	Can be achieved within 6 months of strategy launch		Can be achieved within 12-18 months of strategy launch		Achievable within 3 years

Early Help Strategy Implementation Plan 2015 – 2018

Objective 1

Ensure that children & young people receive help at the lowest level or intervention that is safe and effective in promoting good outcomes

1. Improving the range and effectiveness of Early Help by:

Action	Lead	Supported By	Method	Measures	Expected Outcomes
1.1 Develop an Early Help Pathway that meets all levels of need	Improvement Project Manager – prevention & Partnerships	Members of Early Intervention & Prevention Steering group (EI&P)	• Focus groups / workshops/EI&P Steering Group meetings	• Early Help Pathway (Process Map) in place. • Impact on referrals to Children's Services	• Families receive the support they require at the time they need it. • Reduction in referrals to Children's Services
1.2 Develop an Assessment and Planning Pathway that identifies a common assessment mechanism	Improvement Project Manager – Prevention & Partnerships	Members of Early Intervention & Prevention Steering group (EI&P)	• Focus groups / workshops / EI&P Steering Group meetings	• Assessment & Planning Pathway (Process Map) in place	• Families' needs are assessed using the JAFF unless they require

(e.g. Joint Assessment family Framework) for children, young people and families who do not require a statutory service.					Children's (Social) Services intervention.
1.3 Agree and implement a common approach to the *Family Plan*	Improvement Project Manager – Prevention & Partnerships	Members of Early Intervention & Prevention Steering group (EI&P)	• Focus groups / workshops / EI&P Steering group meetings	• A Family Plan template is in place and there is evidence of use by a range of agencies.	• Families' needs are met through the provision of a strength's based Family Plan
1.4 Strengthen arrangements for multi-agency planning and risk management and developing a *Lead worker* role for interventions that sit below Children's Services thresholds	Improvement Project Manager – Prevention & Partnerships	Members of early Intervention & Prevention Steering Group	• Focus groups / workshops/EI&P Steering Group meetings	• A multi-agency planning & risk management tool is in place and there is evidence of use by a range of agencies.	• All families who receive support have an identified lead worker to coordinate the support.
1.5 Implementing the Cardiff Parenting Framework that seeks to support the delivery of a range of Evidence-based parenting interventions for families with a range of levels of need and	Parenting Co-ordinator	Agencies delivering Parenting Support	• Parenting Practitioner / Manager meetings	• Range and level of evidence-based parenting programmes delivered across the city. • Progress	• Parents / carers who require parenting support are able to access an evidenced-based group or individual

monitors impact.				reports on tasks contained in Parenting Framework Action Plan.	programme at the right time in order that their needs are met in a timely way.
1.6 Undertake a review to Update the Family Information Service (FIS) Family Support Directory to ensure material held on services is comprehensive, accurate and up to date in order that families and professionals are able to easily access the information they need about services in their preferred format at the time they require it.	FIS Manager	Agencies delivering Family Support Services	• Audit • Use of questionnaires / on- line forms completed by agencies delivering services included in the directory	• Completion rate of questionnaires • Feedback of users of the directory to determine its usefulness	• Parents are able to access the information they require about the availability of services that are available to meet their needs.
Develop a central access point (possibly on the FIS website) for professionals to access Early Help materials such as the JAFF, Early help pathway / Assessment, Family	FIS Manager / Improvement Project Manager – Prevention & Partnerships	Members of Early Intervention & Prevention Steering Group	• Focus groups / workshops/EI&P Steering Group meetings	• Web pages in place containing relevant information to support the implementation of the Early	• Consistency of approach by Practitioners resulting in Improved outcomes for families

Plan template etc				Help Strategy	

2. Improving the effectiveness of step up and step down pathways by:

Action	Lead	Supported By	Method	Measures	Expected Outcomes
2.1 Strengthening and / or remodelling existing services that seek to keep children, young people and families who are on the care threshold at home (e.g. IFSS, FISS, Support Care); and develop new services that have a strong evidence-base (e.g. Blackburn & Darwen model)	Children's Services Operational Manager (OM), Strategy, Commissioning & resources	Family Intervention& Support Services (FISS) Manager and Children's Services case-management OM & Team Managers(TMs) Other Council Directorates (e.g. Communities, Education)	• Project Groups	• Progress reports on Project Plans • Establishment of new services	• Improved range of prevention services exist • Children, young people and families on the brink of care are effectively supported within their families where appropriate. • Reduction in the number of LAC (particularly teenagers coming into care).
2.2 Reviewing and updating the Joint Working Protocol between services for children and services for adults which seeks	Children's Services Operational Manager (OM), Strategy, Commissioning & resources	Family Intervention& Support Services (FISS) Manager and Children's Services case-management OM & Team	• Task & Finish Group	• Updated Protocol agreed. • Key actions in implementation plan achieved	• Children, young people and families in families where parents / carers have

to address the additional needs of parents whose own needs impact negatively on their ability to appropriately safeguard and meet the needs of their children (IFSS; Drug and alcohol services; adult mental health provision; services for Young Carers)		Managers(TMs) & Health & Social Care (H&SC) OMs & TMs		within agreed timescales.	additional needs are appropriately safeguarded. • Reduction in the numbers of children becoming Looked After as a result of their parents / carers being unable to meet their needs due to the parents/carers own needs not being met.
2.3 Using strengths-based approaches to facilitating the opportunity for families to identify their own strengths and to encourage and support the wider family to come together in a crisis to develop a plan that supports the child and prevents family breakdown or promotes family reunification(e.g. Family Group Meetings / Restorative Approaches)	Children's Services Operational Manager (OM), Strategy, Commissioning & Resources	Family Intervention& Support Services (FISS) Manager and Children's Services case-management OM & Team Managers (TMs), Social Care Training Manager	• Project Groups • Training Plan & Training events	• Progress report on Project Plans • Attendance at training events • Implementation of new services (e.g. Family Group Meetings)	• Families are empowered where appropriate to find their own solutions to difficulties by looking within the family for support where this is available. • Reduction in the number of children becoming Looked After

					as a result of family breakdown.

Objective 2

Maximise the impact of Children's (Social) Services by strengthening the effectiveness of social work intervention

1. Re-design the model for the delivery of social work support and intervention

Action	Lead	Supported By	Method	Measures	Expected outcomes
1.1 Eliminate bureaucracy (Lean Review) and freeing up social work time for direct work with families	Children's Services Operational Manager (OM), Strategy, Commissioning & Resources	Business Support Manager & members of the Project Group including colleagues from Enterprise Architecture	• Project Plan using Lean Review methodology • Project Group	• Progress reports on the Implementation of actions arising from rapid improvement events.	• Social Workers are able to step-down families to lower-level interventions in a more timely way. • Morale amongst Social workers improves as they achieve better outcomes for children, young people and families and experience improved job satisfaction.

1.2 Revise Care First (client record system) to maximise its potential	Service Manager- Performance Management	CareFirst Systems Administrator, Children's Services OMs	• Audit of key functionality and capabilities of system • Project Group	• Progress reports on the implementation of actions arising from the audit and project plan	• Social workers have more capacity to undertake direct work with children, young people and families. • Morale amongst Social workers improves as they achieve better outcomes for children, young people and families and experience improved job satisfaction.
1.3 Restructuring social work teams around 'Practice Consultant-led' models of multi-disciplinary intervention	Improvement Project Manager – Social Work Services	Children's Services Management Team (CSMT)	• Project Group • Focus groups • Training events • Visits to other Local Authorities	• Progress reports on the implementation of actions arising from the audit and project plan	• Social workers have more capacity to undertake direct work with children, young people and families. • Social Workers are able to step-down families to lower-level

					interventions in a more timely way. • Morale amongst Social workers improves as they achieve better outcomes for children, young people and families and experience improved job satisfaction.
1.4 Rationalise the skill mix to enable a smaller cohort of highly skilled social workers to focus on behavioural change	Improvement Project Manager – Social Work Services	Children's Services Management Team (CSMT), case-management TMs	• Project Group • Focus groups • Training events	• Progress reports on the implementation of actions arising from the audit and project plan	• See above as same applies
1.5 Strengthen the approach to 'permanence' where early decisions to separate infant children from their families is evidenced and justified. (Public Law Outline (PLO) process & Legal Panel; Adoption Services)	OM Intake & Assessment & Early Intervention	OM Child In Need / Child Protection, Om LAC, OM Strategy, Commissioning & Resources	• Implementation of Legal Surgeries • Implementation of Regional Adoption Service (RAS)	• The RAS is operational and performance against national indicators for adoption has improved for the region. • Progress reports on	• Infants who are separated from their birth families are provided with the best opportunity to achieve their potential through the stability and security that a

				impact of Legal surgeries	permanent substitute family can provide.

2. Promoting Kinship Care

Action	Lead	Supported By	Method	Measures	Expected Outcomes
2.1 Extend opportunities to relatives to care for children who cannot remain with their parents	OM Intake & Assessment & Early Intervention / OM Child In Need / Child Protection,	OM Strategy, Commissioning & Resources	• Development of Kinship Care Policy & procedures	• A policy and procedures are in place and operational • Increase in number of arrangements in place for relatives to care for children who cannot remain with their parents.	• An increased number of children, young people and families who cannot remain with their parents are provided with an opportunity to remain within their extended family being cared for by relatives
2.2 Extend Special Guardianship (SGOs) and Residence Order (ROs) options	OM LAC	OM Strategy, Commissioning & Resources, OM Child in Need / Child Protection	• Development of Kinship Care Strategy • Launch SGO/RO project with foster carers who have children placed long term and are deemed	• Strategy in place • Progress report on SGO/RO project • Increase in number of SGO / ROs	• An increased number of children are given the opportunity of security and stability through the use of SGOs

					'permanent'.
					and Ros by their carers.
2.3 Explore the feasibility of realigning resources in order to support the assessments related to the aforementioned work being undertaken within the Fostering Service.	OM Strategy, Commissioning & Resources	OM Child in Need / Child Protection, OM Intake & Assessment & Early Intervention	• Project Group	• Progress report on Project Plan	• An increased number of children, young people and families who cannot remain with their parents are provided with an opportunity to remain within their extended family being cared for by relatives • The assessment of Kinship Foster carers are undertaken in a timely way and this work does not have an adverse impact on the capacity that is required for the Fostering Service to recruitment and assessment

					more mainstream Foster Carers.

3. Consolidate the Specialist Looked After Children's (LAC) Service & 'Break the Cycle'

Action	Lead	Supported By	Method	Measures	Expected Outcomes
3.1 Maximise the effectiveness of permanence in enabling LAC to achieve their full potential.	OM LAC	OM Strategy, Commissioning & Resources	• Development of a LAC Strategy	• Implementation of key actions in strategy implementation plan • Quarterly performance Monitoring Performance Framework • Quarterly reporting through Quality Assurance & Learning Framework	• LAC are provided with the best opportunity to achieve their potential through the stability and security that a permanent substitute family can provide.
3.2 Ensure active care plan management to promote early opportunities for return to family	OM Children in Need / Child Protection, OM LAC	FISS Service Manager, OM Safeguarding	• Supervision • Training • OM /TM Auditing of Case Files • IRO reporting	• Quarterly performance Monitoring Performance Framework • Quarterly reporting through Quality	• Where appropriate, LAC are provided with the opportunity to return home to their family in a timely way.

				Assurance & Learning Framework	• There is an increase in the realisation of care plans where the desired outcome is a return home.
3.3 Reverse the shift towards externally purchased residential care in favour of local family placements	OM Strategy, Commissioning & Resources	OM LAC	• Commissioning Plan • In-House Fostering Recruitment strategy	• Increase in in-house Foster Carers • Turning the curve for ratio of in-house – external placements • Increase in external residential provision offered in local area	• There is a reduction in the number of LAC placed in residential care and an increase in the number of LAC placed in local family placements, and wherever appropriate, LAC are placed closer to home.
3.4 Deliver the Payment by Results LAC themed initiative around Enhanced Foster Care.	OM LAC	OM Strategy, Commissioning & Resources	• Implementation Group	• Scheme is operational and a larger number of children have been returned from out of area placements in line with their care plans	• Wherever appropriate, LAC are placed closer to home in a family setting.