

## Guidance for developing new Children's Services strategies, October 07

The following definitions have been agreed by the C&YPSP Executive.

- Strategy is defined as “a long term approach, based on a shared vision, to achieve improved outcomes for children, young people and families in one or more geographical or operational areas. Strategy is not static but evolves in response to changing needs.”
- A plan is defined as “a detailed document that sets out the intended method of progressing from the current situation to achievement of one or more desired outcomes (objectives or goals). The sequence of steps must be measurable.”
- A policy provides “guidance, a framework, or set of principles that determine decisions, actions, and other matters.”
- A procedure is “a particular way of accomplishing an objective (sequence, timing, execution, etc.); usually developed to describe the methods for implementing policy.”
- A protocol is “an agreed set of procedures or standards usually between 2 or more parties and most often established in relation to data transfer.”

It is acknowledged that some statutory “plans” (e.g. NPCYP) are actually strategy documents but may not be called such.

**The following guidance outlines the key components for a strategy and supports the process of strategy development by prompting some of the issues for consideration.**

This list is not exhaustive or set in stone as in some circumstances you may be required to follow statutory requirements or templates. Please use your discretion in structuring your strategy, whilst ensuring it flows logically. Keep the strategy document succinct by placing supporting material within appendices.

In developing strategy, be aware that lead-in times for strategies to be formally approved by the C&YPSP Executive and City Council Executive can be considerable. This is a particularly important factor in your forward planning if the strategy and/or plan has a statutory deadline.

**[Tip: underlined text is a hyperlink to website where documents can be found](#)**

## Consider the following issues before you begin

- How does the proposed strategy relate to the NPCYP and other existing strategies? Is this new strategy necessary?
- Has the C&YPSP Executive endorsed the strategy to be developed?
- Who needs to be involved in the strategy development?
- What is your budget for strategy development, e.g. consultation activities, publication of draft and final versions?
- What is your timeline for completion, allowing recommended time for consultation and meeting statutory/Committee deadlines for approval?

## Guidance to improve accessibility of documentation

- Keep strategy succinct. Reference existing material, don't replicate. Place new background material in appendices.
- Use Arial font, size 12 minimum.
- No underlining, italics or capitals to add emphasis. Only use bold to highlight key text
- Don't shade any text boxes. Shading or colour contrast can make text difficult to distinguish
- Avoid using jargon or acronyms. Include a glossary in appendix to explain terms
- Ensure you have received signed consent forms for any photographs
- Ensure individuals cannot be identified from any details provided in case studies
- Don't include logos on versions intended to be circulated electronically as the file size can then be too large for some email accounts. All contributors can be acknowledged in appendix

<b>Suggested subheadings</b>	<b>Guidance on completing subheadings</b>
1. Introduction	Foreword by Catherine Fitt, Executive Director of Children's Services, Nick Cott Executive Member for Children and Young People, other key Director/Chief Officer
2. Background/ Context	Why develop this strategy? <b>How does it relate to NPCYP priorities and CYP priorities?</b> Are there national or statutory requirements? International, national and local context should be considered.

3. Underpinning strategies	<p>Which key Newcastle strategies does this one directly relate to? Copies of all CYP strategies can be found on the <a href="http://www.newcastlechildrenservices.org.uk">www.newcastlechildrenservices.org.uk</a> website.</p> <p>How does it relate to the <a href="#">Local Area Agreement</a>, <a href="#">Regeneration Strategy</a> and other key strategies?</p>
4. Definition	<p>What is meant by term used to describe strategy, e.g. “early intervention”? Be explicit about what is outside of the scope of this strategy and why. This may be of significant benefit later on, prevent assumptions being made or misinterpretation of what is intended to be achieved.</p> <p>In plain English, aim to explain to a wide audience what the strategic area covers. In the development of your strategy you should assume you are writing for someone who knows little about the subject, as will in some instances be the case. As you are probably very familiar with the subject matter you may risk missing out important details which others might find useful explanation.</p> <p>Explain any acronyms or technical terms, perhaps in an appendix.</p>
5. Vision, objectives, principles	<p>What difference will this strategy make? Try to be specific and focussed about what success will look like and how you intend to get there, e.g. a generic statement about improving outcomes for children and young people does not drill down to what is the unique thing about what your particular strategy aims to achieve.</p> <p>What is the lifetime of this strategy document, e.g. 2007-2010?</p> <p>The Children’s Trust governance arrangements set out common principles agreed by partner organisations. Have all relevant organisations involved with this strategy adopted these principles?</p>
6. How was strategy developed?	<p>Outline the processes and consultation undertaken to develop and approve the strategy, who was involved, etc. As an appendix, you could include a stakeholder diagram and/or governance diagram.</p> <p>You need to allow as part of the consultation process for individual partners to take the strategy through their internal consultation and approval processes.</p> <p>Click on text for <a href="#">guidance on consulting with partners about strategies and action plans</a></p> <p>Either include here, or as separate section, details of engagement of CYP, parents and carers, practitioners and partners. See below.</p>

<p>7. What do CYP say? What do parents/carers say?</p>	<p>Have CYP, parents/carers, practitioners and partners been engaged in developing, prioritising and reviewing this strategy, related services and action plans? If yes, how and to what degree? Are these mechanisms well resourced? How will they be involved in the delivery of the strategy and measurement of its success?</p> <p>What arrangements do you have for engaging with CYP, parents/carers, practitioners and partners? How have you communicated to CYP, parents/carers etc about changes as a result of their feedback?</p> <p>What evidence do you have that engagement and participation has had a positive impact? Have you improved services for specific groups, e.g. LAC, CLDD, BME as a result of their feedback? For a new strategy, you may not yet have evidence of impact. Be explicit about what evidence you will be seeking, how, when and from whom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For advice and support on <a href="#">engaging with children and young people</a> click on underlined text or contact Nick Brereton; for <a href="#">parents and carers</a> contact Jacqui Adams.</li> <li>• For <a href="#">guidance on community engagement</a>, click on underlined text or contact Janette Brown.</li> <li>• To publish your consultation and feedback and finalised strategy on the children’s services practitioner website <a href="http://www.newcastlechildrenservices.org.uk">www.newcastlechildrenservices.org.uk</a>, email copy to <a href="mailto:childrens.services@newcastle.gov.uk">childrens.services@newcastle.gov.uk</a></li> </ul>
<p>8. Current situation/performance</p>	<p>What are the causes / issues relating to current performance?</p> <p>Have you undertaken a comprehensive needs analysis that incorporates universal, targeted and specialist services? Definitions of tiers of service are described in the <a href="#">Early Intervention and Prevention</a> strategy</p> <p>Have you identified gaps in service delivery across the spectrum of needs and services? The <a href="#">windscreen model</a> conceptual framework that has been agreed in Newcastle to illustrate the continuum of need ranging from no additional needs to very complex needs at the far right of the windscreen may be a useful reference.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the current key performance indicators for this outcome</li> <li>• Identify additional indicators that would help you to assess performance</li> <li>• Issues of equality and diversity must be explicit. What are your performance measures in relation to particular groups of children and young people? E.g. by gender, ethnicity, looked after children, children with learning difficulties and disabilities, refugee/asylum seekers</li> <li>• Have you/do you need to measure performance by locality? Detail how you plan to achieve this and who else will need to be involved. Is there any help you can get in identifying your measures?</li> </ul>

	<p>In relation to the indicators specified and other evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are we currently performing?</li> <li>• What is the trend?</li> <li>• Are there different issues for different groups of children and young people?</li> <li>• Are there different issues in different parts of Newcastle?</li> </ul> <p>Where relevant, use the <a href="#">APA grade descriptors</a> to judge the overall performance in this priority area. Otherwise rate performance based on external assessments such as audits, inspections, complaints, benchmark comparisons with other services or local authorities, user feedback or evaluation etc. Include all evidence, either within the text or as appendices. A good example of an analysis can be found in the <a href="#">Teenage Pregnancy Strategy</a></p>
<p>9. What do we know works</p>	<p>What existing research and evaluation could inform policy and service development, product development and innovation? Include references or research material in appendices as additional evidence for approach. Need to be able to discuss how this knowledge will be applied locally and any local variations which need to be taken into account</p> <p>Is the strategy based on evidence of what works (and lessons learned from what doesn't? Need to be able to demonstrate that you have taken on board knowledge gained from previous attempts to improve by other people, services, authorities, etc.)</p> <p>What are you currently doing that appears to be working? And what evidence do you have that it works? Are there examples of best practice from elsewhere we can learn from? Detail also what we know doesn't work. Be explicit why we are taking the approach we are as opposed to any other potential approaches. Include case study examples of good practice if appropriate.</p> <p>Understanding what is having an impact often involves the views of frontline staff in honestly assessing what they believe is making a difference. Given that the issues are complex and there are multiple inputs, Friedman suggests the following helpful model in evidencing what works:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We tried a bunch of stuff that had a <b>credible chance</b> of making a difference ...</li> <li>2. ... and it had a <b>timely</b> relationship to ...</li> <li>3. ... a turn in the curve</li> </ol> <p>For a simple explanation of <a href="#">outcomes accountability</a> click on the highlighted text.</p>

<p>10. How and who will manage the strategy and action plan(s)</p>	<p>How will the strategy be governed under the Newcastle Children’s Trust arrangements set out in the governance agreement? Who is accountable? How will underachievement be monitored and managed?</p> <p>Who is the clearly identified individual (“champion”) and/or body who is leading locally on strategy development?</p> <p>What are the different roles and responsibilities of individuals, agencies and partnerships? Certain key officers who need to play a role may include finance officer, performance officer/team, legal services, strategic procurement, asset management</p> <p>Is there managed partnership and coordination working across voluntary and statutory organisations? (Refer to stakeholder diagram or sign-up sheet)</p> <p>What are the mechanisms in place for collaboration across organisations and for reducing duplication</p>
<p>10. Key contributors</p>	<p>Which partners are currently working together on developing and delivering this strategy? Who else needs to be involved? A list of contributors could be listed as appendix.</p>
<p>11. Staff development</p>	<p>What changes will be required to embed strategy? Any infrastructure, process changes which will need to be planned for? What will be the human/financial implications?</p> <p>Detail what training, development, support may be needed, and what needs to be planned in and resourced – for those delivering the strategy and/or those impacted upon by its delivery</p> <p>Demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is investment in training and qualifications for all those delivering the strategy</li> <li>• There is investment in management and supervision skills within services supporting the strategy</li> </ul>
<p>12. Resources</p>	<p>A suggested template is appended to this guidance.</p> <p>Detail all funding routes, bids that need to be made and monitored, any restrictive spending criteria on use of funding, any claw back potential, the financial officer responsible</p> <p>Is there a Plan B if funding ceases, is not awarded, or is not sufficient? What is the impact upon scope, timescales, human capacity? Is there any room for leeway in any of these or any contingency with regards finance?</p> <p>Invest to save details if relevant, what investment will be made upfront and what savings are expected (including their intended usage/deployment)</p>

	<p>In developing the strategy and considering its implementation, ensure the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is comprehensive and accessible information available about sources of general and specialist support and how to access them</li> <li>• There are resources to enable services to be accessible to, and appropriate for, ‘hard to reach’ children and young people, their parents and carers</li> <li>• There are opportunities and funding mechanisms to enable piloting and innovation</li> <li>• There are sustainable and adequate funding streams</li> <li>• Support is obtained from local and national organisations to provide the skills and knowledge needed to deliver the strategy. This is particularly important when meeting the needs of minority groups</li> </ul>
<p>13. Monitoring, review and evaluation</p>	<p>How do the standards and mechanisms by which services delivering the strategy will be measured and assessed fit with the Newcastle Children’s Trust governance arrangements?</p> <p>Who is the responsible officer, governing group?</p> <p>What services are involved in providing updates evidence, feedback? What is the schedule for monitoring and evaluation?</p> <p>Any non-achievement clauses or penalties which need to be explicit? Any legal, statutory requirements which have to be met?</p> <p>There should be mechanisms which support organisational knowledge so that current and future policy and service developments learn from, and build on, existing knowledge</p>
<p>14. Targets</p>	<p>What targets currently exist for improving performance?</p> <p>This may include national targets, BVPIs, Local Area Agreement, LPSA etc. In addition, there may be non-quantitative improvements identified through inspection, evaluation etc.</p> <p>What are the methods of inspection, if appropriate?</p> <p>What is the schedule for local, corporate, national reporting?</p>

15. Action plan	<p>Identify steps, targets, responsibilities, resources, and outcomes wanted over the next (specified) period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify the key actions/activities – <b>ensure that recommendations from the JAR and other inspections are reflected in this</b></li><li>• Clearly state when the actions will be completed and who has lead responsibility</li><li>• For each action, be explicit about how it will be measured. How much will you do? How well will you do it?</li><li>• Review the actions you have listed to identify risks (threats and opportunities) that would affect the successful completion of the actions/activities. List any material risks as well as an outline of current and/or planned risk control measures in the risk and risk control column.</li></ul> <p>(The City Council has a risk management toolkit that can help with these processes, as might other partners. If required, our Children’s Services Risk Advisor (Vanessa Clarke ext 26456) can assist you with the identification of risks and appropriate risk control actions and ensure that risks are included in the appropriate risk register/s, if felt to be significant enough.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For each action, how is it being resourced? Include targeted budgets / new funding / reprioritisation of existing resources / areas of activity that will cease</li></ul>
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## Suggested Resources Template

Within your strategy and action plan, you should look at the bigger picture and the impact of capital expenditure and how it can affect revenue costs, for example:

Rent; direct repair, decoration and cleaning costs; energy and water; finance; replacement and renewal; staff, equipment and security costs; internal specialist advisers; staff costs; accommodation; admin costs; research costs; consultancy costs; project management costs

## Financial Analysis

### Revenue Costs

Revenue Expenditure	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	Future
Itemised main elements below:						
Employee Related						
<i>Salaries/Wages</i>						
<i>Other employee related</i>						
Premises Related:						
Transport Related:						
Supplies and Services:						
Other (Specify):						
<b>Total</b>						
<b>Revenue funding</b>						
Cash Limit						
Trading account						
Contributions(specify)						
Grants(specify)						
Other(specify)						
Savings (specify)						
<b>Total</b>						

## **Supporting Material**

[A-Z of Children's Services strategies](#)

[APA Grade descriptors](#)

[Children and Young People Strategic Partnership](#)

Children's Trust governance arrangements – *link to be added after Nov C&YPSPE*

[Children's Trust partnerships](#)

[Community engagement protocols](#)

[Consulting with partners about developing strategies and action plans - guidance](#)

[Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy](#)

[Newcastle Local Area Agreement](#)

[Newcastle Plan for Children and Young People \(full\)](#)

[Newcastle Plan for Children and Young People \(summary\)](#)

[Newcastle Plan for Children and Young People - Year 1 Review](#)

[Newcastle Regeneration Strategy \(full\)](#)

[Newcastle Regeneration Strategy \(summary\)](#)

[Outcomes accountability](#)

[Participation and engagement of CYP](#)

[Participation and engagement of parents and carers](#)