

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

29th JUNE 2007

Implementation of the national Contact Point (formally known as Child Index) system and implications for North Yorkshire County Council

Report by the Corporate Director – Children and Young People’s Service

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Section 12 of the Children Act 2004 provided for a national index of all children in England to be established. This index has been named ‘ContactPoint’. Its purpose is to help people that work with children and young people identify who else is working with the same child quickly in order to facilitate information sharing and coordinated service delivery.
- 2.2 The Government estimates that around £88 million pounds can be saved nationally by reducing the time practitioners spend trying to identify other colleagues working with the same child. The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) intends ContactPoint to be the primary tool in achieving these efficiencies gains.
- 2.3 ContactPoint is a core element of the ‘Every Child Matters; Change for Children’ agenda. It is one of a suite of ‘tools’ that are being introduced nationally to help practitioners work in partnership and deliver effective joint working. ContactPoint complements, and is linked to, other initiatives such as the Common Assessment Framework, improved Information Sharing Arrangement and the Children’s Services Directory.

3.0 Information held on ContactPoint

3.1 ContactPoint will hold basic information on all children 0-18 years, and up to 25 years for certain groups of young people, namely Care Leavers and young people with complex disability. The following information will be held on ContactPoint for each child:

- Name
- Date of Birth
- Gender
- Address
- Unique Identifier
- Parents/ Carer contact details
- Primary Health contact details (GP/ Health Visitor/ School Nurse as appropriate)
- School or Educational Setting contact details (where the child is of school age)
- Where a child is receiving additional services, the contact details for that service, and
- Where a child has a Common Assessment, a flag will be shown to highlight that has taken place.

There is no case information held on ContactPoint.

3.2 The information for ContactPoint will come from linking existing systems to ContactPoint.

a) Nationally, child information will be provided from:

- the DfES
- the Department of Health
- the Department for Work and Pensions
- the Home Office
- the Office of National Statistics
- the Ministry of Justice
- the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCSA)
- National Voluntary Organisations: Barnardos, NSPCC and the Children's Society.

b) Locally, the following services will be expected to link their systems to ContactPoint:

- Education (including FE Colleges, Independent Schools and non-maintained Special Schools)
- Social Care
- Health (Primary Care/ Acute Trusts/ Mental Health)
- Early Years Providers
- Connexions
- Police
- Fire and Rescue

c) Locally, the following services may, but are not required, to link to ContactPoint

- Registered Social Landlords/ Housing Trusts
- Housing Departments
- Voluntary and Community Organisation

4.0 Management of ContactPoint and Local Accountabilities

- 4.1 The DfES have established a 'National Implementation Team' for ContactPoint and are responsible for the overall project management and IT development and technical security of the system. However, it is a joint initiative between national and local government, and the responsibilities for local areas have been outlined in the draft regulations for ContactPoint.

Local Accountabilities

- 4.2 The DfES has divided the national system into 150 'Local Implementation Areas', one of which is North Yorkshire. To support Local Authorities, the DfES have also employed Regional Coordinators to monitor progress and facilitate with any arising issues. The Regional Coordinator for Yorkshire and Humberside is Catrin Morgan, Catrin.Morgan@atkinsglobal.com.
- 4.3 The Local Authority is responsible, on behalf of the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, for establishing a 'Local Implementation Team', meeting national deadlines and managing the North Yorkshire 'section' of ContactPoint. The content of the North Yorkshire 'section' is defined as the records for all children and young people normally resident in North Yorkshire.
- 4.4 Specific responsibilities for North Yorkshire County Council include working with partners to:
- Ensure the relevant local systems can link to ContactPoint
 - Ensure that each child record for children normally resident in North Yorkshire has good quality data
 - Identify, authorise, train and set up Users and monitor for misuse of the system
 - Ensure adherence to security policies
 - Ensure all Users have enhanced CRB checks
 - Communicate with all relevant stakeholders, including children young people and families about ContactPoint
 - Manage the complaints processes in relation to ContactPoint
- 4.5 The regulations provide for Local Authorities to manage ContactPoint on behalf of all partners, including ensuring other agencies staff do not misuse the system and that other agencies maintain accurate case records. This is an increase in our current accountabilities and consideration will need to be given across the Partnership to how best we can deliver on our joint responsibilities.

5.0 Timeframe for Implementation

- 5.1 The DfES expect ContactPoint to be implemented nationally by early 2009. North Yorkshire has been allocated 'Deployment Slot 2', which will give access to the national system in late summer 2008, with training and roll out expected from September 2008 – March 2009.

6.0 Current Progress

- 6.1 In line with the DfES Project Plan, the 'North Yorkshire Integrated Processes Board' has been established within the remit of the Children and Young People's Strategic Board. This multi-agency Board represents all areas of Integrated Working and provides the steer for, and coordination of, all the new 'tools' being introduced in localities.
- 6.2 The Integrated Processes Board is responsible for meeting the deadlines within the DfES Project Plan, for risk management of the implementation of ContactPoint and delivery of key tasks. The Board is supported by the 'Integrated Processes Team' comprising the Integrated Children's Systems Manager, Integrated Processes Manager and Integrated Processes Support Officer.
- 6.3 Each Local Authority area has to submit a 'Local Authority Readiness Assessment' (LARA) response for the DfES to monitor our progress. The last submission was in January 2007. North Yorkshire was assessed as being ahead of expected targets.
- 6.4 There are currently two priority areas of local work:
- a) identifying the systems that will be required to link to ContactPoint, assessing their data quality and their ability to integrate with the ContactPoint system.
 - b) undertaking a partnership-wide workforce analysis to understanding which roles will be 'users' of ContactPoint, their training requirements and whether they have the relevant security clearance required e.g. enhanced CRB checks/ secure IT access etc.

These tasks will be completed over the summer period, and next focus will be improving data quality and establishing the roll out plan for North Yorkshire, including a comprehensive training strategy.

7.0 Recommendations

- 7.1 That Members are briefed on progress and any arising issues as appropriate.