



Community Services

SERVICE PLAN

April 2007 to March 2010

Advanced Draft 08.02.07

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

To meet Halton's most pressing needs, the Borough Council has identified **6 key priorities**, which, as detailed within the Council's Corporate Plan, are: -

- **A Healthy Halton**
- **Halton's Urban Renewal**
- **Halton's Children & Young People**
- **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**
- **A Safer Halton**
- **Corporate Effectiveness & Business Efficiency**

The primary purpose of Service Plans is to provide a clear statement on what individual services are planning to achieve and to show how this contributes towards achieving the corporate priorities of the Council. They are an essential tool for making key decisions about future service provision and the level of resources required. Additionally the service plan is designed to enable the public, Elected Members and staff to monitor how well this part of the Council is performing in improving the quality of life for local people.

2.0 SERVICE PROFILE

2.1 Purpose

The Department exists to provide a range of services across the borough, some of which are statutory duties and all of which help to improve access to education, improve inclusion and attainment and increase and widen participation in learning. It also has responsibility for services to particularly vulnerable groups including children with Special Educational Needs and Children with Disabilities.

The Department is responsible for:

Early Years Services: Early Years team has responsibility for the implementation of the National Childcare Strategy in Halton. The strategy is driven by the Childcare Act 2006, which is the first ever legislation specifically for early years and childcare. The Act places a number of duties on LA's; to secure and sustain sufficient childcare; to secure sufficient quality early years education; to provide quality information to parent/carers and providers on services for children aged 0-19; to complete a comprehensive sufficiency assessment in consultation with parents/carers, young people, local childcare and early years providers and employers. The second part of the act introduces the Early Years Foundation Stage, which will build on and bring together the existing Birth to Three Matters, Foundation Stage and national standards for day care and childminding. This new framework will support providers in delivering quality integrated early education and care for children from birth to age 5.

Children's Centres: The Department has a lead role in implementing the Government's vision of a Sure Start Children's Centre for every community providing all families with young children with access to high quality early years provision and other health and family support services, as well as improved support for their children's transition into school. They will also support parents who are seeking to return to work with employment related services, which will help lift families out of poverty. Sure Start Children's Centres will be central to all local authorities' efforts to develop mainstream early years services as part of wider local provision for children. The main purpose of children's centres will be to improve outcomes for young children as set out in Every Child Matters, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged. Since life chances for children are strongly related to poverty and deprivation, we are investing most in, and requiring a fuller and more intensive service from, children's centres in disadvantaged areas. Halton will have 9 Children's Centres operational from 2007 with an additional 3 by 2008.

Extended Schools: The Children & Families Extended Services Division also leads on Extended School developments and the creation of Children and young People Area Networks (CYPAN's). Halton have developed 5 CYPAN's. These are geographical areas across the borough all, which offer extended services for families, children and young people depending on the need in that area. Within each CYPAN area services include access to Sure Start Children's Centres, Early Education integrated with Childcare, Extended Services in Schools, Health and Family Support. The governments target is that by 2010 all schools in Halton will offer extended services. Government guidance for Extended Schools states that schools have to provide access to the core offer and do not have to provide the services themselves. The core offer includes quality childcare, swift and easy

referral to specialist services, varied menu of activity, parenting support and community use of facilities.

Inclusive Learning: The purpose of the SEN Division is to provide focus upon the delivery of the Council's Strategy for the Inclusion of Pupils with SEN. Included within it are Educational Psychology, SEN Service (newly established in Jan 2007, following the recommendations of service Review) the SEN Assessment Team and the Early Years SEN team including the Portage Service developed for the support of families of young children with complex SEN/disabilities, with a special focus to improve the pathways for children of 0-4 years with SEN/disability in identification, assessment, support and capacity building. The key challenge for this division is to implement the SEN review and secure improvements in our SEN indicators, through developing the capacity of mainstream schools to meet the needs of all pupils including those with SEN and complex difficulties.

The Department's main beneficiaries are pupils with Special Educational Needs, their families and Halton Schools; pre-school children, parents and carers and providers of early years education/care; families who need information, advice and support at key times in their children's lives, notably starting primary school, secondary and special schools; accessing financial support for school meals, school transport and student awards; children and young people who are vulnerable and who are disaffected and at risk of or permanent exclusion from school; children who seek employment or who work in the entertainment industry and all children and young people 0-19.

Disability and Complex Needs: The Disability and Complex Needs Division provides the Children's Disability social work service including assessment of need, support for disabled children who are looked after, and family support services as well as carer assessments. The Division directly provides residential short breaks for disabled children at Inglefield, as well as commissioning short breaks from the voluntary and community sectors. The Division provides multi-agency strategic planning and operational management of Children's Disability services for the Local Authority and Health Partners, and management of the pooled budget. It also provides leadership of the multi-agency Children's Disability Mini Trust, one of the four pilot mini trusts established in April 2006.

2.2 Key Messages

The department is leading the development of Children and Young People's Area Networks (CYPAN's) linked to the Children's Centre's and Extended Schools agenda. There has been a significant challenge managing the change process from Surestart to CYPAN's, however this development gives an excellent opportunity to focus services on local need and priorities.

There is a clear focus has for all services supporting children and young people as a result of the Children Act 2004 and Every Child Matters. The integration of what was previously Education & Social Inclusion Directorate with Children's Social Care, to become the Children & Young People's Directorate has enabled teams to focus upon delivering service's against the 'Outcomes Framework':

- ECM 1 – Staying Safe
- ECM 2 – Being Healthy
- ECM 3 – Enjoying & Achieving
- ECM 4 – Making a Positive Contribution
- ECM 5 – Achieving Economic Well-Being

Working within a coherent framework under the Director of Children's Services and to an integrated plan (The Children & Young People's Plan), it is intended that services will work better, not only across the new Directorate, but across all partner agencies providing for children, resulting in improvements across the 5 outcomes.

9 priorities have been identified for the Directorate and agreed with the DfES, CSCI, OFSTED and GONW. These are:

- Priority 1 - Outcomes for LAC
- Priority 2 - Attendance
- Priority 3 - SEN Services
- Priority 4 - Attainment and Achievement
- Priority 5 - CAMHS Services
- Priority 6 - Teenage Pregnancy
- Priority 7 - Exclusions
- Priority 8 - 14-19 Strategy
- Priority 9 - School Organisation

Community Services will support the work of the directorate towards all of these priorities, and has a strategic lead for the following following:

Priority 3 - To reduce the number of children/young people requiring a statement of SEN and, in particular, in segregated provision i.e. special schools

Over the past 12 months a clearer focus has emerged for the SEN Division, following the Review of the Learning Support Service, completed in June 2006. The Service restructured, will be launched in January 2007 with the aim of supporting schools and settings in developing their own capacity to meet the needs of all children, including those with SEN & complex difficulties.

Priority Actions Plans exist for each of the areas identified and the objectives are incorporated within this Service Plan. Appropriately and importantly, each of the priorities supports the broader Council's priorities.

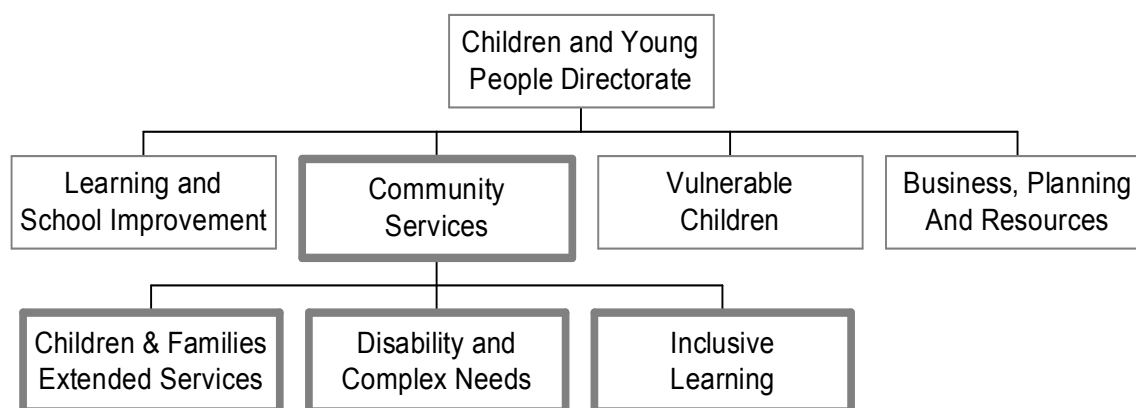
The Annual Performance Assessment judgements for Children's Services are on a scale of 1 to 4 ranging from 1 'a service that does not deliver minimum requirements for users (Inadequate) to 4 'a service that delivers well above minimum requirements for users (Excellent/Outstanding). Halton's 2006 APA Judgements were as follows;

Area for Judgement	Grade Awarded
The contribution of the local authority's children's services in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people	3
The council's overall capacity to improve its services for children and young people	3
The contribution of the local authority's social care services in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people	4

In addition the contribution of services to achieving the five outcomes was rated as excellent for Staying Safe and good for the other four outcomes. Key strengths were identified under each of the five outcomes and the following strengths relating to the Department were identified;

- Transition Plans for young people
- Progress of Looked after Children and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities from their starting points.
- Early years provision

2.3 Organisation Structure



Staffing

	Children & Families Extended Services		Disability and Complex Needs		Inclusive Learning	
	F.T.E	Headcount	F.T.E	Headcount	F.T.E	Headcount
Managerial	12	12	4	4	3	3
Professional/ Technical	16	19	3	3	25.5	28
Administrative/ Clerical	10	16	5.4	6	5	7
Front Line	31.8	44	19.6	21	2.3	3
Total	69.8	91	32	34	35.8	41

3.0 AIMS OF THE SERVICE

The Council has identified six key strategic priorities that are detailed within the introduction to this plan. Whilst the majority of Council services will contribute in some way to each of these priorities those that are most relevant to the Community Services Department, and the Service Aims associated with them are: -

Corporate Priority 1: A Healthy Halton

Area of Focus 6: *To ensure the health needs of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are addressed*

Service Aims:

- SA 1: Providing services and facilities to maintain the independence and well-being of vulnerable people within our community (KJ 1.6)
Service Objective CS6

Corporate Priority 3: Halton's Children and Young People

Area of Focus 13: *Improving the educational attainment of pupils in Halton, by providing effective teaching and school support*

Service Aims:

- SA 2: To ensure children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are helped to enjoy and achieve (KJ 3.8)
Service Objective CS1

Area of Focus 15: *To deliver effective services to children and families by making the best use of available resources*

Service Aims:

- SA 2: To ensure children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are helped to enjoy and achieve (KJ 3.8)
Service Objective CS2
- SA 3: To ensure early years provision promotes children's development and well being and helps them meet early learning goals (KJ 3.2)
Service Objectives CS3 and CS4
- SA 4: To ensure that services are based on a shared understanding of local needs amongst partner organisations and with the community (KJ 6.1b)
Service Objective CS5

Area of Focus 17: *Provide an effective transition for young people from school to employment, through opportunities for work related learning, and post 16 education, voluntary and community work.*

Service Aims:

SA 5: To ensure children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are helped to achieve economic well-being (KJ 5.7)

Service Objective CS8

Area of Focus 19: *To ensure a safe environment for children where they are supported and protected from abuse and neglect.*

Service Aims:

SA 6: To ensure children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities live in safe environments and are protected from abuse and exploitation (KJ 2.8)

Service Objective CS7

4.0 FACTORS AFFECTING THE SERVICE

4.1.1 Political

Every Child Matters: Change for Children Agenda introduced a new approach to the well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19. The aim is for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

The Agenda promotes early intervention and co-ordinated service provision delivered through stronger partnership working and children's trusts.

Halton Community Strategy 2006-2011 identifies 5 priorities, which for the first time includes children and young people as a specific theme. The Children and Young People's Commissioning Partnership was established following this decision, and functions as the Specialist Strategic Partnership for Children and Young People. The Partnership also holds responsibility for implementing the practical arrangements needed to implement a Children's Trust, functions as a forum for the Alliance Board Task Group Chairs and for driving the joint commissioning agenda.

Children & Young People's Alliance Board functions as the Children's Trust, and is responsible for strategic planning of services to children and young people, including developing and implementing the Children and Young People's Plan and Children's Trust arrangements. The work of the Alliance Board is underpinned by the Halton Multi-Agency Compact, which sets out the responsibilities of Halton Borough Council and its Partner agencies on the Board.

Directorate Restructure: The management structure of the Children and Young People's Directorate was re-engineered in September 2006 to address the challenging agenda presented by Every Child Matters and ensure the Directorate is fit to deliver a modern and improved service to children and young people.

Halton Safeguarding Children Board was established in April 2006 in line with the requirements of the Children Act 2004, and links into the Halton Children & Young People's Strategic Planning arrangements and the Halton Children & Young Peoples Plan. The Board is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in each local area will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in that locality, and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.

Joint Area Reviews: New arrangements for inspection of children's services at local authority area level were introduced by the Children Act 2004. Joint Area Reviews will look at how services are working together locally to improve outcomes. They evaluate the collective contributions made to each outcome by relevant services and examine the involvement of children, young people and their parents in service planning structures. Halton's Joint Area Review is planned for March 2008.

4.1.2 Economic Climate

Deprivation: The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) for 2004 suggests that deprivation has improved in the Borough. In 2004 the IMD ranked Halton as 21st most deprived Authority in England compared to 16th in the 2000 Index. However, it still ranks as one of the most deprived districts in England. Although located in Cheshire, Halton shares many of the social and economic problems more associated with its urban neighbours on Merseyside. Halton is ranked in the IMD as the 3rd highest authority in terms of deprivation on Merseyside, behind Knowsley and Liverpool, and 5th highest in the North West. Neighbouring authorities St Helens (36th), Wirral (48th) and Sefton (78th.) are way down the table compared to Halton.

Halton has some of the most deprived wards in the country in terms of child poverty. Several parts of Halton are amongst the poorest in the country. In Widnes, the most deprived areas are Kingsway, Riverside and Appleton. In Runcorn, the most deprived areas are Castlefields, Halton Lea and Windmill Hill. However, there are many affluent areas of the borough as well. These are located mainly on the outskirts of both towns and comprise of several new housing estates.

Employment: Claimant unemployment in the Borough fell from 5.0% in January 2000 to 3.1% in November 2005. However, Halton still had the 5th highest claimant rate in the North West in November 2005. Research shows that the skill base of the local area is relatively poor compared to the United Kingdom as a whole and surrounding local economies. Halton has a low percentage of adults with further education qualifications and low rates of numeracy and literacy. All told, there is a mismatch between skills in the local workforce and jobs available in the borough, and it is anticipated that in the future over 95% of new jobs will need qualifications of at least NVQ 2 level and over 70% at NVQ 3 and above.

4.1.3 Social Factors

Demographic changes: The mid-2005 population of Halton stood at 118,800 (rounded up to the nearest 100 people). This is down from the mid-2004 population of 118,900. Halton has a larger number of people in the 5-24 age categories than across England as a whole. This is partly down to the influence of Runcorn New Town where a lot of younger people live.

The birth rate in Halton is declining, and this is already being seen in the falling numbers on roll in the district's primary schools. In January 2003 pupil numbers in Halton's Primary schools were over 1000 fewer than their net capacity. This will, naturally work its way through the system and result in reducing pupil numbers in secondary education and FE. This could lead to the problem of surplus Secondary school places across the borough in the near future.

The next ten years will see a reduction in teenagers by 20%. This presents new risks for social exclusion and shifting demands for services. Single person households will rise, and single parenthood will become even more common. One result is likely to be a marked increase in social isolation, which will have profound effects on people's health and involvement in their communities.

Health: Statistics show that health standards in Halton are amongst the worst in the country and single it out as the aspect of life in the borough in most urgent need of improvement. The population is ageing which could put even greater

demands on the health and social care services. At the same time lifestyle choices in the borough, especially among the young, in terms of diet, smoking, alcohol, exercise and other factors continue to give cause for concern for the future.

4.1.4 Technological Developments

Integrated Children's System: There have been delays in progressing the implementation of ICS although full implementation is now on target for arch 2007. This reflects the national situation, with a recent DfES review finding that only a minority of local authorities would achieve full implementation by the DfES deadline of January 2007. ICS will provided an electronic recording system for social care through the development of web based E-Forms that integrate directly with the client database, Carefirst.

Electronic Social Care Record is now scheduled for introduction during 2007-08. Phase 2 development, which will incorporate legislative and practice changes and address connectivity issues, has been postponed by the DfES and further guidance is awaited.

Child Index: The Index will be a secure electronic tool that will enable authorised practitioners working with the same child or young person to find one another quickly and easily so they can provide more effective support to them and their families. Halton has been designated as an early adopter authority. The first user live date for Halton is January 2008, and the Index has a national implementation date of April 2008.

Electronic Common Assessment Framework: Halton has established a multi-agency group to oversee the development of an electronic CAF system (eCAF). The system has been built on the Children and Young People's Database, and will be piloted with practitioners from a range of voluntary and statutory agencies between January and June 2007.

4.1.5 Legislative

Children Act 2004 provides the legislative spine for the Every Child Matters agenda. It aims to minimize the risks and improve outcomes for children and young people by transforming the way children's services are organised and improving joint working between agencies. The Children Act is supported by a wide range of guidance regarding strategic planning, safeguarding, service delivery and local engagement.

The Every Child Matters agenda arising out of the Children Act provides the framework for the development of integrated service delivery for children and moves towards Children's Trusts. The act also established the key strategic roles of Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services. It also introduced a single Children & Young People's plan covering all services to children to focus strategic planning.

Adoption and Children Act 2002 became operational from December 2005, introducing comprehensive changes to adoption services. The Act makes the child's welfare the paramount consideration in all the decisions by courts and introduces the use of the 'welfare checklist' into adoption work. It also highlights the need to prevent delay in planning for permanence and adoption and places a duty on local authorities to ensure that the support and financial assistance

needed is available to people affected by adoption. The Adoption and Fostering Service has been restructured in order to ensure services are delivered in accordance with the new legislation.

Childcare Act 2006: The new Childcare Act aims to transform childcare and early years services in England, taking forward some of the key commitments from the Ten Year Childcare Strategy, published in December 2004. The Act will require authorities to improve the five Every Child Matters outcomes for all pre-school children and reduce inequalities in these outcomes, secure sufficient childcare for working parents and provide a better parental information service. The Act also reforms and simplifies early years regulation and inspection arrangements. It is anticipated that the main provisions of the Act will come into effect in 2008.

Local Government White Paper Strong and Prosperous Communities: The White Paper promotes community and neighbourhood engagement, and will strengthen the council's role in leading community-wide improvements. It develops the role of overview and scrutiny in relation to external bodies, and provides new requirements on service providers to engage with Sustainable Community Strategies and Local Area Agreements. There are changed requirements for council constitutions, and announced changes to the performance management and inspection regimes.

“Care Matters : Transforming the Lives of Children in Care:” The Green Paper, was launched for consultation in October 2006 and sets out a radical package of proposals for transforming the lives of children in care, and will have major resource implications. Proposals are made regarding better support for those on the edge of the care system; making sure there is a more consistent adult in each child's life to fulfill the state's responsibilities as corporate parent; provision of stable, high quality placements; a place in a good school and support for further education; support for all aspects of children's lives outside schools; supporting children to make the transition into adult life and clear and strong accountability to make the whole system focus on the needs of children in care.

Education and Inspections Act 2006: In autumn 2005 the Government published *Higher Standards, Better Schools For All*, the Schools White Paper. The White Paper contained proposals aimed at ensuring that every child in every school in every community gets the education they need to enable them to fulfil their potential. The White Paper received Royal Assent on 8 November 2006 and became the Education and Inspections Act 2006. As well as giving legal force to many of the proposals in the White Paper, the Act contains some additional measures that were not in the original document, including a duty on governing bodies to promote well-being and community cohesion, and to take the Children and Young People's Plan into consideration when undertaking this duty.

Extended Schools Prospectus 2005: The prospectus sets the agenda for all schools and children and families to be able to access a core of extended services which are developed through multi-agency partnership. Extended services can include childcare, adult education, parenting support programmes, community-based health and social care services, multi-agency behaviour support teams and after-school activities.

14-19 strategy aims to develop a coherent 14-19 phase of education where young people are committed to continuing learning whether in school, college or the workplace. The Strategy aims to encourage more young people to stay in

school beyond 16 by increasing curriculum flexibility and choice, extending the program of studies for learners in the 16-19 age group and improve the vocational offer.

4.1.6 Environmental

There are no environmental factors likely to impact on this service area during the period covered by this plan.

4.2 Service Developments

Children and Young People's Plan: In line with the Children Act 2004, the Halton Children and Young People's Plan brings together all agencies and services within Halton, not just those delivered by the Council, and sets out joint priorities and joint activities to improve outcomes for children and young people. All Council Directorates, local Health Trusts, Cheshire Constabulary, Cheshire Probation Service, The Youth Offending Team, Connexions, Learning and Skills Council, Education Business Partnership and a range of voluntary sector services contributed to the Plan. Most importantly, it takes into account consultations held with children, young people and their parents and carers across Halton and reflects their aspirations and views.

Consultation Activity: A participation strategy was produced in 2004 in order to ensure that children, young people and their families are given the opportunity to be fully engaged in strategic planning and shaping services. In line with the strategy, a process of consultation has been undertaken in respect of the changes to the design and delivery of children's services.

A major piece of consultation regarding the planning of services for children and young people was undertaken between November 2005 and February 2006, to inform the Children and Young People's Plan. A questionnaire was published on the Halton Website and in the Halton Borough Council magazine which is delivered to every household in Halton. The questionnaire was also circulated to primary and secondary schools and distributed through partner agencies. Almost 400 responses were received from young people and over 100 from adults. In addition to the above survey, 115 staff from across all partner agencies attended consultation/ briefings and were able to feed into the planning process by giving their views about priorities areas for action. The findings these consultations were taken into account in developing the Halton Children and Young People's Plan, including identifying priorities and setting performance targets.

In addition to this specific consultation exercise, the strategic management structure was designed to ensure that the engagement of children and young people and their carers is central to all processes. There is a high level of participation of Looked After Children in reviews and service planning using child friendly processes and consultation methods. A parent and carers forum was established, and has a parent/carers representative on the Alliance Board and each of the Task Groups. The Board facilitated a comprehensive process to elect the Borough-wide Youth Forum and Member of Youth Parliament. 123 young people from a variety of backgrounds attended area based residential events where they learned about the democratic process. This formed the basis for the selection process for the youth forum and the MYP. All 11 – 18 year olds received a National Democracy Week information pack and 5228 eligible young people voted.

Annual Performance Assessment: The 2006 annual performance assessment of services for children and young people found that Halton consistently delivers above minimum requirements for children and young people, and that the contribution of services to outcomes is excellent in the area of staying safe and good in the remaining areas. Areas for development, to be focused on in future APAs and the Joint Area Review, are:

- Testing out the impact of a comprehensive CAMHS.
- The effectiveness of measures to reduce the rate of reprimands, final warnings and convictions amongst looked after children in Halton's care.
- Young people's attainment of qualifications at Key Stage 4 and post-16 and unauthorised absence and exclusion rates in secondary schools.

Childcare Act, passed into law on 11 July, is truly pioneering legislation and is the first ever exclusively concerned with early years and childcare. The Act will help transform childcare and early years services in England for generations to come, taking forward some of the key commitments from the [Ten Year Childcare Strategy](#) published in December 2004. In order to meet the requirements in the Act developments in 2007 include:-

- Completion of Sufficiency Assessment
- Secure sufficient Early Years Education
- Secure Sufficient Childcare
- Business plan for Phase 1 Children's Centres
- Develop 3 Children's Centres
- Work in partnership with schools on extended services
- Sustaining existing early years and childcare providers
- Extend the Children's Information Service for 0-19
- Provide QTS support in all Children's Centres and in the private and voluntary sector
- Offer training for the private and voluntary sector

Five Children and Young People Area Networks are to be established across Halton. The aim of these networks is to enable integrated children's service provision designed with children, young people and families at the centre and delivered to meet identified local need. The cornerstone of providing services that will address local need is the underpinning of service delivery plans by audit and consultation and participation and engagement participation activity with children, young people, families and communities.

To contribute to this process needs analysis for each network has been produced. These documents have been written to link with the Halton Children and Young People Plan 2006/09 and the Halton Community Strategy 2006/11. This will ensure that the local targets will support the corporate targets for Halton and will also contribute to enabling children and young people in the borough to be successful in achieving the 5 outcomes defined within the Children Act 2004.

Halton Parent and Carer Forum has been established and the database currently holds the names of 44 parents across the borough whom are willing to be involved in the consultation on children and young people service planning and delivery. Direct communication links between the Forum and Halton Children and Young People Alliance Board. Halton Youth Service has conducted consultation with the forum on their service delivery plan and plans are in place to consult in the every near future on the authorities Anti bullying policy.

As part of the implementation of the Government Extended Schools agenda an audit has been completed on current service delivery within 2 Children and Young People Area Networks. This required multi agency responses. Consultation is planned with children, young people, families and local communities to ensure that the Extended Service provision responds to need. Implementation of this agenda collaboratively with the borough's Children's Centre developments enables a truly integrated provision of services across the 0-19 age range.

The Children's Disability Partnership Board is a multi agency group that takes forward the strategy for disabled children with complex needs in Halton. The Board held a stakeholder day in September 2006 to seek views to inform the development of the Children's Disability Mini Trust. The key messages were distributed to stakeholders and will be taken forward through the multi agency strategy and the planning groups of the Partnership Board.

In response to stakeholder views Halton Speakout was commissioned to deliver a self advocacy project in special schools. In response to the Young People's forum raising issues around wheelchairs, a review of the wheelchair service is planned which will be undertaken with the involvement of young people. Parents and carers of disabled children requested additional short breaks to support their pre Christmas preparations and 41 full day places were commissioned with the voluntary sector to provide a break to enable carers to have a Christmas Shopping day.

An internal audit of the Children's Disability Mini Trust is taking place which aims to provide assurance that significant business risks relating to Children's with Disabilities - Mini Trust are being managed to an acceptable level. A key unannounced inspection of the Inglefield Short Break unit in September 2006 found that the service was providing 'Good' outcomes for the users of the service.

4.3 Efficiency Improvements

A range of efficiency gains have been identified within the Directorate which represent both cashable and non-cashable efficiencies. Cashable efficiencies have been identified in a number of key budget areas such as outborough placements, agency provision, supplies and services and staffing.

Through the re-designation of Halton Special Schools and the more effective use of the Key Stage 4 PRU along with the review of other special needs provision it is estimated that the numbers of pupils with special needs educated out of borough can be reduced. This is currently a key budget pressure for the directorate.

Opportunities have been taken to realign funding to meet the Directorates priorities through the cessation of a number of posts where these roles are no longer required or can be delivered in a more costs effective fashion.

Non-cashable savings will be produced through a range of initiatives such as the improvement in the percentage of statements processed within the 18 weeks period using the existing staffing resource.

4.4 National, Regional & Sub-Regional Focus

The services actively participate in regional and national forums relating to their work including networks related to SEN, Workforce Development, Early Years, Children's Centres, Extended Schools and Children with Disabilities.

4.5 Equal Opportunities

Halton Council is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and combating discrimination and victimisation within all aspects of its service delivery, policy development and as an employer. This commitment is reflected in a range of policies, strategies and framework documents that underpin the work of the Council in its day-to-day operation and in the services it delivers.

The Council fully supports the broad principles of social justice and will oppose any form of discrimination and oppression. Council policy will apply to all of those who come into contact with it, i.e. those who presently use directly provided services of services provided on the Council's behalf; potential users of services; other agencies and professional; employees and job applicants; and the general public.

During the course of 2006 – 07 all Council Services conducted Equality Impact Assessments to examine the equality implications of all policies, procedures and practices within their area.

As a result this department developed an Equalities Action Plan, which is subject to an annual review, that identified a number of low / medium priority areas for action that will be taken during the lifetime of this plan (refer section 6.3).

4.6 Unforeseen Developments

Whilst every effort has been made to identify those developments that may influence or impact upon the service during the life of this plan the possibility exists that unforeseen developments may occur that need to be considered as and when they arise. Such developments will be detailed and commented upon as appropriate in the sections dealing with key developments or emerging issues within the relevant Service Plan Quarterly Monitoring Reports.

In addition to the normal reporting cycle the service may also report 'by exception' to the appropriate Policy and Performance Board when unforeseen developments occur. Where a more immediate decision is required due to the pressing nature of the unforeseen development, this will be referred to Management Team and the Executive Board for attention. The respective Policy and Performance Boards will be kept informed of any developments of this nature.

All reports to the Policy and Performance Boards with the exception of Part II items, are publicly available documents and can be accessed through the Council's website at <http://www2.halton.gov.uk/>

5.0 RESOURCES

5.1 Budget Summary and Service Costs

To be added when Budget for 2007-08 is finalised

5.2 Future Staffing Requirements

Year	Managerial	Professional/ Technical	Administrative/ Clerical	Front Line
2007/08	No Change*	No Change*	No Change*	No Change*
2008/09	No Change*	No Change*	No Change*	No Change*

*It is difficult at this stage to project or anticipate future staffing requirements. Work is currently being undertaken, under in conjunction with consultants from Manchester University, to develop a Halton Children's Workforce Development strategy. Steps are currently being taken to secure improved efficiencies through pooling of budgets and reconfiguration of service delivery. Future grant funding streams and budget constraints will also inform future staffing levels.

5.3 Future ICT Requirements

The ICT Development Plan looks forward to developments over 3 years 2006-2009. The most significant developments centre around the continuing developments to the Halton Children and Young People's Database and the Social Care system – Care First and the Integrated Children System (ICS) and the increasing amount of tracking data and the need to provide comprehensive analysis and reports. This will be further impacted upon with the demands for development / introduction of these major projects –

IS – Information Sharing Child Index: NW authorities were invited to become early adopters of the Child Index and Halton has agreed to become an early adopter authority. As part of the required development of the national Child Index it is vital that access to the current CYP database can be undertaken on the web by all relevant practitioners in Halton. All LA's need to develop a content management CYP local directory. The system needs to be web based to allow all practitioners to report on their involvement with the child/young person. The system will then via XML reports link to update the National IS Index. In order to do this we need to purchase Synergy gateway from Tribal Software Solutions – this is a fully integrated web portal to the CYP database designed to underpin multi agency collaboration.

OLM Carefirst 6 Software – this will include the incorporation of the developments required Integrated Children System (ICS) together with the Electronic Social Care Record. To enable the project to be implemented post April 2007 the following is essential – OLM Consultancy and Project Management Issues. Additional IT infrastructure / servers are also required , There is a statutory requirement on the authority to store electronically all letters/reports etc. relating to Children Social Care records. This will involve all current, archived and future records. The process will require new IT infrastructure, scanning and new working arrangements to be introduced – in particular a new content

management process will be need to be adopted. Resources will be required to work on all current and historical records.

Building Schools for the Future: Key to the success of BSF is the integration of learning and teaching, physical environment/buildings, infrastructure and technologies. None can be considered in isolation. Information and communications technology (ICT) is a core part of the programme with specified funding provision. Our vision is for an ICT enabled learning community, building on our current ICT strategy. Through BSF, ICT will transform the way that education is delivered in Halton. The BSF ICT strategy opens the way to a new pedagogy, making it easier for teachers to plan and access high quality materials, help pupils and their parents to explore their subjects they are studying. The use of new technology will energise learners and practitioners. ICT will enable practitioners to personalise learning. We aim to develop and exploit ICT as part of our overall programme to raise standards. Building Schools for the Future will deliver the following:

Increased maintenance and increased costs for the Halton Children and Young People's Database and Carefirst 6i and their associated modules will impact on resources and growth items will be required. The relatively small amount of capacity within the directorate for these tasks suggests that growth will be required unless central support services are able to widen their support or that additional resources can be made available within the directorate.

The directorate has a significant number of PCs that are out of warranty or will shortly be out of warranty. A capital bid has been submitted to enable the replacement PCs/laptops that will be coming out of warranty in the 2007/08 financial year – 3 years for laptops and 5 years for desktops.

An investment of capital resources at least at current levels is necessary to tackle effectively our duty to promote effective learning environments in our schools, which include keeping pace with technological advances. In addition, there are issues related to condition, suitability, accessibility and security which demand an ongoing prioritised programme if learners' interests are to be adequately safeguarded and promoted.

5.4 Future Accommodation/Property Requirements

In order to participate in the Building Schools for the Future initiative and access Primary Capital Funding the borough will need to commence a reorganisation of its school provision to establish the best community solution to learning provision for the 21st Century. The outcome of the review of nursery, primary, secondary and special provision will be the provision of facilities that are inclusive, improve the learning environment, are accessible, provide choice to young people and their families and are considered major community resource. Both BSF and Primary Capital provide Halton with a once in a lifetime opportunity to modernise the physical and learning environment and transform learning outcomes for children and young people.

The second phase of the development of Children' Centres will be complete by March 2008 providing flexible, multi-agency services to meet the needs of children, young people and their families.

The opportunity for the more effective organisation and deployment of CYPD Staff to ensure the most appropriate location for service delivery will be provided following the re-location of the Permanence Team and the Adoption and Fostering Teams from Grosvenor House to Midwood House in 2007. A more comprehensive assessment of the Directorates accommodation requirements will then be undertaken in 2008 following the transfer of the Housing and Community Directorate staff from Grosvenor House to Runcorn Town Hall.

6.0 SERVICE PERFORMANCE

Plans are no use if they do not produce real results. We need to set targets and measure our performance to know if we are achieving the improvements intended. Various types of indicator are used here to do this:

- **Objectives and Key Milestones.** These show the major events in the work of the Department that are planned to take place during 2007–10, such as the launch of new initiatives, production of key plans and strategies and progress on major projects†
- **Performance Indicator Targets.** These show performance on indicators that are prescribed by central Government as part of their drive to ensure that councils deliver best value in serving their local communities.
- **Local Performance Indicators.** These show performance on indicators that the Department or the Council has adopted locally themselves and those adopted from national and other sources.
- **Local Public Service Agreement Targets.** Such targets are the result of an agreement between the local authority and the Government. This agreement sets out the authority's commitment to deliver specific improvements in performance and the Governments commitment to reward these improvements.
- **National Floor Targets.** These are targets that set a minimum standard for disadvantaged groups or areas or a narrowing of the gap between such areas and the rest of the country.
- **Local Area Agreement**
Standard corporate text to be added.

† Against each key objective the overall initial and residual risk assessment (before and after the risk control measures have been identified) is shown. The risk mapping exercise scores the potential impact on the key objective (severity) and the likelihood (probability) of the risks happening to arrive at a number. This is represented by a number with the associated level of assessed risk.

Risk Score	Overall Level of Risk
1 – 4	LOW
5 – 10	MEDIUM
11 – 16	HIGH

The following tables identify the objectives and/or any national and local indicators for the service. Each individual objective/indicator has been referenced to the Corporate Plan Priority to which it relates.

6.1.1 Key Service Objectives

Key Objective CS1

Corporate Priority:	Halton's Children and Young People
Key Area Of Focus:	13 - Improving the educational attainment of pupils in Halton, by providing effective teaching and school support
ECM Outcome & CYP Plan Priority	Enjoy and Achieve

Service Objective:	CS1: To reduce the number of children/young people requiring a Statement of SEN and improve the opportunities for pupils to be educated in mainstream school					
Key Milestone(s) (07/08)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To establish a multi-agency provisions panel, allowing enhanced provision to be allocated earlier to support effective earlier identification and inclusive practice in advance of requests for statutory assessment by March 2008 					
Key Milestone(s) (08/09)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review the early years SEN Strategy and Structure in line with revised structures for PCT and CYP Directorate by March 2009 					
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To promote critical self review of each school's SEN practice and policy including Accessibility and DED Training by March 2010 					
Risk Assessment	Initial	TBC	Responsible Officer	DM Inclusive Learning	Linked Indicators	TBC
	Residual	TBC				

Key Objective CS2

Corporate Priority:	Halton's Children and Young People
Key Area Of Focus:	15 - To deliver effective services to children and families by making best use of available resources
ECM Outcome & CYP Plan Priority	Enjoy and Achieve

Service Objective:	CS2: To ensure value for money in meeting SEN and seek to improve levels of educational achievement and attainment for all pupils with SEN					
Key Milestone(s) (07/08)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To monitor the use and deployment of delegated and non-delegated SEN resources to ensure that the needs of pupils with SEN are met throughout the year 					
Key Milestone(s) (08/09)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To monitor the enhanced funding for pupils with complex educational and or medical needs through enhanced provisions panel 					
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To implement the Review of SEN Unit Provision by September 2009 					
Risk Assessment	Initial	TBC	Responsible Officer	DM Inclusive Learning	Linked Indicators	TBC
	Residual	TBC				

Key Objective CS3

Corporate Priority:	Halton's Children and Young People
Key Area Of Focus:	15 - To deliver effective services to children and families by making best use of available resources
ECM Outcome & CYP Plan Priority	Enjoy and Achieve

Service Objective:	CS3: To secure sufficient childcare and Early Education Places in line with Childcare Act					
Key Milestone(s) (07/08)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Childcare needs analysis by Sept 2007 • Provide QTS support to private and voluntary service to ensure at least 75% achieve good or better inspection rating by March 2008 					
Key Milestone(s) (08/09)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop service in line with completed needs analysis by March 2009 • Provide QTS support to private and voluntary service to ensure at least 80% achieve good or better inspection rating by March 2009 					
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide QTS support to private and voluntary service to ensure at least 85% achieve good or better inspection rating by March 2009 • Extend free early education entitlement to 15 hours per week by 2010 					
Risk Assessment	Initial	TBC	Responsible Officer	DM Extended Services	Linked Indicators	TBC
	Residual	TBC				

Key Objective CS4

Corporate Priority:	Halton's Children and Young People
Key Area Of Focus:	15 - To deliver effective services to children and families by making best use of available resources
ECM Outcome & CYP Plan Priority	Enjoy and Achieve

Service Objective:	CS4: To increase accessibility to Children's Centres services					
Key Milestone(s) (07/08)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish national performance management framework for children's centres by March '08 To achieve designation of 3 Phase 2 Children's Centres by March 2008 					
Key Milestone(s) (08/09)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To move into Phase 3 of Children's Centre planning by September 2008 					
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To meet national timescales for Children's Centre's programme 					
Risk Assessment	Initial	TBC	Responsible Officer	DM Extended Services	Linked Indicators	TBC
	Residual	TBC				

Key Objective CS5

Corporate Priority:	Halton's Children and Young People
Key Area Of Focus:	15 - To deliver effective services to children and families by making best use of available resources
ECM Outcome & CYP Plan Priority	Enjoy and Achieve

Service Objective:	CS5: To develop Children and Young People's Area Networks to provide services based on local needs					
Key Milestone(s) (07/08)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify key local targets for CYPAN areas based on needs analysis and community consultation by December 2007 To consolidate the transition from Surestart programmes to Children and Young People Area Network's (CYPAN's) by September 2007 					
Key Milestone(s) (08/09)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish baseline position for local targets and ensure robust monitoring systems are in place by March 2009 Ensure that additional services are commissioned against local need and contribute to achieving national and local targets 					
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved performance against baseline position for local targets by March 2010 Ensure that additional services are commissioned against local need and contribute to achieving national and local targets 					
Risk Assessment	Initial	TBC	Responsible Officer	DM Extended Services	Linked Indicators	TBC
	Residual	TBC				

Key Objective CS6

Corporate Priority:	A Healthy Halton
Key Area Of Focus:	6 - Providing services and facilities to maintain the independence and well-being of vulnerable people within our community
ECM Outcome & CYP Plan Priority	Enjoy and Achieve

Service Objective:	CS6: To provide co-ordinated and integrated services to children with disabilities					
Key Milestone(s) (07/08)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review/ updating of strategy in the context of the new service design. Implement revised strategy by March 2008 and establish baseline position. 					
Key Milestone(s) (08/09)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children with Disabilities mini trust integrated into single Children's Trust by March 2009 5% increase against baseline in the % of children with complex needs whose assessed health needs are met by March 2009 					
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10% increase against baseline in the % of children with complex needs whose assessed health needs are met by March 2010. 					
Risk Assessment	Initial	TBC	Responsible Officer	DM Disability & Complex Needs	Linked Indicators	TBC
	Residual	TBC				

Key Objective CS8

Corporate Priority:	Halton's Children & Young People
Key Area Of Focus:	17 - Provide an effective transition for young people from school to employment, through opportunities for work related learning, and post 16 education, voluntary and community work
ECM Outcome & CYP Plan Priority	Achieve Economic Well Being

Service Objective:	CS8: To develop self confidence of children with disabilities to deal with significant life changes and challenges					
Key Milestone(s) (07/08)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review data with Connexions on post school destinations of CWD mini trust cohort by March 2008 					
Key Milestone(s) (08/09)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% of all disabled children within the CWD mini trust cohort are progressing into work, education or training or other positive destinations by March 2009 					
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of all disabled children within the CWD mini trust cohort are progressing into work, education or training or other positive destinations by March 2010 					
Risk Assessment	Initial	TBC	Responsible Officer	DM Disability & Complex Needs	Linked Indicators	TBC
	Residual	TBC				

6.1.2 Other Service Objectives

Other Objective CS7

Corporate Priority:	A Healthy Halton
Key Area Of Focus:	19 - To ensure a safe environment for children where they are supported and protected from abuse and neglect
ECM Outcome & CYP Plan Priority	Be Healthy

Service Objective:	CS 7: To provide security, stability and care for Children with Disabilities in their home environment		
Key Milestone(s) (06/07)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree target for all eligible families receiving a carer's assessment of their needs. Implement data collection processes by September 2007 		
Key Milestone(s) (08/09)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 65% of all eligible families receiving a carers assessment of their needs by March 2009 		
Key Milestone(s) (09/10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of all eligible families of disabled children receive a carers assessment by March 2010 		
Responsible Officer	DM Disability & Complex Needs	Linked Indicators	TBC

6.2 Performance Indicators and Targets (Statutory & Local Indicators):

Ref ¹	Description	Corp Plan Priority / CYP Plan Priority	Halton 2005/6 Actual	2005/06 Quartiles (All England)			Halton 2006/7 Target	Halton 2006/7 Actual	Halton Targets		
				Top	Middle	Bottom			07/08	08/09	09/10
Service Delivery											
<u>CS LPI 1</u>	Number of requests for support moderated by the Early Intervention Panel to meet children's needs earlier		New Indicator	N/A			40		75	90	100
<u>CS LPI 2</u>	% of children with complex needs receiving family support rather than residential services		New Indicator	N/A			N/A	Baseline To Be Established	TBA	TBA	TBA
BVPI 222a	Quality of early years & childcare leadership: Percentage of leaders of integrated early education and childcare settings funded or part funded by the LA - <i>with a qualification at level 4 or above</i>		14%	35	24	16	38%		50%	75%	80%
BVPI 222b	Quality of early years & childcare leadership: Percentage of leaders of integrated early education and childcare settings funded or part funded by the LA - <i>with input from staff with graduate / post graduate training in teaching / child development.</i>		100%	100	43.5	20.5	100%		100%	100%	100%

¹ Key Indicators are identified by an **underlined reference in bold type**.

Ref ¹	Description	Corp Plan Priority / CYP Plan Priority	Halton 2005/6 Actual	2005/06 Quartiles (All England)			Halton 2006/7 Target	Halton 2006/7 Actual	Halton Targets		
				Top	Middle	Bottom			07/08	08/09	09/10
Quality											
CS LPI 3	% of Carers of children with complex needs whose assessed needs are met by Children's Services		New Indicator	N/A			N/A	Baseline To Be Established	TBA	TBA	TBA
CS LPI 4	% of leaders of integrated early years settings with a qualification at Level 4 or above		14%	N/A			38%		40%	42%	44%
CS LPI 5	% of leaders of integrated early years settings which have input from staff with graduate or post graduate training in teaching or child development		100%	N/A			100%		100%	100%	100%
CS LPI 6	% of private and voluntary sector early years service providers achieving good or better inspection reports		New Indicator	N/A			N/A	Baseline To Be Established	TBA	TBA	TBA
Fair Access											
CS LPI 7	% of children with complex needs accessing inclusive play and leisure opportunities		New Indicator	N/A			N/A	Baseline To Be Established	TBA	TBA	TBA
Cost & Efficiency											
CS LPI 8	Number of children with complex needs educated out of borough		New Indicator	N/A			96		89	85	80
BVPI 43a	Percentage of SEN statements prepared within 18 weeks – excluding 'exceptions'		100%	100	99.4	95.7	98%		100%	100%	100%

Ref ¹	Description	Corp Plan Priority / CYP Plan Priority	Halton 2005/6 Actual	2005/06 Quartiles (All England)			Halton 2006/7 Target	Halton 2006/7 Actual	Halton Targets		
				Top	Middle	Bottom			07/08	08/09	09/10
BVPI 43b	Percentage of SEN statements prepared within 18 weeks – including 'exceptions'		91%	95.4	85.85	72.45	85%		92%	95%	95%
Corporate											
There are no indicators of this type for this service											

6.3 Equality Action Plan

To be completed

The Department carried out an Equality Impact Assessment during 2006 and a number of actions that needed to be taken were identified. Those yet to be completed that are considered to be high priority are detailed in the table below.

Strategy/Policy/Service	Impact Assessment (High/Low/None)	Action(s) Proposed	Timetable			Officer Responsible
			2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	

6.4 Local Public Service Agreement

The service is not directly responsible for any LPSA, however the service contributes to the LPSA targets in the Vulnerable Children's and Learning and School Improvement service plans.

6.5 National Floor Targets

The service is not directly responsible for any National Floor Targets, however the service contributes to the targets in the Vulnerable Children's and Learning and School Improvement service plans.

6.6 Local Area Agreement

To be confirmed

7.0 PERFORMANCE REPORTING

One of the main purposes of having a Service Plan is to enable the Council and interested members of the public to keep track of how the Council and its Departments are doing and to help councilors and managers see whether the service is performing as planned and achieving its targets.

Progress will be monitored through:

- **Day to day monitoring by Strategic Directors through their regular interaction with Operational Directors;**
- **Quarterly progress reports to the Management Team;**
- **The inclusion of quarterly service plan monitoring reports as a standard item on the agenda of all the Council's Policy and Performance Boards.**

Policy and Performance Board agenda are public documents and can be accessed free using Internet access at any library where assistance with the technology is available if needed.

8.0 STATUTORY & NON-STATUTORY PLANS

The following plans and strategy documents are relevant to this service plan:

[Community Strategy](#)

[Halton Best Value Performance Plan 2006/07](#)

Halton Children and Young People's Plan 2006-2009

Halton Corporate Plan 2006-2011

Halton Community Strategy 2006-2011

Youth Justice Plan

Halton Safeguarding Children Board Business Plan

Preventative Services Partnership Board Business Plan

Common Processes Task Group Business Plan

Specialist/Targeted Task Group business Plan

Universal Task Group Business Plan

Building Bridges Strategy for Children and Young People with Disabilities

Looked After Children Strategy

14-19 Strategy Plan

Emotional Health and Well-being Strategy

Children in Need Strategy

Teenage Pregnancy Strategy

Young Person's Substance Misuse Plan

Risk Assessment for Key Service Objectives Initially assessed as ‘High’ Risk

To be completed when risk assessment of key objectives has taken place.

Key Objective Ref	Initial Risks identified	Risk Treatment Measures

A commentary will be included in the quarterly service plan monitoring report at quarter 2 and quarter 4 to indicate the progress against risk treatment measures.