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Des Paul

CHILDREN'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL PRIORITIES FOR 2011-12 - Final remit letter

I am writing to set out my priorities for the work, together with associated funding, of the Children's Workforce Development Council (the Council) for 2011-12.

The Council has responsibility for delivering a range of programmes in respect of people who work with children, young people and their families other than in schools. These programmes, which are carried out on behalf of the Department for Education (the Department), are either to ensure that there are sufficient numbers of people in various parts of this workforce or to support them in gaining better skills and qualifications. It is also a Sector Skills Council (SSC), which means that it must work with employers to encourage them to raise skills amongst this workforce.

The Council's work in 2011-12 will continue to be closely linked to my Department's and the Government's aim for a society where all children and young people are able to fulfil their potential.

As this is the last remit letter to the Council, I am also looking to you to work with the Department as an active and supportive partner in moving to new delivery arrangements including the creation of new executive agencies.

Children's Workforce Policy

The Council should continue to support workforce development in the children's workforce. Our policy approach is:

i) where government support is needed to increase the numbers and improve the skills of those working in priority areas, such as Early Years (those working with children aged 0-5 years), Children, Young People and Families' Social Work and Educational Psychology, we will continue some funding for programmes but in ways which support employers and professionals to take over responsibility themselves, and

ii) where government involvement is unhelpful, no longer represents the best use of resources, or where numbers and skills issues have been sufficiently addressed, we will stop centrally funded programmes but continue to support those working in these areas to take greater responsibility for training and development.

Clearly, the funded programmes outlined below fall into the first category. In relation to the second category, there will be some areas where the Department needs to step back completely. We will need to consider, with you and others, when and how Government can help employers and professionals to take greater responsibility. We look to the Council to work with us in providing such support. This will influence the way in which you use the administrative resources you are allocated. Priorities are set out below under Support for Sector-led Development and include supporting those working with vulnerable children and young people; delivering policy on safeguarding children, child poverty, social care and integrated working; and the Council's sector skills role in relation to qualifications and standards.

The Council will need to work closely with my officials in responding to the key reviews outlined below:

- The review of the Early Years Foundation Stage - a structure of learning, development and care for children from birth to five years old;
- Child Poverty: A Report on The Foundation Years;
- The Early Intervention Review which considers how best to support children from disadvantaged backgrounds in early childhood;
- Professor Munro's review of Child Protection;
- The Family Justice Review; and
- The Special Educational Needs (SEN) Green Paper.

It is important that employers and professionals are able to continue to take responsibility for recruitment and improving skills from 2012 when new delivery arrangements are in place. The Council, in its role as the SSC as well as a delivery organisation, should use its resources to support the transition to these new arrangements. The Council will need to keep a strong focus on its research activity and working with employers. You may need to implement internal change programmes in order to support a successful transition.

Funded Programmes

I have agreed the programme and funding for CWDC delivery in 2011-12 for:

- Social Work reform
- Early Years
- Educational Psychologists
- Those working with Families and Parents
- Residential Care

It is expected that any continuing commitments in 2011-2012 specifically for Social Work and Early Years, arising from activity funded in 2010-2011, are met from their respective 2011-2012 funding allocations. Additionally, I expect the Council to meet some agreed continuing commitments of no more than £626,000 from the 2011-2012 overall programme funding allocation. Responsibility for any such commitments remaining after March 2012 will fall to the Department.

The funded programmes for the Council in 2011-12 are:

Social Work Reform

I would like the Council to support the Social Work Reform Board's national programme to improve the quality of social work (some of which relates to social workers who work with adults) and provide better services to children, young people and families. You should also help local authorities and others to respond to Professor Munro's review of child protection.

The Council can help bring about change through:

Helping local authorities improve their social work services by:

- supporting them to share expertise and experience in reviewing services and planning for improvement;
- administering the Social Work Improvement Fund providing funds to local authorities so that they can take immediate action to implement improvement plans, and make changes to their social work services in response to the recommendations of the Reform Board and of Professor Munro; and
- sharing experiences and learning about improvement measures undertaken by local authorities through the 2010-11 Social Work Improvement Fund and other social work programmes.

Helping the employers and managers of social workers to take greater ownership of initiatives to improve the quality of social workers by:

- embedding support for newly qualified social workers in their first year of work;

- embedding the professional development programme for social workers in their second and third years of employment; and
- helping employers introduce an advanced social work professional role to retain the most experienced and effective social workers in frontline social work practice.

Improving social work recruitment and quality by:

- administering the Step Up to Social Work scheme to support a new cohort of high calibre individuals to change to a career in social work;
- administering the Return to Social Work programme to secure a supply of former social workers who are able to return to practice; and
- exploring the benefits of other approaches to securing a high quality supply of entrants to children and families' social work.

Working with other national bodies, including the General Social Care Council, the College of Social Work and Skills for Care, to help implement specific recommendations from Professor Munro's review of child protection as well as proposals from the Social Work Reform Board including:

- The Assessed and Supported Year in Employment;
- Professional standards for social work which will set out the expectations of social workers at each stage of their careers; and
- Development opportunities for managers of social workers to develop the skills they need to better support staff.

Continuing to evaluate the impact of all these programmes remains a priority.

Continuing to reduce the bureaucratic burden on employers and managers by streamlining administration and reporting requirements is also a priority.

Funding: £79.9m (to be reviewed when we know the recommendations of the Munro review), of which at least £43.9m to be allocated to Social Work Improvement Fund.

Early Years Workforce

In relation to staff working with children aged 0-5 years, I will look to the Council to deliver work on the recruitment and retention of this Early Years workforce as well as increasing the quality of the workforce.

To inform this work, the Council will want to consider the implications of the findings of the Child Poverty review, the Early Intervention review and the review of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), especially in relation to the Early Years Professional Standards (EYPS) and associated training and assessment programme. Finally, the Council should take appropriate account of this Government's recently published Special Educational Needs (SEN) Green Paper.

In terms of specific work streams, the Council should continue to roll out the New

Leaders in Early Years programme, and ensure that existing candidates on the EYPS programme continue to receive their training and assessment. I expect the Council to develop detailed proposals for the redevelopment of the EYPS programme from 2011-12 and to run a retendering exercise for the programme in spring/summer of 2011. You should continue with work to approve qualifications at level 2 and 3 for practitioners meeting the EYFS requirements.

Funding: £16.85m

Educational Psychologists

I look to the council to work with local authorities, training providers and relevant professional organisations in order to maintain viable training arrangements for those wishing to become educational psychologists. This will also include carrying out preparatory action necessary for a training programme to start in September 2012. Arrangements should be designed to ensure that, so far as is possible, numbers recruited to the programme match predicted trainee placements to ensure, so far as is practical, all trainees successfully complete their course.

The costs of this work should continue to be recovered from local authorities and other employers of educational psychologists. The Department's officials will continue working with the Council to help ensure this is possible and will provide the funding to meet the shortfall in local authority subscriptions associated with those beginning training in 2011. The Council will need to make sure that Department for Education is kept abreast of progress.

To support the review of educational psychologist training announced alongside the launch of the SEN Green Paper that the Department is undertaking during the year.

Funding: up to £5.2m

Families and Parenting Workforce

In relation to those staff providing services that support families and parents, I will look to the Council to continue to work with the Further Education (FE) sector, voluntary and private sector suppliers and local employers to improve the quality of support on offer. This will include:

- building their capacity;
- rolling out accredited training for family and parenting workers who are providing intensive support for families with multiple problems;
- being more responsive to local demands for accredited training for family and parenting workers (including those supporting parents of children in the early years); and
- providing intensive support to families in the future.

I will also look to the Council to work alongside national and local partners involved

in the Families with Multiple Problems Programme which was launched by the Prime Minister in December 2010. The aims of this work should be to bring about life-changing benefits for individual families, helping them to build stronger families where children have access to more opportunity and the family as a whole is able to contribute to their community.

Funding: £0.5m

Residential Care Workers Pilot

To complete the piloting and testing of a training programme for residential care workers, so that they can develop their skills and confidence in working with children and young people living in children's homes.

Funding: £25k

Support for Sector-led development

In addition to the programme funding outlined above there are a number of areas of work for which such funding will not continue. I would like you to use your administration funding allocation to ensure that products such as training materials and other resources developed are kept up to date and made available to employers and individuals, in order that they can take responsibility for their development.

These areas are:

Young People's Workforce

The young people's workforce is made up of those who work with young people aged 13-19 other than teachers and social workers. It includes learning mentors, education welfare officers, youth workers and advice and guidance workers.

To complete the work to develop and deliver the framework for the development of apprenticeships for working with young people at levels 2 and 3 that was started under the Young People's Workforce Reform Programme.

To continue to make accessible to the young people's workforce including the employers, the full range of resources and material developed through the Youth People's Workforce Reform Programme. This includes the foundation degree and apprenticeship for working with young people, the skills development framework.

To support the Department and its Strategic Partner's activities to develop the young people's workforce providing targeted support to vulnerable young people and those delivering the National Citizen Service the initiative designed to give 16-year-olds the chance to learn new skills and get involved in their community.

Safeguarding

To keep children and young people safe from harm, including those suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, by developing recruitment guidance and training materials which include education, prevention and response programmes in schools and other settings for the children and young people's workforce. To improve learning and support for employers across the children and young people's workforce enabling them to recruit safely and encouraging them to share effective practice to develop a better informed workforce and to sustainably improve recruitment practice.

Integrated Working

Integrated working is a framework from which local areas develop processes to enable all practitioners to work together for the benefit of the child, young person and family.

I want the Council to continue to support and embed Integrated Working across the wider workforce and promote and disseminate good practice. Your approach will need to reflect developing Government policy in a number of areas to be discussed and agreed.

Child Poverty and Disadvantage

To build on the findings of the analysis which identified gaps in the workforce training provision in relation to tackling child poverty and disadvantage and to decide on priorities within the recommendations.

To support the implementation of child poverty needs assessments and strategies effectively by developing guidance based on evidence emerging from child poverty pilots and validated practice and training materials.

Disability Capacity

To support the short break workforce including playworkers or befrienders, working in a paid or voluntary capacity, who provide short breaks for disabled children and young people offering them a chance to try new and fun experiences and to be more independent.

To provide general disability awareness training for all those who work with children and young people which enhances practice so that their services are inclusive of children and young people with disabilities.

To support the Department and its strategic partners' activities to develop the capacity of the non-schools workforce aimed at supporting and servicing disabled children, young people and their families.

Residential Care and Fostering

To support the Department's challenge and improvement programme for residential care by contributing to the further development of learning opportunities, training and qualifications for children's home staff.

To take forward work on supporting the implementation of the Training Support and Development (TSD) Standards for foster carers. These aim to give all foster carers the basic skills to care for children. To launch a less bureaucratic version of the TSD Standards workbook. To provide support to users of the TSD Standards e.g. frequently asked questions and supporting materials. All foster carers are expected to meet, as a minimum, the TSD Standards.

Funding, Efficiency and Reducing Burdens

To deliver the priorities set out in this letter the Council's baseline budget for 2011-2012 is £113,498,530 comprising £102,475,000 programme and £11,023,530 administration budget. The funding is made up of:

- Programme funding of £85,625,000 which includes funding for Social Work Reform, Educational Psychologists, Families and Parenting and the Residential Care Workers pilot;
- Programme funding of £16,850,000 for Early Years; and
- Administration funding of £11,023,530 for all CWDC running costs.

A detailed funding breakdown will be sent to the Council under separate cover. In addition the Department will provide a separate breakdown of identified and agreed continuing commitments from the 2011-2012 overall programme funding allocation.

It will be important to jointly work with my officials to establish a shared understanding about how the Council plans to deploy funding in relation to the priorities set out in this letter. While the Council will need flexibility to manage funding across programmes and to respond to in-year pressures, I expect officials to be informed quickly if you find that spend will deviate significantly. This will be a challenging financial year for the Department and our agencies, so it will be important that you work with my officials to ensure that any under spends or savings are detected early and can be deployed in line with my priorities. No transfer of budgets from programme to administration is permitted.

The Department will continue to hold the Council to account against identified targets and success measures. These will be agreed following negotiations with the Department by end April 2011. Performance of the Council will be monitored at monthly performance review meetings.

ALB Reform Programme

The Coalition Government is committed to the Arms Length Body (ALB) Reform Programme as a means of radically increasing the transparency and accountability of all public services. The reform process, which covers all of HM Government's Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) as well as other public bodies, is designed to help reinvigorate the public's trust in democracy and also to ensure that the Government operates in a more efficient and business-like way. The programme will ensure we have the right organisations in place to implement Government policy and it will play a major part in delivering savings over the next four years.

As you know, we are in the process of reducing the number of ALBs and improving accountability by bringing some of the work previously done by ALBs back in to the Department and creating Executive Agencies which are more directly within the Department's control; removing duplication; looking for ways to achieve efficiencies and cost reductions through the sharing of services; and better aligning our ALB sector with the rest of the Education system. The Council has a significant role to play in making this vision a reality and we expect to work with you over the coming year to implement any planned changes to your organisation or reforms we are making to all our ALBs.

New treatment of Administration budgets

You will be aware that there are changes to the administration budget for Department's Arms Length Bodies (ALBs), which include the Council, starting in the 2011-12 financial year. Most significantly, the administration budgets for ALBs are being met from the Department's own overall administration allocation.

Administration budgets cover the costs of all activities not related to direct frontline service provision or in support of frontline service delivery. The Department has provided the Council with detailed guidance on the types of spending which are considered as administrative activity; for the Council this will include items such as staff salaries, pensions, accommodation and office services (eg: stationery, telephone charges and computer maintenance). It is important that the Council works closely with the Department's Sponsorship and Finance teams to make sure this guidance is followed.

Governance and Risk

It is vital that the Council has in place robust processes which can help it identify difficulties which might arise which could hamper delivery. We expect to see both robust processes for spotting such difficulties early and dealing with them effectively so that service delivery is maintained. The Council should also continue to work with the Department to make sure there are appropriate external checks on the work it delivers, as required by the Permanent Secretary. I expect the Council to raise immediately with the Department any potential problems related to delivery including any arising from organisations with which you are working.

Efficiency controls remain in place

The Efficiency Reform Group was established by the Cabinet Office in 2010. It has brought together expertise from across Government: from different parts of Cabinet Office, HM Treasury and the Office of Government Commerce. It aims to make Government more efficient (by reducing operational overheads to give taxpayers better value and allow resources to be focused on key priorities); and to reform radically the way public services are provided (to ensure they meet rising public expectations, improving transparency and accountability and shifting power to people and creating the Big Society).

The Efficiency Reform Group has introduced a series of financial and management controls to make sure that only essential recruitment and procurement activity is undertaken by Government Departments and organisations like the Council which are funded by Government. These controls include:

- a freeze on all external recruitment;
- Treasury approval for appointments with salary packages which total more than the Prime Minister's salary of £142,500;
- a freeze on new advertising and spending on marketing;
- a freeze on new contracts and contract extensions; and changes to ICT projects of over £1 million and a review of all existing ICT projects;
- a freeze on any new spending on consultancy services from outside bodies;
- a ban on new property acquisitions, property leases and lease extensions; and
- all other procurement subject to stringent Value For Money appraisal and reporting of all spend to HM Treasury on a monthly basis.

In certain specific circumstances exemptions can be sought by your Chief Executive. Exemptions need to be cleared by the Department, HM Treasury or the Cabinet Office depending on the nature of the exemption. The details of the various exemption processes were sent to your organisation in July 2010.

Transparency

The Government remains committed to greater transparency so that the public can hold politicians and public bodies to account. As part of this you are already publishing information on spending on salaries, organisational costs and services you buy. In line with all Government departments and Arms Length Bodies you have already published individual salary information for your senior staff earning over £85,000, along with organisation charts to demonstrate the groups of people your senior staff are responsible for, and the costs of these groups.

We expect you to continue to publish this data and to continue to co-operate with

transparency requests, ensuring data is submitted to deadline and in the required format.

Information Standards

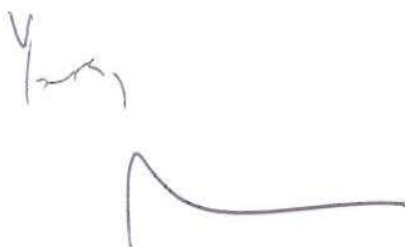
The Information Standards Board (ISB) is the Government sponsored body for data and information standards. The ISB is the authority for system-wide information and data standards for the Education, Skills and Children's Services system in England. Its role is to provide governance of 'standardisation of standards' (<http://www.escs-isb.org.uk/>).

As an organisation you should work closely with the ISB in the identification and development of data and information standards that meet the needs of the Business. If you are delivering new information systems or ICT enabled projects, you are required to consider and implement the standards as a first option, seeking an exemption where their use is not possible. Where existing systems need to migrate to the Department, we will work with you to plan how they might meet ISB standards if they do not already do so.

Next steps

I am now looking to the Council to continue to work with my policy officials to discuss and agree the detail of the requirement and accurately cost the work set out with an eye to securing best value for public money.

Whilst this is your final remit letter I acknowledge that the remit process will need to continue until the end of April at which time programme objectives, targets, success measures and resources will be signed off by my officials.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Gove', written in a cursive style.

MICHAEL GOVE