 2008	Development of localised workforce plans to support service delivery, diversity, recruitment, retention and development objectives.
1.2	Provide guidance and tools to local managers to support them to write workforce plans.	Sherry Malik	Anita Davies	September 2007	Workforce Planning toolkit to be launched to support HR Operations in implementation.
1.3	Improve the quality of HR/workforce data.	Sherry Malik	Jabbar Sardar HR Projects and Systems Manager	September 2007	Monthly organisational health indicator report for CDG and ECDG with analysis of 25 HR KPIs
1.4	Ensure that there are clear job descriptions, roles and responsibilities for new roles and that accountability is established.	Sherry Malik	James Hyde and HR Advisors	March 2008	Every new member of staff to have a current, and signed job description on their personnel file. All existing staff to have a current and signed contract and JD on file by April 08.
1.5	Achieve key outcomes of safe 1: 12 supervision ratio through the early establishment of new roles.	Jane Booth			
1.6	Develop our commissioning skills.	Lamorna Wooderson	Fiona Green		
1.7	Diversify local teams to include specialists, FCAs and Administrators through accreditation and Family Support Workers and commission skills	Sherry Malik	Jabbar Sardar	March 2008	

	and services to create a multidisciplinary skill base within teams.				
1.8	Develop a scheme for Business Support Staff which develops them into FSW roles	Sherry Malik	Alan Critchley Hayley Green	Sept 2007	
1.9	Complete a strategic pay review, which includes pay, terms and conditions, benefits and related aspects, to ensure we have the best workforce to deliver our service.	Jane Booth	Jabbar Sardar and HR Projects and Systems Manager	September 2007	
1.10	Secure interest in Cafcass as an employer and as a career option by working in partnership with local authorities and the CWDC and extending out practice placements.	Sherry Malik	Anita Davies and Head of KLPD	March 2008	In conjunction with KLD develop secondment arrangements with other employers in the children's workforce sector
1.11	Increase the number of practice placements for students who are our potential future workforce.	Sherry Malik	Head of KLPD		
1.12	Continue to promote Cafcass through the media, conferences, recruitment campaigns and other public opportunities.	Sherry Malik	Jabbar Sardar and Anita Davies	April 07 Sept 07	To develop a microsite for the recruitment campaign for FSW. To develop a recruitment talent pool to retain skilled workers who may be interested in working for Cafcass HRA to identify at least one regional recruitment fair per annum to promote jobs in Cafcass
1.13	Ensure all new FCAs and SEC's have a PQ award.	Sherry Malik	Head of KLPD Head of HR		PQ award to become an essential requirement in all person specifications for FCA posts
1.14	Improve "productive time" through the use of technology, greater staff mobility and flexible and improved working practices.	Sherry Malik	Jabbar Sardar	March 2008	
1.15	Explore and wherever viable, develop national partnerships to share services.	Lamorna Wooderson			

Obj 2	To be recognised as an organisation that genuinely equips its people and is an employer of choice	Corporate Sponsor	Lead Person	Timescales	Progress
2.1	Proactively manage staff engagement and in particular support BME and disabled staff through induction, appraisal, personal development	Sherry Malik	Jabbar Sardar and Anita Davies	April 2007 March 2008	To embed the revised induction programme within regions, and to monitor outcomes. To address key areas of staff engagement arising from the staff survey
2.2	Ensure Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for every member of staff through appraisal, including our commitment to achieve a Level 2 qualification for all our Business Support staff.	Sherry Malik	Head of KLPD James Hyde Alan Critchley	March 2008	Annual cycle of appraisal to be reviewed and re-focused where necessary. Separate CPD logs to be utilised and delegation of responsibilities to CPD co-ordinators in each local area. Regular interim review of CPD effectiveness and impact
2.3	Developing a system of all staff having a flexible portfolio of roles based on individual strengths to maximise performance.	Sherry Malik	Jabbar Sardar, Anita Davies and KLD	March 2008	
2.4	Develop and implement a work-life balance policy.	Jane Booth	HR Health and Wellbeing Manager	September 2007	To incorporate flexible working policy. Use employee feedback to inform key desirables and achievables within confines of business need.
2.5	Carry out a review of home working to ensure flexible ways of working provide value for employer and employee	Lamorna Wooderson			
2.6	Write a staff engagement strategy which specifically addresses the issues arising out of the staff survey	Sherry Malik	Sheena Adam Takki Sulaiman Suzie Goodman		
2.7	Carry out a staff survey every two years.	Sherry Malik	HR Health and Wellbeing Manager	April 2009 May 2007-March 2008	Results of survey for 06/07 to be published. Key actions arising to be addressed through a series of workshops with Cafcass employees
2.8	Improve relations with Trade Unions to broaden areas of agreement.	Jane Booth	Jabbar Sardar	On-going	

2.9	Develop a culture where all staff are committed to values and vision of Cafcass.	Anthony Douglas	Sherry Malik Suzie Goodman		
2.10	Maintain a good standard of HR service during structural changes to the regions.	Sherry Malik	Jabbar Sardar	On-going	
2.11	Ensure good health and safety practices in all offices.	Shery Malik	Jabbar Sardar and HR Health and Wellbeing Manager	March 2008	To undertake an audit of the H&S requirements and reasonable adjustment required by all staff in post. To ensure that H&S needs are addressed for new starters at or before their induction.
2.12	Ensure all staff are properly equipped (IT literate, etc) to carry out their job.	Lamorna Wooderson	Head of KLPD		
2.13	Develop a sustainable development strategy, which will embed the principles of sustainability into our strategies and policies and culture.	Sherry Malik	Kim McKenzie		
2.14	Work with external organisations (SfC, CWDC, Options for Excellence, etc) to strengthen our position and benefit from being part of the children's services workforce.	Sherry Malik	Jabbar Sardar	On-going	
2.15	Appoint a Head of Knowledge, Learning, Practice and Development in 2007/08	Sherry Malik	Sherry Malik		
Obj.3	To develop our leadership capacity so that it supports organisational and staff improvement and effective delivery of services.	Corporate Sponsor	Lead Person	Timescales	Progress

3.1	Commission and implement a three-year leadership and management programme for first line managers.	Sherry Malik	Head of KLPD	September 2007	
3.2	Encourage talent within Cafcass and signpost training to support and ambitious people.	Sherry Malik	Anita Davies and Head of KLPD	On-going	
3.3	Develop coaching and mentoring scheme, and ensure diversity is central to this.	Sherry Malik	Head of KLPD and Anita Davies	March 2008	To build on the mentor/buddy scheme in place for FCA's, and apply to whole organisation. To provide coaching and mentoring skills training to HR Advisors. To support the BME Managers group in identifying suitable mentors both internally and external to Cafcass.
3.4	Develop a valuing staff award scheme.	Sherry Malik	Sheena Adam Takki Sulaiman Suzie Goodman		
3.5	Develop a succession-planning scheme to address retirements in management posts over the next five-ten years	Sherry Malik	Jabbar Sardar and Anita Davies	March 2008	Regions to have succession planning schemes in place. Cafcass to introduce a best practice guide for retiring employees which will involve flexibility to enhance employee performance
3.6	Develop a graduate recruitment scheme for some business support posts, eg IT, MIS and finance.	Sherry Malik	Jabbar Sardar and Anita Davies	March 2008	To work with our recruitment partners to identify creative ways to fill hard to fill vacancies. To create a talent pool and 'waiting list' for prospective candidates for hard to fill posts
3.7	Achieve the Investors in People Standard.	Sherry Malik	Head of KLPD and Jabbar Sardar	March 2010	

