

June 2010

No Wrong Door

**Developing locality services for children,
young People and families in Herefordshire**

**Consultation on Locality arrangements for
children, young people and their families**

Introduction

‘Children and young people in Herefordshire deserve excellent services which improve their lives now and their future life chances’

Within the context of the Total Place agenda and requirements to deliver improved outcomes for the local population of Herefordshire within ever-increasing financial constraints, Herefordshire Public Services (Herefordshire Council and NHS Herefordshire) has been exploring how to improve access to services and service delivery by developing a common approach to localities in Herefordshire.

As part of this overall development toward locality based working, the *‘No Wrong Door’* project, led by the Children’s Trust, will deliver multi agency integrated locality services for children, young people and families, that will improve their future life chances by *taking the best practice forward, and leave the rest behind.*

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process is at the heart of delivering of integrated locality based working for children, young people and their families in Herefordshire.

As we move towards delivery of children’s services through Locality Teams we need to work with our colleagues and partners to develop robust, practical models to operate the CAF, which engage a broad range of agencies to work together in communities to meet needs more effectively and earlier, and to build confidence in our lead professionals to coordinate and deliver excellent packages of support. This paper sets out a framework for this.

The current proposals for locality teams in Herefordshire divide the county into two, with a team covering the north and one to the south. These proposals cover the management and staffing arrangements for the county but do not set out the more detailed arrangements for how we will deliver services more locally to children, young people and their families. As Herefordshire Public Services explore the options for locality based arrangements across the council and PCT, building on this work, this paper sets out further proposals for taking forward cluster based working for children, young people and families through locality based multi agency groups within our communities in Herefordshire.

We will welcome your views.

Background

Across the Herefordshire Public Service (HPS) work is underway to agree the locality areas which services across the partnership can use to jointly deliver services. The HPS work has concluded that the county should have 4 locality areas in total, and further divided into 9 local 'service provision areas'. These are - Hereford City, the five market towns of Leominster, Bromyard, Kington, Ross on Wye, and Ledbury, and three rural areas - Weobley, the Golden Valley and Mortimer. The boundaries of these cluster areas reflect high school catchment areas within the county.

We have been closely involved with and welcome the HPS work and have looked at the outcomes of the work to date against the needs of children and young people and where those children live. We have explored ways in which we can deliver children's services within the agenda of natural communities. Within Children's services we recognise the value of common boundaries as far as possible. Equally, we must ensure that we have a working model that will be practical and effective. This paper sets out our response to date to the HPS work and sets out our proposed model describing how children's services can work within the 9 locality service provision boundaries identified.

We have undertaken considerable work on these service provision areas, looking at the numbers of children and young people aged 0-19 living in those areas, and considering the Matrix of Vulnerability which is indicative of the levels of child vulnerability and is an indication of the levels of service response. We have also considered the common assessments that have been completed in the last 18 months which are one indication of levels of need in each area.

Initially children's services had proposed a model that divided the county into three locality areas, from the centre of the city outwards. HPS work concluded that a three way split for the city would not work and opted to maintain the city as one 'locality', with three further localities surrounding the city. Work completed by children's services concluded that the best fit with this four area model – given that we are not financially able to support 4 locality teams, was that we could realign our three locality areas into two in order to fit into the four area model – one Locality Area Team to the north, and one Locality Area Team to the south.

This is how the 2 Locality Area model will fit with the HPS four area model:

Firstly, we have taken the decision that Ledbury will form part of the South Locality Team as this ensures a better balanced split of resources in terms of the North and South.

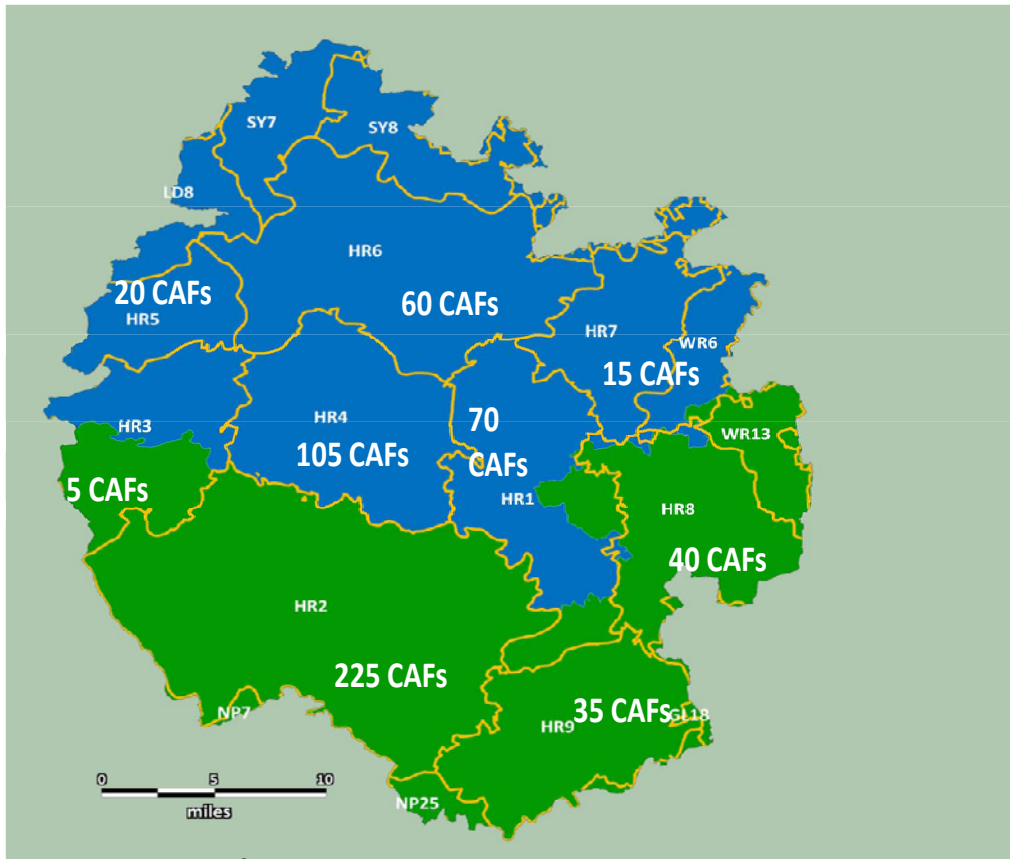
Secondly, we recognise the 9 locality service provision areas and using high school catchment areas as our boundaries, we have concluded that for children and family services we should begin by working with 8 identified 'natural communities' that fall within the 9 service provision areas. This will enable us to apportion resources to meet need. We can deliver children's services in the Ledbury, Bromyard, Ross on Wye and the Golden Valley service provision areas and for these 4 areas the boundaries are co terminus with HPS. However, data around the needs of children and families tells us that for children's services, we would start by combining the service locality areas of Mortimer and Leominster into one natural community, with Weobley and Kington being combined into another natural community.

Thirdly we recognise that the city in the HPS model is one service provision area. We in children's services need to apportion the resources to meet the needs of the city whilst fitting in with the HPS model. We will do that by working the city across the two locality team areas. This will ensure that the city area does not absorb disproportionately high levels of resource – over 50% of the total. This would compliment the arrangements for the GPs city team. GPs propose having two contact points within the city, one for the north of the city and one for the south. This model, working the city across two locality areas, will relate well to the GP model with the GP contact points having a clearly defined pathway into the North and South Locality Teams.

We have already begun work to successfully roll out a working model to the 'natural communities' we have described.

Rationale

We reached the conclusion that we can deliver children's services through the four area model by realigning children's services into two Locality Area Teams. We looked at a range of data, focusing on the needs of the county and numbers of children served. To ensure a workable model we aspired to make both locality areas broadly equitable for management span, taking account of the new HPS design principles and guidance on spans of control and efficiency. We also looked at a range of needs data. One area we looked at was the pattern of common assessment delivery. Common assessments – or CAFs are completed by professionals when they identify a child has additional needs but which are not severe enough to warrant high level interventions such as social care interventions. The map below shows the pattern of CAF completion.



Number of CAFs completed in each postcode area

This high percentage of assessments being completed in the postcode areas of HR1, HR2 and HR4 reflect our earlier findings when we looked closely at the matrix of vulnerability information, and demonstrate that CAFs are being offered to the most vulnerable families in these areas.

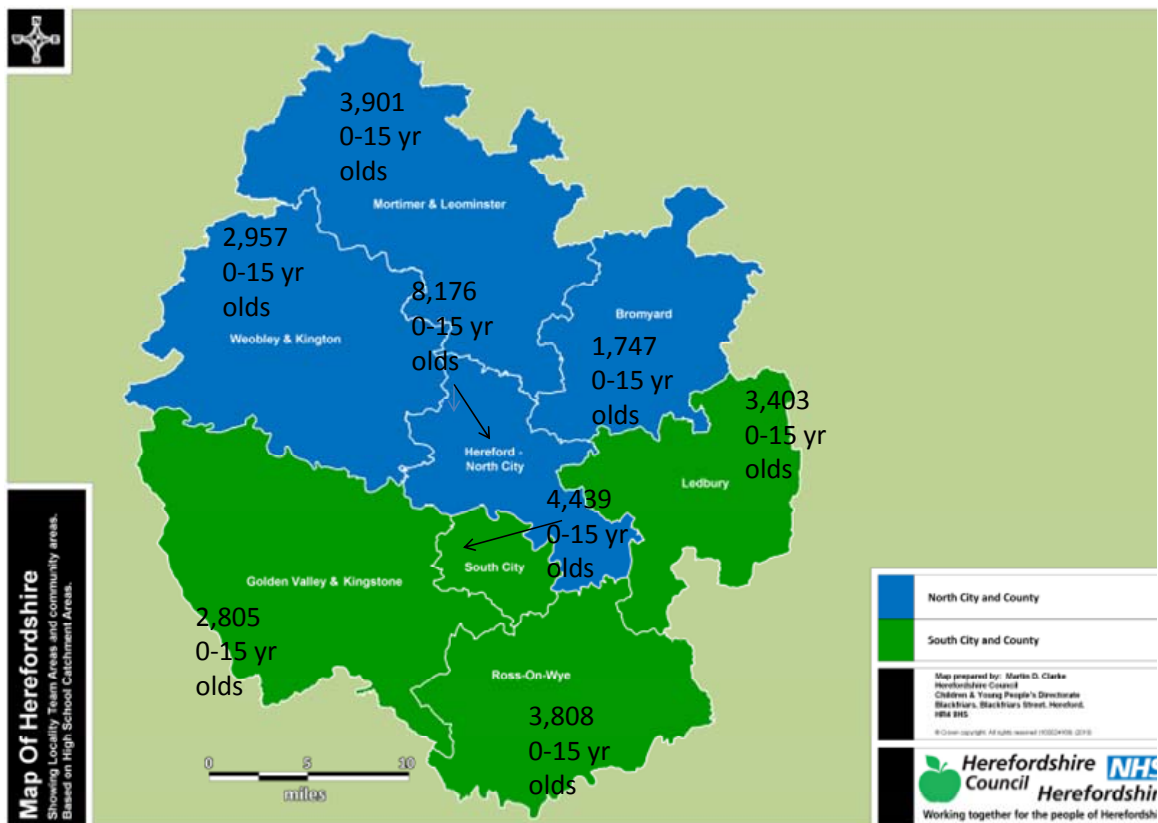
The Matrix of Vulnerability shows a number of key indicators about communities analysed by area. It is a mix of different data sources including:

- Index of multiple deprivation
- Health data
- Policing data
- Education data
- Worklessness data
- Access to services data
- Housing data
- Social Care data

The matrix gives each super output area and each ward a vulnerability score. This score is indicative of the levels of child vulnerability and is an indication of the levels of service response.

By matching this ward level data from the Matrix and the pattern of CAF completion to the natural community cluster areas we have been able to look at the needs presented in each area and this has led us to the recommendation that there should be 8 natural community areas. Within these 8 areas we plan to develop a ‘team around the Community’ approach.

This map shows the numbers of 0-15 year olds who are living in each of the 8 proposed Team around the Community cluster areas.

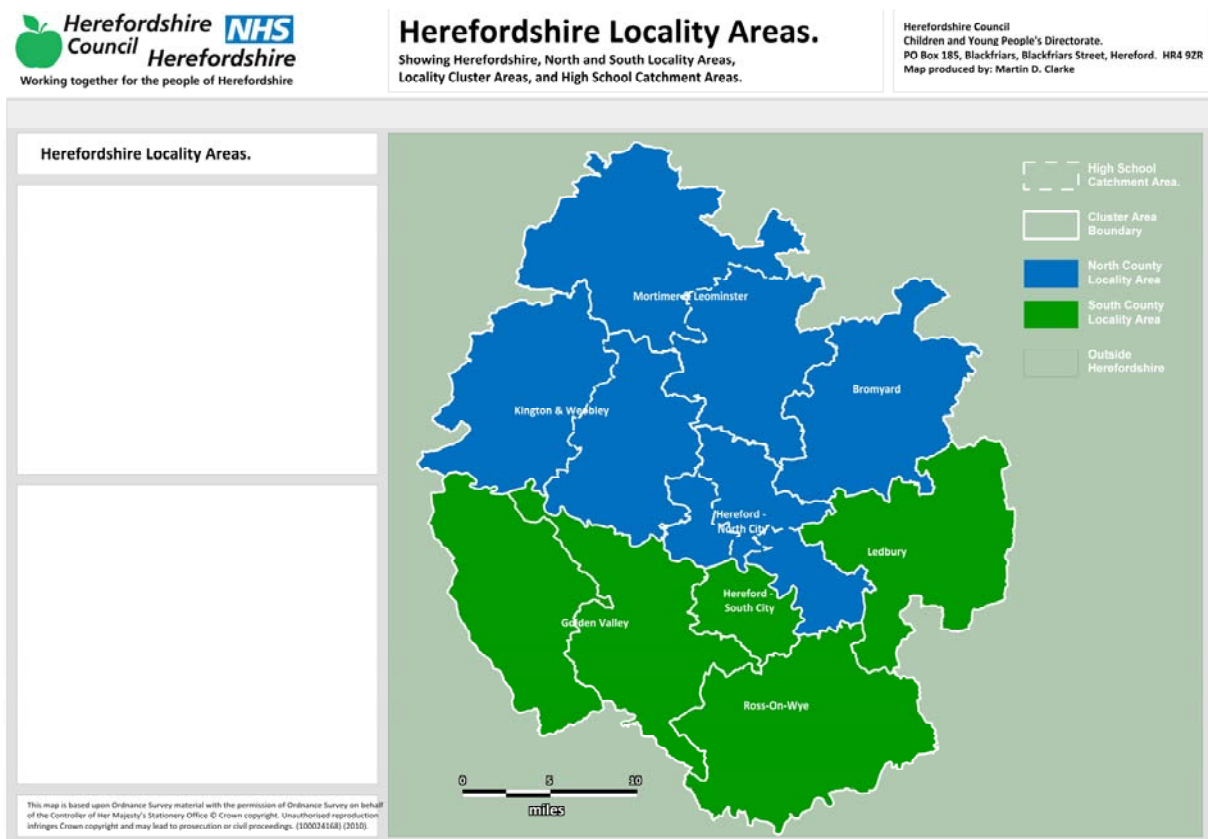


This information about the total numbers of children and young people, and indicators of the total numbers of vulnerable children, plus the numbers of CAF completed, have led us to conclude that we are able to deliver children’s services through 2 Locality Area Teams. As stated earlier, we concluded that for the purposes of the multi agency group working arrangements, the city is too large and the needs are too great to be considered for one multi agency meeting. We would therefore deliver services to the city across both Locality Area Teams. Other areas such as Mortimer and Weobley are not generating sufficient assessments at this stage to warrant separate meetings.

In practical terms then, we have concluded that in order to align children's services to the HPS model, we would need to deliver services through these 8 natural communities:

- Mortimer and Leominster
- Kington and Weobley
- Golden Valley
- Ross On Wye
- Ledbury
- Bromyard
- Hereford - North City
- Hereford – South City

Map showing proposed eight natural community areas:



We propose to implement a 'Team around the Community' approach in each of these identified communities. Current CAF data and experience of the two pilot areas suggests a volume of new CAFs expecting to peak at around 45 per month, with each area picking up on average 3-8 new CAFs every 6 weeks. Some of these will follow the established Team around the Child (TAC) approach and some will come to through the team around the community

This approach is already being piloted in Bromyard and in Leominster and the learning from this, together with the learning from other authorities implementing the MAG approach, will inform how we implement the approach in Herefordshire. We would like to establish the other 6 multi agency groups between now and April 2011.

Why have we taken this approach?

A significant number of children and young people have multiple additional needs that require co-ordinated, targeted responses from a number of services for varying periods of time. Many of these children and young people are now having their needs met through the Common Assessment framework process, which is used to identify needs and then as a planning tool to deliver the actions necessary to meet the needs.

Successful implementation of the CAF in Herefordshire has seen over 450 new assessments in the past 12 months. Currently around 45 new assessments are being completed each month. The range of partners engaging in the CAF process continues to grow and includes GPs, Police Officers, Health Visitors, youth workers, Connexions PAs, Children's Centres, and schools. Targeted CAF training and CAF refresher sessions, together with locality events for Lead Professionals are supporting practitioners to engage in the CAF process.

However, with this success come some challenges. Consultation with a number of CAF practitioners and Lead Professionals has identified concerns over the sustainability of the TAC approach now that the number of CAFs has grown.

These include:

- the growing number of TAC meetings that need to be arranged;
- the demand on staff to attend these meetings;
- the depth of local knowledge required to ensure that the right people are invited to the TAC meetings;
- the influence required to ensure that staff attend and take responsibility for actions from the TAC meetings.

Growing number of TAC meetings that need to be arranged

Growth of engagement in the CAF means that there are currently in excess of 500 active CAFs across the county. In the HR2 postcode area there are currently more than 150 active CAFs. Some Lead Professionals hold 12 -15 CAFs at any one time. These require a TAC meeting, often involving the same professionals or agencies. The amount of time and effort involved from the LP in planning, convening, managing, minuting and reviewing a TAC meeting is becoming unsustainable, often making it difficult to engage all of the appropriate agencies in a particular CAF TAC. Meetings are often cancelled at short notice for a range of reasons and this brings further pressure on the LP to try and rearrange the TAC at short notice. *'I spent hours arranging the meeting and at the last minute the mum said she couldn't make it as the boiler had broken down.'*

Demand on staff to attend these meetings

For each TAC meeting the LP requests a number of agencies to attend in order to consider the needs identified in the CAF. Capacity to attend several TAC meetings each week is becoming an increasing issue for our partners and colleagues and this results in an inconsistent approach. *'We really value the TAC meeting approach but we just don't have*

the staff to attend them all'. This is particularly an issue for the voluntary sector especially those who have few staff providing a countywide service.

Depth of local knowledge required to ensure that the right people are invited to the TAC meetings

The key to a successful TAC meeting is having a clear understanding of the needs identified in the CAF, considering what actions will be required to meet those needs, and then identifying those services who would potentially deliver those actions. The LP then invites these services to attend the TAC meeting. LPs have reported to us that when the needs identified in the CAF are clear and the actions clearly defined, it is often an easy task to invite the right people to the TAC meeting. However, they also say that when the needs are not so clear and are complex in nature, it is difficult to decide who to invite to the meeting. *'I don't always know what services are out there. It changes so often.'*

Influence required ensuring that staff attend and take responsibility for actions from the TAC meetings

LPs have said that sometimes they feel that they lack the influence to request that certain agencies attend a TAC meeting, and that when invited staff do not attend, they feel that they do not have the influence to ensure that they do attend. One Learning Mentor commented *'Who am I to tell another agency that they must come?'* It is not uncommon for invited staff not to attend meetings and this is frustrating for the LP and disempowering for families who attend the TAC.

The CAF and the Team around the community approach

In order to find a more effective way to bring professionals together to meet the needs of children, young people and families, and overcoming the issues outlined, work has been underway to develop a new approach. As part of the new Locality Working arrangements, we have been piloting a new approach which is focused on a 'team around the community', rather than the 'team around the child' approach.

Bromyard 'No Wrong Door' pilot is Highly Commended by first ever West Midlands Safeguarding Awards

The approach taken in Bromyard was to bring together a wide range of practitioners from both adult and children's services, who are working in the local community to meet the needs of children and young people. These agencies include voluntary providers, police, schools, GPs, church, housing, mental health services, adult services, youth service, Connexions, Health Visitor, Educational Welfare Officer and the children's centre, and effectively act as a 'Multi Agency Group' (MAG).

The MAG now meets every six weeks. The meeting has four distinct parts – (see Appendix A for process map of meeting).

In the first part of the meeting, practitioners can seek advice about children and young people that they have identified as having additional needs. As there is no formal consent at this stage, the group can offer advice and guidance to the practitioner. The group can agree a single agency response to the concern and the practitioner organises this outside of the meeting once consent is given by the family. The group may recommend that a CAF be offered to the family and the group will identify who the appropriate person will be to offer this.

In the second part of the meeting, practitioners bring completed CAFs with identified needs clearly set out. The practitioner has gained signed consent to discuss the needs of the family at this meeting. Agencies agree the support to be offered and are tasked with actions. The Lead Professional is agreed at this stage and they will liaise with the family to share with them the outcome of the meeting.

In the third part of the meeting, CAFs are reviewed and the Lead Professional outlines which needs have been met and which needs are unmet. This provides an opportunity to check that the intervention being delivered is continuing to have a positive outcome.

In the fourth part of the meeting, the group can discuss general issues for concern for example - problems with school attendance; problems with anti social behaviour in the town. The group will discuss the issue and work up a multi agency response.

What difference has the Bromyard Approach made?

Exploring the 'family CAF' is a main element of this pilot and the Think Family agenda is firmly embedded in the project. In each of the CAFs completed the needs of the parent have been identified and are being addressed by the MAG. Involving adult services in this way has made the pilot particularly valuable in forming pathways between adult and children's services.

A formal evaluation of the pilot will be presented in mid 2010. However GPs and other colleagues have already reported noticing a real difference in the way the partners are working together in the community.

Quote Dr Tait, GP practice in Bromyard, Herefordshire – *“This is a real opportunity to do something positive working with families in a co-ordinated manner before they reach crisis point. The talents of individual members of the team are organised in a way which supports and makes sense to families.”*

Quote Lead Professional from Children's Centre - *“the CAF is allowing us to get in there before the family/child's needs/issues spiral out of control. They are starting to feel they are being listened too and their needs/issues are trying to be met”.*

Quote from one of the CAFs - Young mum - *“knowing I don't have to cope on my own”*

These meetings will bring together the key agencies and professionals in a local area to consider the needs and responses for several children, families or groups. Lead professionals will have the option to convene a team around the child meeting for any child who has had a common assessment as they do now, or they can bring the assessment to the MAG for a response. This way of working also has the benefit of being able to link the support of different family members by different services that previously may not have known about or understood each others involvement. It will also mean that new solutions can be found for ongoing needs as the variety of agencies involved in the meetings will bring a wealth of different experience and knowledge of how to provide support or what services are available locally.

The MAG will include representatives from Police, schools, health including GPs and health visitors, Educational Welfare Service, Educational Psychology, Youth Workers, Connexions, Parenting and Family Support, Children's Centres, CAF Team, housing services, voluntary sector services, and adult services.

The meeting will be able to deploy resources to meet the needs of individual and cohorts of children and young people. Every child or family being supported by the multi agency meeting will have a Lead Professional to ensure that their views and needs are taken into account. When required, a package of support that is tailored to meet their needs will be agreed at the meeting, and then regularly reviewed. These meetings will also be the focus of the CAF step down approach where children and young people are coming to the end of Child in Need plans, and families need a package of support at this lower level.

Meetings will be organised and chaired through the Heads of Locality Services who will drive the approach at a strategic and operational level in both locality areas. Meetings would be held every 6 weeks in local areas and would typically last 2 hours. On average about 15 CAFs can be discussed at each meeting. The meetings are very business like and are very focused on the needs identified in the CAF rather than 'telling the families story'. It is very much a tasking and co-ordinating meeting where it is clearly focused on what action is needed, by whom, and by when. Information sharing and confidentiality are of paramount importance and consent is always checked before any discussions on individual families take place.

Feedback from Lead Professional network events

Following a series of consultation events with CAF practitioners and Lead Professionals, colleagues felt that this would be a welcomed approach. The following areas were key points raised:

- LPs value the TAC approach and welcome the option to continue with the TAC approach for those CAFs where the TAC is appropriate. Children's Centres and other early years settings particularly value the TAC as it is empowering for families and enable families to participate in a meaningful way.
- LPs particularly welcomed the opportunity to attend the MAG and share concerns with colleagues and the opportunity to take advice and guidance from colleagues.
- LPs who were holding a number of CAFs felt that the MAG would enable them to 'share the load' and would feel better supported and that the 'burden is shared'.
- LPs felt that the MAG approach would be really valuable when the needs identified in the CAF were complex and required a number of agencies to work together, especially where siblings were at different schools.
- LPs commented that the MAG approach would save them time in that they would not be organising so many individual TACs.

- LPs felt that as the MAGs would be chaired by Heads of Service, that they would be seen as 'credible and would have clout'. The Chair would be able to ensure that the meetings were conducted in a professional, confidential manner and would be able to ensure that actions agreed upon were delivered.
- LPs wondered about the capacity of the meetings in terms of the numbers of children each meeting could discuss, especially in the South City area which generates many CAFs.
- LPs were concerned about confidentiality and some partners were unsure about information sharing rules and responsibilities.
- LPs who were supporting large numbers of CAFs welcomed this approach as it was felt that the TAC approach was no longer sustainable.
- LPs felt that the TAC approach should always be an option and that it should be the judgement of the LP to decide whether to hold a TAC or bring the CAF to the MAG.
- LPs welcomed the part of the meeting where concerns could be raised about groups of children or young people who were a cause of concern e.g. groups of young people drinking alcohol in the park; concerns about a particular group of girls in school with body image issues; concerns about poor attendance in a school. A multi agency approach to these issues was felt to be valuable.

Conclusion

The new locality arrangements are being established to ensure we can provide the best possible response to children, young people and their families when they need help. We need the widest possible engagement across the agencies to ensure success with this approach. We have had significant support to date, but we do need to hear from you in order that we can take account of your views as we develop these approaches.

We invite you to return the attached questionnaire, and tell us what you think.

Please return the questionnaire to Michelle Price by **22 September 2010**, either by email: michelleprice@herefordshire.gov.uk or to: Herefordshire Council. PO Box 185, Blackfriars, Hereford, HR4 9ZR

The feedback will be discussed at the No Wrong Door Delivery Model task and finish group and then at the Children's Trust Management group and we will feed the results of this consultation to you in the Autumn.

Thanking you in anticipation of your feedback.

**Appendix A
Process Map for Multi Agency Group meetings**

