

**Report to ADCS Council of Reference
September 16 2009**

A – VSC England

1 - Appendix A to this report provides a summary of the key VSC activity since the last meeting of Council. In the main, these have been led by the Director of CPD, Chris Berry, as I have been occupied significantly with the NCSL/ADCS/CWDC DCS Leadership Programme. I believe this report continues to demonstrate strong progress against the objectives for 2008–10 agreed by the VSC Board namely;

- Developing increasingly bespoke programmes geared to the needs of regions or individual authorities
- Broadening the scope of CPD activity to the whole range of Children's Trust activity
- Being involved strategically in workforce development planning in order to be able to anticipate and plan for CPD needs
- Creating key linkages with partners in CPD delivery

2 - National leadership programme for current and aspiring DCSs

As Council members will recall the design and initial delivery of the NCLS (soon to be National College) programme has been tasked to the Leadership Consortium which is a “doing” group made up from executive officers of the respective partners in the Coalition. I am a member of this group in addition to acting as the Principal Adviser to the overall DCS Leadership Provision. Eleni Ioannides and Howard Cooper continue to represent ADCS on the Guiding Coalition which is the strategic and decision making group for the DCS Leadership Provision.

Since the last meeting of Council there has been significant progress on the extended remit of the NCSL. A detailed paper outlining the progress to date is attached to this report as **Appendix B** which provides an overview of the programme design and developments to date.

As this is very much a work in progress I will update Council members further at the meeting on September 16th.

Due to the rapid pace of development I have had to assign a significant amount of time to this work and am currently committing the equivalent of four days per week to the Leadership Consortium throughout 2009. In order to address the obvious capacity implications for the VSC as a result of this commitment, we have recruited a Director of Operations to oversee the daily running of the VSC and act as my deputy when required. I'm pleased to inform Council that Pam Snowball, who is currently the Social Care Workforce Development Team Leader for Bolton Council, has been seconded to the VSC for a period of two years from October 5th 2009.

3 - Individual council support

We are currently providing consultancy/facilitation support to Bury, Herefordshire and Telford and Wrekin Councils regarding the provision of CPD to their respective management teams and wider service managers and are currently awaiting responses from Oxfordshire, Reading and Derby City Councils following initial scoping discussions.

B - VSC Scotland

I have maintained my support to the development of the VSC in Scotland by regularly contributing to the ongoing design and delivery of the national CPD Leadership and Management modules. During early August I co-facilitated the annual VSCS Summer School for Senior Managers.

C - VSC Wales

The work of VSC Cymru in Wales continues to develop both in terms of the delivery of CPD opportunities to senior and middle managers but also at the national strategic level.

60% of this year's management development programme cohort were promoted to senior posts or were given significant extra responsibilities as a direct result of the course inputs and during their attendance at the course. One Director noted that the candidate on the VSC course, appointed against other highly experienced candidates, demonstrated a breadth of understanding of the current and future agenda in Children's Services. The feedback from all of the programmes delivered in Wales during the past twelve months has been particularly positive.

The VSC Cymru training contract for 22 LA senior officers on behalf of Welsh Assembly Government has now been completed, again with very positive outcomes.

As a result of the successful delivery of these programmes the VSC in Wales is rapidly gaining a reputation for effective leadership and management development and, consequently, individual local authorities have now started to approach the College with requests for in-house development for their senior managers. Currently, Torfaen Council is seeking council wide training for all its senior officers and bids for the contract are required by 25 September. VSC Cymru has been approached by partners (Cardiff Business School and ContinYou UK) to work together in order to submit a consortium bid in response to the invitation to tender. This is a welcome development and real sign of the growing impact of the VSC in Wales.

D - International links

As a result of our continuing commitment to the International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI) the VSC hosted an international management seminar in Scotland on the theme of "Leadership for partnership working: challenges and solutions". The seminar took place on July 27th-29th 2009 with participants attending from Denmark, New Zealand, The Netherlands, Scotland, Wales and England. The presentations and discussion topics are posted on the VSC website.

Through our ICSEI links and our promotion of children's services developments we are now able to offer the possibility of international exchanges to The Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden to learn about their provision for CYP and families.



The next meeting of ICSEI is due to take place in January 2010 and as the co-convenor of its Network for Policy makers, Practitioners, and Politicians (3P) I have now submitted a symposium proposal and a programme for the three network breakfast meetings. We have case study commitments from a number of European countries. These will aim to consider the leadership and management challenges presented by the integrated delivery of services for children, young people and families in the respective countries.

Anton Florek
Chief Executive
Virtual Staff College
September 2009

Appendix A

VSC Activity Report September 09

1. Introduction

This report gives an update of the work carried out and planned since the last meeting of ADCS Council of Reference.

2. IYSS training

2.1 The consortium lead by FPM are now recruiting for the programme for the aspiring heads of IYSS, the closing date is the 5th October. The programme runs from January to March 2010. There are 150 places nationally.

2.2 I reported at the last meeting of Council that the Director of CPD was due to meet XUE, the partner organisation that is providing the 360 feedback tool. Discussions are taking place with CWDC, who funded the development of the 360 tool as to how this resource might be promoted more widely.

2.3 The programme for the Heads of IYSS and their voluntary sector partner finishes in October 2009. A report of the evaluation will be provided at the next council meeting.

3. New developments post Laming

3.1 We continue to work with the North West Children and Young People's Improvement forum. We have been exploring how we could assist with the implementation post Laming. There is the possibility of developing nationally a supply pool of IROs, independent panel chairs, independent authors etc. These people would be recruited, trained and quality assured. A report is to be considered by the VSC Board at its next meeting.

3.2 We have marketed two new programmes one for CAF and the other "Improving arrangements at the front door". We have offered this to Children's Trusts as a closed programme as well as two open programmes, one in the North and one in the South. These have to date recruited small numbers so we may need to review these arrangements.

4. North West RIEP programme

4.1 This extensive programme will complete in October 2009. This has been a successful partnership with the North West SHA, GONW and the NWADCS forum.

5. Management Development Programme

5.1 We recently completed day 5 of a programme with the Collaboration for Children in the North West and have will completed another programme in the North West in November.

6. Commissioning

6.1 A third joint commissioning programme was completed in September in the North West.

6.2 We have been commissioned by Lancashire Children's Trust to implement a bespoke training programme for their staff. This will start in September 2009.

7. Senior Management Team Training

7.1 We are currently working with the senior management team of a Children's Services Department. This Leadership programme will be complete by the end of the year.

8. Future developments

8.1 We are currently having talks with the University of Cumbria regarding developing joint programmes for the sector.

8.2 The Director of CPD is in the process of setting up meetings with the new Deputy Regional Directors in Government Offices to explore how the VSC may work with them. A progress report will be provided to the next meeting.

8.3 She is also to meet with the DH to look at how VSC can assist with how the You're Welcome Standards can be fully implemented throughout the country.

8.4 We are planning a VSC Associates Day at the end of the year. Part of the programme is to work with our associates to develop their ideas regarding future CPD programmes within the Children's Services sector.

Appendix B

DCS Leadership provision – Update September 2009

The design, planning and delivery development of the DCS provision continues to progress rapidly since the NCSL was given the remit to develop a 'leadership development programme for DCSs and those close to stepping up to the role'.

DCS Leadership Programme

The application round for cohort one of the DCS Leadership Programme opened on 8 April and closed on 22 May. In total, 61 eligible DCSs registered for the first cohort and, as a result, a decision was taken to bring forward the second cohort which was due to start in April 2010 so that all interested DCSs could start the programme as soon as practicable. The invitation to register for all of the remaining cohorts is due to be sent out to all DCSs in the next few weeks and it will be up to individual DCSs to choose which particular cohort they register for.

The high level programme design which was constructed in collaboration with a wide range of key stakeholders including DCSs, NCSL, CWDC, ADCS, DCSF, C4EO and informed by the McKinsey & Co research has provided the platform for Deloitte, as the Strategic Partner for the DCS Leadership Programme, to move rapidly towards the delivery phase and the start of the programme in November 2009.

During the past few weeks all of the DCSs in cohort 1 have been contacted by a senior colleague from Deloitte and the first phase of the Needs Analysis is under way. A contractor has been appointed to manage and deliver the coaching element of the programme and work has commenced on the development of a set of national leadership standards which will serve to inform key elements of this and the aspirant DCS programme. In addition, work on the content modules has now reached the point where the actual resources which will be available to the programme participants are due to be commissioned. The Leadership Consortium remains committed to ensuring as active an involvement of the children's services sector as possible in the design, formulation and delivery of these.

The design team is continuing to refine the final details of the programme including the content of the residentials and I anticipate that I will be able to provide Council with a comprehensive overview of the final design at its next meeting.

Aspirant DCS Leadership Programme

Work has now commenced on the design framework for the Aspirant DCS Leadership Programme which is due to commence in June 2010. A small team from Deloitte has been working closely with the Leadership Consortium and the draft design framework is well advanced. Two Webex consultation conferences aimed at serving and aspirant DCSs took place in late August. The discussions during these conferences affirmed the general direction of the planning to date and also provided the design team with some important additional features to consider. Many of the suggestions made by the participants have informed the second design phase and the final framework is due to be completed by early October.

I anticipate that detailed design work will take place during October/November prior to the commissioning of the delivery contractor for the programme soon after.

As previously reported to Council, the NCSL has agreed to sponsor four VSC Leadership Academies during 2009 in order to provide CPD opportunities to Aspirant DCSs whilst the national programme is being finalised. The first of these took place in Manchester on July 13/14th on the theme of Developing Children's Trusts. The second is planned for October 8/9th in Leeds on the theme of "Children's Health". It is anticipated that the finalised design framework for the Aspirant DCS Leadership Programme will be considered at this Academy seminar in order to provide the participants with the opportunity to comment on the framework to date and inform the design team prior to the next phase of development.

Wider DCS provision

Council members will recall that there are six main elements to the provision:

- A leadership development programme for current DCSs
- A leadership development programme for aspirant DCSs
- A Succession Planning programme
- An accelerated leadership development programme
- System leadership provision
- An Executive Leadership Programme

The DCS and aspirant DCS leadership programmes are the two principal elements of a wider range of opportunities for leadership development for DCSs and aspirant DCSs which constitute the extended NCSL remit. Preliminary work on the wider provision for DCSs has begun and in some cases is progressing rapidly.

A diagram which provides an overview of how all of these elements fit together to provide a coherent and holistic approach to leadership capacity building within children's services follows at the end of this appendix.

National leadership standards

As previously noted, we have started the process of developing a set of national leadership standards. To date we have developed an initial conceptual model which we intend to refine through the DCS scoping group and, subsequently, a series of on line and offline meetings with members of the ADCS Workforce Development Policy Committee and serving and aspirant DCSs. Following these it is anticipated that we will then undertake more formal consultation meetings with the wider children's services workforce. The result of these discussions will then inform a review of the standards which will then be considered by the Guiding Coalition, then ADCS Council prior to a final period of sector consultation. The target date for the completion of this work is June 2010.

Succession Planning

In March 2009, the Secretary of State accepted a proposal for the National College to establish a succession planning programme for future DCSs, and requested more detailed recommendations 'in due course'. In August 2009 a further submission was made to the DCSF, and funding has been allocated for the current financial year to allow the College to plan for delivery in 2010/11.

Following discussion at the Guiding Coalition and a subsequent consultation workshop, the National College is proposing to establish a formal partnership agreement with the ADCS for its DCS groups in the regions to take responsibility for succession planning at a local level. As part of this initiative it is planned that resources will be made available through an annual regional grant sufficient to commission a programme with these aims. The expectation is that this work will be undertaken in close partnership with the CWDC Regional Development Managers, the TDA Regional Advisers and the National Succession Consultants (NSCs) currently working with local authorities on school based succession planning. A detailed paper describing this proposal from the National College is on the agenda for the consideration of Council at its meeting on September 16th.

System Leadership

One of the hallmarks of NCSL provision is to support system improvement through the best leaders helping others to improve, and system leadership has been identified as one of the key strands of the programme of support for Directors of Children's Services. Evidence from school based system leadership has demonstrated the benefits that accrue to both the system leader and the supported leader and their school, if the process is well supported, brokered and quality assured.

The Guiding Coalition has supported the development of system leadership roles, and has agreed that the first phase of the system leadership programme (09/10) will be the provision of a current or recently serving

DCS as a mentor to every newly appointed DCS from September 2009. This should be seen as complimentary to induction programmes offered by individual councils.

Work is now well advanced on this particular element of the system leadership programme. In order to ensure that mentoring opportunities to newly appointed DCSs are available from September 1st 2009 the National College has agreed to work in close partnership with the VSC and, for 2009/10, build upon the current mentoring arrangements which the VSC has managed on behalf of ADCS over recent years. As a result, we have made rapid progress. Over the past few months, a mentor data base has been established with twenty serving or recently retired DCSs having registered their interest in becoming a mentor following an invitation to all DCSs. Each mentor will be accredited through their attendance at one of two induction days for prospective mentors which are planned during September 2009 and, following these, participating in a two day training seminar delivered by the training contractor Tavistock Institute if their initial assessment of need requires it.

We have contacted all DCSs appointed from April 2009 onwards and conducted a short telephone assessment of their mentoring priorities with the view to undertaking a matching process during the autumn of 2009. In parallel, I am in close discussion with Sarah Caton in order to jointly agree a set of procedures which will ensure that all newly appointed (i.e. first time) DCSs from the end of September 2009 will be contacted and offered a mentor relationship as soon as possible after appointment rather than waiting until they take up their new post.

Finally, the mentors and mentees will be co-constructing this programme with us in order to ensure that it is fit for purpose and, in addition, the mentors involved will work closely with the design team to begin the development of the overall system leadership programme.

Towards an integrated approach to tackle succession and leadership development in services for children, young people and families

