

APPENDIX 1

QUALITY PROTECTS – MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN (3RD YEAR)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF PLAN

“Quality Protects” is the description of a Government initiative to transform children’s services, and improve children’s quality of life. It covers education, health and social care; and extends across children in need (eg with a disability), child protection and children looked after by local authorities.

Quality Protects (QP) is in the third year of (at least) a five year programme. This Management Action Plan is an annual requirement describing progress and future plans. The format of the Plan is prescribed by the Department of Health.

KEY ELEMENTS

The QP initiative has 11 objectives which can be summarised as:

1. Safe and effective care of children
2. Protection from abuse and neglect
3. Giving children in need the maximum life chances (education, health and social care)
4. Giving children looked after by the Council the maximum life chances (education, health and social care)
5. Supporting young people leaving care
6. Supporting children with specific social needs arising from a disability or health condition
7. Effective arrangements for referrals and assessment
8. Involving users and carers in planning services and ensuring effective complaints procedures
9. Protecting children in regulated services
10. Providing appropriately trained staff
11. Achieving value for money including effective responses to needs

These objectives are closely linked to a range of national performance indicators to monitor achievement. These are shown at the end of the Action Plan.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

QP is funded by a specific government grant. Spending plans for the current year and next year are shown towards the back of the Action Plan.

The QP initiative (and the funding) has recently been extended from 3 years to 5 years. It is not known what will happen to the funding beyond this period (ie in 2004-2005) and this will need to be monitored closely.

ISSUES

There are two key issues affecting the plan. The first is the national problems of recruiting and retaining appropriately skilled staff to meet the increased expectations. The second is the need to improve/develop appropriate management information and related systems.