

Lifting the Burdens from Children and Young People's Services

The Children and Young People's strand of the Lifting the Burdens Task Force (LBTF) has begun its work and is calling for evidence. What follows is an abridged version of the paper published in July 2007. For further information please visit: www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1508116

Announced by Ruth Kelly in July 2006, the Lifting the Burdens Task Force is an independent, practitioner body set up to review the "bureaucratic and performance management burdens that exist as a consequence of the current relationship between Central and Local Government". It is chaired by Michael Frater, Chief Executive of Nottingham City Council.

The Task Force Working Group on Children's Services is chaired by John Coughlan, Joint President of ADCS. David Hawker, Chair of the ADCS Standards, Performance and Inspection Policy Committee also sits on the Group.

SSRG will be providing evidence and urges members to do so, either directly to the task force (details below) and/or to SSRG via the template on the SSRG website.

The Children and Young People's strand will focus on the 5 main areas noted below, each of which has associated questions.

1. The national performance indicator framework

There are in the region of 250 reported indicators for



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children's services. These are being assessed against 4 main criteria:

- Causality – the indicator measures something which can be clearly identified as a cause of the principal outcome which you are trying to achieve
- Cost-benefit – the cost of producing the indicator is acceptable relative to the benefit of the information derived from it (this, for example, challenges those indicators which only measure things long after the event, because then what you can do with the information is limited and the benefit low)
- Comparability – the indicator enables performance of the

body collecting it to be compared, either with itself (longitudinally) or with others

- Coherence – there is a natural progression of management action that can be tested by using the indicator, from input to output to outcome and finally to impact of the outcome.

Questions:

- (a) On the basis of these criteria, which of the current national indicators used in Annual Performance Assessments and Joint Area Reviews should be discontinued or amended?*
- (b) Are there new indicators that you would propose as part of the National Indicator Set?*