



**An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency**

# **BUSINESS PLAN 2014**

**January 2014**

## 1. Introduction

1.1. Following the enactment of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 Agency was established on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014 and is responsible for improving wellbeing and outcomes for children. It represents the most comprehensive reform of services for the development, welfare and protection of children and the support of families ever undertaken in Ireland. It is an ambitious move which brings together some 4,000 staffs who were previously employed within Children and Family Services of the Health Service Executive, the National Educational Welfare Board and the Family Support Agency.

1.2. The Child and Family Agency has responsibility for the following range of services:

- Child Welfare and Protection Services, including family support services
- Family Resource Centres and associated national programmes
- Early years (pre-school) Inspection Services
- Educational Welfare responsibilities including School completion programmes and Home School Liaison
- Domestic, sexual and gender based violence services
- Services related to the psychological welfare of children

The specific functions of the Agency, as set out in the legislation, may be summarised as follows:

- Support and promote the development, welfare and protection of children, including the provision of care and protection for children in circumstances where their parents have not been able to, or are unlikely to, provide the care that a child needs
- Support and encourage the effective functioning of families, to include the provision of preventative family support services aimed at promoting the welfare of children; care and protection for victims of domestic, sexual or gender based violence, whether in the context of the family or otherwise; and services relating to the psychological welfare of children and their families.
- Ensure that every child in the State attends school or otherwise receives an education and provide educational welfare services to support and monitor children's attendance, participation and retention in education
- In making decisions in relation to these functions have regard to the best interests of the child in all matters and in performing its functions in respect of an individual child under the Child Care Act, 1991 or the Adoption Act, 2010, regard the best interests of the child as the paramount consideration
- Maintain and develop support services, including in local communities
- Undertake or commission research relating to its functions
- Facilitate and promote enhanced inter agency co-operation to ensure that services for children are co-ordinated and provide an integrated response to the needs of children and their families
- Collaborate with any person that the Agency considers appropriate to the discharge of its functions

- Provide information or advice, or make proposals, to the Minister on matters relating to its functions
- Demonstrate high standards of performance, transparency and accountability
- Use the resources available to it in the most beneficial, effective and efficient manner
- Ensuring robust and transparent inspection arrangements for pre-school services
- National oversight of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence services

A full list of services is provided in Appendix 1.

1.3. This Business Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements Section 46 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013; and in response to the Letter of Determination from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs to the Chair of the Board, dated December 20<sup>th</sup> 2013. The Board of the Agency is responsible for the oversight of the development of corporate strategy, annual budgets and business plans. Accordingly this plan has been presented to, and approved by, the Board of the Agency prior to it being submitted to the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs.

1.4. The Child and Family Agency provides a unique opportunity to co-ordinate an enhanced range of services building on the strengths of families and meeting the needs of children. As set out in an appendix to this document, the Child and Family Agency has direct responsibility for a very specific range of services. In addition, the Agency will wish to work with partners and stakeholders advocating for children to ensure equitable access to services across the full range of provision. This will require effective joint working partnership arrangements with other services, particularly health, education, justice and local government.

1.5. The Agency operates under the Child and Family Agency Act 2013. Children are at the heart of the legislation and families are seen as the foundation of a strong healthy community where children can flourish. Partnership and co-operation in the delivery of seamless services to children and families are central to the Act.

## **2. Purpose, Vision, Values**

2.1. In preparation for the establishment of the new Agency a process of consultation and reflection was embarked upon during 2013. From this statements of purpose and vision have been devised as well as a set of core values. Together these will inform the strategic focus of the Agency. They will also form the basis for discussion and consultation to inform the Agency's first three year Corporate Plan. Thus the shared purpose, vision and values of the Agency will be developed and refined further, in the light of experience and in response to the consultative exercise launch on January 30<sup>th</sup> and set out in the document entitled 'Towards a Statement of Purpose'. It is noted that this first version was the consequence of detailed discussions in Children and Family Services, HSE; Family Support Agency and the National Educational Welfare Board.

## **Our Purpose:**

We are committed to putting the needs of children first by:

- Keeping children and families safe from harm
- Enabling children and families to make good decisions about their health and lifestyle
- Helping children and families to engage in education
- Helping children to develop as active citizens, capable of economic independence

## **Our Vision:**

- Children and families are integral to and valued in their communities and by all agencies with whom we will work in partnership
- Children and families are consulted on decisions that affect them and will influence policy development
- Families are supported to set clear boundaries and maintain loving environments
- Evidence based support services are available ranging from early intervention to more intense services in environments and premises fit for purpose
- Staff feel valued and contribute to the development and delivery of services of the highest possible quality
- Staff will be reflective and self evaluating professionals with opportunities to shape best practice
- Decisions and authority will operate at the most local practical level

## **Our Values:**

The day to day commitment of the agency will be judged on the capacity to translate values into behaviours demonstrating unity of purpose, loyalty and responsiveness to the needs of children, courage in the pursuit of values and open minded innovation to identify the most effective approach.

Our core values are:

*Respect* – We always treat everyone, children, families and colleagues with dignity and consideration

*Integrity* - We will be reliable and trustworthy in the way we carry out our work by:

- Adhering to the highest standards of professionalism, ethics and personal responsibility.
- Placing a high value on importance of confidentiality.
- Acting with conviction and taking responsibility for our decisions

*Fairness* – We commit to creating an environment where the voice of the child and young person is cherished, regardless of background and needs

*Collaboration* – We will foster integrated ways of working by:

- Recognising and valuing the contribution that children, families, staff and carers make
- Fostering a culture of agencies working together

*Compassion* – Children, families and colleagues will be treated with care and supported when needed

### **3. Priorities for 2014**

#### **3.1 Accountability**

3.1.1. Considerable work and development is required for the Agency to reach maturity. In particular the following activity will be completed:

- Scheme of delegation established and reviewed
- Governance structures, processes and associated risk register established
- Development of the budget system to enhance transparency and accountability with the aim of establishing more detailed activity based costs related to the main services.
- The review and the re-statement of the Child and Family Agency reform programme prioritised in the context of the consultation relating to the production of the Child and Family Agency first corporate three year plan.

All of the above are aimed at improving the quantity, quality and clarity of information made available to the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Oireachtas. The aim is to establish an Agency that welcomes inquiries and uses scrutiny as an aid to service improvement. The Board of the Agency is committed to best governance practice as set out in Section 21 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013. It will establish audit and risk committee/s in order to oversee the work of the Agency.

#### **Priority 1: Accountability**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. Scheme of delegation established and reviewed	Q1
2. Governance code and structure in place	Q3
3. Risk register established and operational	Q4
4. Budget development plan published	Q4

5. Re-issue and review child care reform programme	Q2
6. Audited risk arrangements in place accountable to the agency board and its sub-committees	Q3

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3.1.2. The Agency is an improving and learning organisation and needs to know where it is delivering high quality services and where improvement is needed. As a well governed organisation it will have internal systems in place to enable it to assess standards, identify areas for improvement and provide assurance to the public on its areas of key responsibility. Key to continuous improvement is a quality assurance and performance framework that enables managers and staff review standards and performance of work against internal policy to inform targeted improvement through management and training interventions. To this end a Quality Assurance and Performance Framework will be developed. This Framework will set out our responsibilities and relationships with all bodies who have an oversight or regulatory relationship with us, i.e. HIQA, Ombudsman for Children, Ombudsman, and National Review Panel. Information generated by the framework will inform the direction of business and corporate planning.

The Framework will:

- Develop national policy guidance on the audit and performance framework
- Develop and implement national audit methodology and system
- Inform business planning key targets for policy development, operational processes, staff development and training
- Establish process to monitor and assess implementation of external recommendations regarding management systems and practice
- Provide performance information to the DCYA on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis, or as directed by the Minister

This will provide the Agency with quality assurance and audit processes in addition to meeting the inspection, regulatory and legislative requirements which will govern the new Child and Family Agency.

**Priority 2: Quality Assurance**

Outputs	Timeline
1. Performance Framework established	Q4
2. Reporting cycle agreed and monitoring requirements met	Q3
3. A system of performance audits and quality reviews in place	Q3

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## 3.2 Partnership Working

- 3.2.1. The Child and Family Agency is committed to working in partnership with children and young people, families, communities and other service providers from the community, statutory and educational sectors in order to improve outcomes and opportunities for all of Ireland's children.
- 3.2.2. The Child and Family Agency will work in close co-operation with the Health Service Executive with regard to the health and wellbeing of children. A Memorandum of Understanding and a Joint Protocol for Interagency Cooperation have been put in place to facilitate this process. This is particularly important in the promotion of client-centred, seamless working with, for example, public health nurses and speech and language therapists. In addition, there will be increased cooperation and collaboration with educational and community partners arising from the amalgamation of Children and Family Services with the National Educational Board and the Child and Family Agency.
- 3.2.3. In addition the Child and Family Agency is committed to supporting a continued roll out of Children Services Committees ensuring the most effective possible joint working among all those who provide services to children.
- 3.2.4. As a learning organisation a research capacity will be developed to ensure that practice is closely aligned to evidence and theoretical foundations. A number of research initiatives will be initiated. This will include work with the Centre for Effective Services to increase the current practice knowledge base of the Agency and to further service improvement.

### Priority 3: Partnership

Outputs	Timeline
1. Review of Memorandum of Understanding with HSE	Q4
2. Review of Joint Protocol with HSE	Q4
3. Development of research capacity and commissioned research activity with CES	Q2
4. Agency participation/facilitation and, where appropriate, leadership of the development of Children's Services Committees	Q4

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### 3.3. Workforce Development

3.3.1. The initial number of staff (headcount) that have transferred to the Child and Family Agency in January 2014 from the HSE was 3,837. These numbers comprise of Social Workers, Social Care Workers, Family Support Staff and Pre-school Inspectors. Also, all staff from the National Education and Welfare Board and the Family Support Agency transferred to the Agency.

3.3.2. A workforce development strategy will be produced in consultation with DCYA and the relevant trade unions. This will ensure clarity of responsibility regarding professional and staff development, career structure and performance support for key staff groups including:

- Clerical and administrative staff
- Family Support Staff
- Education Welfare
- Social Work
- Social Care
- Staff working in the community
- Managers

In taking forward key aspects of the child welfare and protection reform three sub priorities have been identified:

3.3.3 The development of a guaranteed and protected one year induction programme for every newly qualified social worker in each given year. Discussions have been initiated with IMPACT Trade Union. In 2013 there were 202 qualifying social workers. This scheme would include protected workload, weekly tutorial / mentoring provision

3.3.4 Maternity cover: In due course the above increase in the complement of social workers will enable sufficient time to cover maternity leave and retain staffing standards at their present level. In 2014 arrangements will be put in place to provide an appropriate level of maternity cover to meet the exigencies of the service

3.3.5 A review of clerical and administrative support and associated structure is being taken forward.

#### Priority 4: Workforce Development

Outputs	Timeline
1. An agreed workforce development Strategy	Q4
2. Clear partnership arrangements with the relevant professional bodies	Q3
3. An agreed graduate social work scheme with recruitment commencing	Q4



4. Agreed maternity cover in defined Circumstance	Q2
5. Review of clerical and administrative Staff	Q3
6. Implementation of lead recommendations following the review of clerical and administrative staff	Q4

Further details of the above initiatives and associated costings are contained in Appendix 2 to this plan.

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### **3.4 Family Support**

- 3.4.1. Family is the most important influence in a child's life. From birth, children depend on parents and family to protect them and provide for their needs. Children thrive when parents are able to actively support their positive growth and development. Sometimes parents need help, support and additional resources to do this. Meitheal is a model of working that aims to provide services to children in an integrated and coordinated way. The Agency has approved Meitheal as the national practice model for agencies that work with children, young people and families and it will be implemented in 2014.
- 3.4.2. A strategy for family support will be developed to complement the DCYA National Policy Framework. The strategy will address the alignment of the Family Resource Centres with the overall Agency approach to prevention and early intervention and the integration of the community sector into provisions of the Service Delivery Framework.
- 3.4.3. Reflecting the transition of the former Family Support Agency programmes into the Child and Family Agency, a focus for the Agency in 2014 will be on the integration of these programmes within the new structure. The alignment of this activity will be considered along with the other Community Sector organisations (see section 3.12)
- 3.4.4. A key priority for the Child and Family Agency will be to build on the significant strengths of the Family Resource Centres in meeting the Agency's mandate for community-based early intervention and family support. In that regard, the development of family support as a preventative and early intervention strategy will feature strongly in 2014, with particular regard to the roll-out of the Child and Family Agency's National Service Delivery Framework and alignment of the Family Resource Centre Programme within the local community interventions.

### Priority 5: Family Support

Outputs	Timeline
1. Quality review of implementation of family support processes in each Area	Q4
2. Integration of Family Resource Centres within the Service Delivery Framework	Q4

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### 3.5 Early Childhood Care and Education

3.5.1 Parents and families form the foundation for later life by nurturing and teaching children during their early years in a safe and secure environment and making sure they are ready to learn when they enter school. The Agency will monitor services provided to children in early childhood care and education settings to support the delivery of high standards including that the people working with children in early childhood care and education settings have the best possible training, qualifications, support and advice.

3.5.2. The focus in the Early Years sector will be on quality assurance, workforce development and outcomes for children. The Early Years Inspection Service will operate on a national rather than a local or regional basis. This is to ensure that resources are deployed to best effect and a consistent service is provided.

3.5.3. A number of areas of action have been prioritised:

- Strengthening the national Early Years inspection system
- Application of new protocols and standards to underpin regulatory compliance and enforcement
- Introduction of a registration system

3.5.4. The new registration system, rather than a notification system, will be introduced in response to an amendment to Part 7 of the Child Care Act 1991

- Standards-based inspections will commence in 2014 supported by work processes, business documents and guidance documents.
- Development of an I.C.T system to support the inspection process and facilitate payment of registration fees online
- The inspection function will be strengthened by the appointment of seven additional inspectors
- Inspection reports will be posted on the website in a timely manner.

### Priority 6: Early Childhood Care and Education

Outputs	Timeline
1. Registration system operational	Q3
2. Standards-based inspections in place	Q3
3. ICT system in place to support the inspection process	Q2
4. Additional inspectors appointed	Q4
5. Publication of inspection reports available online in a timely manner	Q3

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### 3.6 Child Welfare and Protection

- 3.6.1. Where there is a concern about the welfare or safety of a child, a referral is made to the Social Work Service. Approximately 42,000 such referrals were received in 2013 dividing approximately at half between each type of concern. Each referral is dealt with in line with Children First National Guidance. Referrals are prioritised and an immediate service is provided to children at high risk. Appropriate responses are developed in line with the assessed needs of each child. The Agency will continue to provide appropriate timely responses to all child welfare and protection referrals received.
- 3.6.2. The Agency's National Service Delivery Framework will be implemented across the child welfare and protection services. The purpose of the framework is to provide a responsive, efficient and effective service to families in need. It will deliver services that are appropriate to difficulties faced by the family, and interventions proportionate to their problems. Staff will be supported to assess risk and make decisions regarding children in an evidence based environment, where certainty is not guaranteed. The Framework will promote efficient community engagement and effective working across professional groups and agencies.

This framework includes:

- Intervention thresholds to trigger different service response and timeframes
- Standardised approach to dealing with referrals at intake stage
- Standardised approach to assessment at all stages
- Clarity on differentiating between referrals requiring a family support intervention and one needing a child protection assessment/intervention
- Clarity on diversion of referrals to community and commissioned sector
- Consistent practice in the notification and support of a child on the Child Protection Notification System
- Access by the Gardai to the Child Protection Notification System when it is fully operational

**Priority 7: Service Delivery Framework**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. Intervention thresholds introduced and reviewed	Q1
2. Standardised intake and assessment processes introduced and reviewed	Q2
3. System for diversion to community and voluntary sector in place	Q3
4. National Child Protection Notification System in place	Q2

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3.6.3. As part of the ongoing reform agenda the Agency has committed to develop capacity of child protection services to appropriately and effectively address the needs of children who present in emergency situations outside of normal working hours. Services currently provide out-of-hours emergency placements for children at risk in the greater Dublin area through the Crisis Intervention Service (CIS) and throughout the rest of the country through the Emergency Place of Safety Service. This service is to be expanded to allow the Gardai to consult with a social work service out of hours. The service will operate as follows:

- The Dublin based Crisis Intervention Service (CIS) will operate as a national contact point for the Gardai
- The CIS will offer consultation and advice to the Gardai
- When necessary the CIS will contact local on-call social workers
- Local on-call social workers will deal with the situation by telephone on by way of a call out as required.

**Priority 8: Emergency Out of Hours Service**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. National contact point available to Gardai	Q3
2. Local on-call social workers available to respond throughout the country	Q4

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3.6.4. The Child Care Information System (NCCIS) will provide standardised business processes through the service. Rollout of the NCCIS will commence in Q1 with user acceptance testing in a selected site. The system will commence its go live in stages from Q4. This will include functionality and standardised forms for referral and assessment, child protection, child welfare/family support, children in care and family welfare conferencing.

**Priority 9: Child Care Information System**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. NCCIS testing and user acceptance in test site completed	Q1
2. NCCIS – planning for full roll out commenced	Q4

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3.6.5 The Agency will revise and implement consistent child protection procedures in line with the national guidance Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children, in order to enhance the overall safety and protection of children at risk.

3.6.6. Reform will include a ‘whole systems approach’, and further to the enactment of the Children First legislation, will provide greater clarity in relation to the respective roles and responsibilities of all services and professionals working with children. This will address the major culture change required in planning and delivering services to children and their families. An impact assessment of the implication of the pending legislation will also be undertaken.

**Priority 10: Children First**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. Quality review of consistent implementation in each Area	Q4
2. Impact assessment of pending legislation completed and reported to DCYA	Q1

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**3.7. Alternative Care**

3.7.1 The Child and Family Agency has statutory responsibility to provide for the protection and care of children where their parents have not given or are unlikely to be able to give adequate protection and care. There are over 6,000 children in statutory care, with over 90% of these in foster care placements living in a family setting. The Agency will continue to work with these children to ensure that all children are placed in the most appropriate care

setting and work towards ensuring that all children in care have an allocated social worker and a written care plan.

- 3.7.2. Approximately 1200 young people are currently in receipt of aftercare services. The support provided can be financial assistance to remain living with foster carers or in supported accommodation in a range of settings, for other financial support and the advice and guidance of an aftercare worker. The Agency will ensure that all young care leavers receive an assessment of their aftercare needs prior to before leaving care. An implementation plan for aftercare will be fully rolled out in 2014.
- 3.7.3. A national strategy for residential care will be developed and implemented. This will set out key priorities will include a review of the balance between direct provision and commissioned services. In addition a Practice Handbook for alternative care will be produced and implemented.
- 3.7.4. Special Care is provided to children and young people, who are in need of protection and would usually be placed in a special care unit. The purpose of Special Care is to provide young people with a positive experience of a placement in secure care including the timely delivery of care, planned intervention and placement plans. A number of initiatives will be undertaken in 2014 including a single entry point for all applications to Special Care with connectivity to existing Regional resources; and improved access to step down placements. There will be a national specialist multidisciplinary/clinical team for children in special care.

**Priority 11: Alternative Care**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. National strategy for residential care completed and implemented	Q4
2. A Practice Handbook for alternative care will be produced and implemented	Q1
3. A single entry point for all applications to Special Care	Q1
4. Improved access to step down placements	Q4
5. National multidisciplinary team for children in special care	Q1
6. Aftercare implementation plan rolled out	Q4

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### 3.8 Adoption Services

- 3.8.1. Adoption services will be re-organised under a national management structure. Policy implementation and practice, resource distribution and deployment will be standardised nationally. A review of equity of access to services will be undertaken. The Agency will oversee, monitor and report on the fostering to adoption process.

#### Priority 12: Adoption Services

Outputs	Timeline
1. National Manager in place	Q1
2. Regional managers reporting to National Manager	Q1
3. National policies and procedures in place	Q4
4. Review of equity of access undertaken	Q2
5. National applications list introduced and maintained	Q2

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### 3.9 Educational Welfare

- 3.9.1 The constitutional right of every child to an education is enshrined in the functions of the Agency under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000, as is parents' right to educate their child in places other than recognised schools.
- 3.9.2 The State fulfils its obligations to provide for the education of the great majority of children through the formal school system. Engagement with school is one of the most important protective factors for children. The education welfare intervention model *One Child, One Team, One Plan* will be aligned with overall assessment processes under the Service Delivery Framework, including Meitheal which will have a common assessment approach.
- 3.9.3 School attendance, participation and retention targets will be developed with a view to integration and alignment with other relevant Agency functions, and particularly in line with the objectives of the DEIS initiative in combating educational disadvantage through the Home-School-Community Liaison scheme and School Completion Programme.
- 3.9.4 Support for schools will be enhanced through the provision of Guidelines on the Development of School Attendance Strategies.
- 3.9.5 Guidelines on assessment of education in places other than recognised schools will be reviewed and revised.

### Priority 13: Educational Welfare

Outputs	Timeline
1. Educational welfare intervention is a constituent part of the Service Delivery Framework	Q4
2. School attendance, participation and retention targets integrated and aligned with other relevant Agency functions	Q4
3. Publication of Guidelines for Schools on the Development of School Attendance Guidelines	Q4
4. Revised guidelines on assessment of education in places other than recognised schools	Q4

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### 3.10 Domestic, Sexual and Gender based Violence Services

3.10.1 Domestic, sexual and gender based violence are serious health, social and human rights issues that affect people across society. The majority of victims are women; men are sometimes affected but children are always affected when violence occurs in the home. There will be national oversight of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence services, augmented by Regional co-ordination and local management where appropriate. These services are part of a pan-Government commitment to the overall National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender based Violence, coordinated by the Department of Justice and Equality (COSC).

### Priority 14: Domestic, Sexual and Gender based Violence Services

Outputs	Timeline
1. System of national oversight in place	Q1
2. Regional co-ordination and local management arrangements in place and reviewed	Q1

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### 3.11 Psychology Services

3.11.1. Children's emotional and psychological wellbeing are essential to achieving positive outcomes. A strategic plan for psychology services will be prepared and implemented.



### Priority 15: Psychology Services

Outputs	Timeline
1. Strategic plan developed, implemented and reviewed	Q4

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### 3.12 Community Sector

3.12.1 The Child and Family Agency is committed to working with a vibrant and effective community sector. Knowledge of the needs and strengths of local communities and the capacity to reach out to those most vulnerable are among the considerable strengths within the sector. Building on these strengths and encouraging collaborative working the emphasis will be on service delivery which has the most effective impact.

3.12.2. A value for money review of commissioned services will be undertaken. This review will ensure that:

- All funding of service providers is in line with meeting statutory obligations and stated Government and Agency priorities
- All existing payments are aligned with the correct provisions of the new legislation
- A recording system is in place for the correct statutory provision under which funds are being made available and that the requisite legal requirements are built into contractual arrangements
- There is transparency in the criteria for commissioning services and there is full accountability for all public funds provided for specified purposes

The review will be undertaken, guided by a three point test against Agency priorities and each provider will be assessed using these tests. These are:

- Efficiency options that do not change the nature of the existing service but are focused on it being delivered more efficiently and effectively
- Transformation to change the nature of the service delivery
- Stop / reduce options that stop or reduce the level of service provided or reduce the number of people it is made available to

This will enhance the Agency's commitment to accountability, value for money and positive outcomes for children and families; and will form the basis of an overall Commissioning Strategy.

## Priority 16: Community Sector

Outputs	Timeline
1. Funded services are provided in line with Agency priorities	Q4
2. Funding arrangements concur with correct provisions of the new legislation	Q4
3. A recording system is in place to record the correct statutory provision under which funds are being made available	Q4
4. A value for money review is undertaken	Q4
5. A Commissioning Strategy is developed	Q4

A summary of all parties, with outputs and timeframes is set out in Appendix 3.

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## 4. Income and Expenditure

### 4.1 Funding Position for 2014

4.1.1 The Agency's gross non-capital provision for 2014 is €602.3 million. This is funded in part by an estimated €20.7 million in income from superannuation, pension-related and other sources. Therefore, the Agency's net non-capital determination for 2014 is €581.6 million.

4.1.2 Table A sets out the funding allocation for 2014 and identifies the funding allocated to the services that were brought together as part of the new Agency.

<b>Table A - Budget Framework</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>Change</b>
	<b>€m</b>	<b>€m</b>	<b>€m</b>
Child and Family Services ( transferred from HSE) *	540.321	536.333	-3.988
Family Support Agency	24.294	21.564	-2.730
National Educational Welfare Board	8.753	8.318	-0.435
School Completion Programme	26.456	24.756	-1.700
<b>Sub Total - Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>599.824</b>	<b>590.971</b>	<b>-8.853</b>
<b>2014 Allocations per Letter of Determination for 2014</b>			
Child Welfare and Protection Reform		6.700	6.700
Pre School Services		0.500	0.500
<b>Agency Establishment and Other Costs</b>			
Centre for Effective Services		0.200	0.200
Children's Services Committee		0.800	0.800
Adoption Services		0.400	0.400
Replacement for Lottery Funding		0.400	0.400
Agency Establishment		2.312	2.312
<b>2014 Allocations</b>		<b>11.312</b>	

<b>Total Gross Expenditure</b>		<b>602.283</b>	
Superannuation		-9.070	
PRD		-10.139	
Miscellaneous Income		-1.473	
<b>2014 Income (Appropriations in Aid)</b>		<b>-20.682</b>	
<b>Net Expenditure</b>		<b>581.601</b>	

\*(Budget transferred from HSE is shown after deduction of the 2014 HRA and ECF targets of €8.7m)

4.1.3 The allocation for 2014 is summarised in Table B setting out the allocations by Pay, Non-Pay and Income for each of the main service areas.

<b>Table B - Child and Family Agency - 2014 Allocation</b>	<b>Pay</b>	<b>Non Pay</b>	<b>Gross Allocation</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Net Allocation</b>
	<b>€m</b>	<b>€m</b>	<b>€m</b>	<b>€m</b>	<b>€m</b>
Child and Family Services	228.520	319.125	547.645	-20.425	527.220
Family Support	0.797	20.767	21.564		21.564
National Educational Welfare	5.545	2.773	8.318	-0.257	8.061
School Completion Programme	-	24.756	24.756		24.756
<b>Totals</b>	<b>234.862</b>	<b>367.421</b>	<b>602.283</b>	<b>20.682</b>	<b>581.601</b>

4.1.4 The establishment of the Agency has given the opportunity to modernise the budget allocation arrangements. A new Chart of Accounts and Cost Centre structure have been established to reflect the requirements of the Agency. The opportunity has been taken to develop a costing basis that reflects the new organisation and service delivery structure. This work is currently ongoing and the intention is to provide more detailed descriptions of spend with a view to, in due course, more detailed activity costs.

4.1.5 The Pay budget of €234.862 million funds staff costs across the following main service areas:

- Social Workers and Support Staff
- Care Workers and Residential Staff
- Education Welfare Officers
- Management and Administrative Staff

4.1.6 The Non- Pay Budget of €367.421 million will be used to provide services across the following main areas:

- Foster Care and After Care Allowances
- Grants to the community sector including grants to provide services responding to Domestic Sexual Gender based Violence
- Schools Completion Programme
- Grants to family resource centres and associated national programmes
- Educational Welfare Services
- Legal costs
- Residential centres and other costs

4.1.7 Income principally relates to Superannuation and Pension Levy related deductions. There is a miscellaneous income target of 1.5m.

## **4.2 Expenditure position**

4.2.1 The establishment of the Agency has provided the opportunity to deliver services that ensures better quality, more effectiveness and ensure value for money. The Agency will put in place plans to ensure that savings can be achieved through more efficient use of resources and through elimination of duplication. For example, the Agency is utilising shared service arrangements with the Health Service Executive for a range of financial, human resource and administrative services.

4.2.2 Under Section 85 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013, the Agency acquires all assets and liabilities relating to Children and Family Services in HSE at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2013. The identification of any relevant expenditures relating to this section will be quantified in 2014.

4.2.3 The Child and Family Services element of the Agency that was part of HSE in 2013, has an estimated expenditure for existing services of €19 million above allocated budget, which needs to be addressed in 2014. Expenditure relating to Legal services represents €15 million of this figure and the remaining €4 million relates to 2013 productivity savings required under the Haddington Road Agreement. These savings will be required in addition to measures to address the 2014 productivity targets and financial pressures.

4.2.4 The Agency will address these financial challenges in 2014 to ensure that it remains within its allocated funding. These challenges are summarised in Table C and are dealt with in more detail overleaf.

<b>Table C - Summary of financial challenge to be addressed in 2014</b>	<b>€m</b>
HRA target from 2013	4.0
HRA target 2014	7.9
Employment Control Framework 2014	0.8
Legal and related expenditure	15.0
Demographic pressures	3.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>31.2</b>

#### 4.2.5 **Pay and pay related savings (Haddington Road Agreement and Employment Control Framework)**

4.2.5.1 As the Haddington Road Agreement productivity savings requirement was not fully met in 2013, €4 million remains to be identified in 2014.

4.2.5.2 For 2014, the Agency is required to make additional savings of €7.9 million relating to the Haddington Road Agreement.

4.2.5.3 The Employment Control Framework savings target for 2014 of €0.8 million brings the overall savings required for Pay and Pay related savings to €12.7 million.

4.2.5.4 The achievable savings, including pay reductions for those earning over €65k and additional hours, have been calculated at €4.5 million for 2014. This includes €3.5 million to be achieved from WTE savings resulting from additional hours for Social Work and administrative staff. This saving will be difficult to achieve but plans are being developed for implementation.

#### 4.2.6 **Legal Expenditure**

4.2.6.1 The Agency will be required to address expenditures above budget of €15 million relating to legal and related services in 2014.

4.2.6.2 Measures to control expenditure in this area have already been put in place. Counsel may be instructed only if authorised by the Chief Executive. Advices can only be commissioned by the Management Team. Regions will be expected to manage within a specific budget allocation and a register of Guardians ad Litem is to be drawn up. However, additional legislative measures to address the costs of Guardians ad Litem will be required to enable significant further efficiencies in the overall expenditure to be achieved. This should be pursued in the context of the overall reform of the family courts and a commitment to a family centred less adversarial approach.

## 4.2.7 Demographic Pressures

4.2.7.1 The demand for the services of the Agency continues to increase. The following are some of the drivers of demand and cost

- The population of under 18s has increased by 11% from 2006 to 2011. (*Source: CSO, Census 2011*)
- Expressed as a percentage of those aged 15-64, Ireland had the highest proportion of persons aged under 15 in the EU (32.5%) in 2012. (*Source: CSO, Measuring Ireland's Progress 2012*)
- The number of children in care is increasing reflecting this underlying growth in the young population. Over the past two years there has been a c.5% increase in the number of children in care to 6,475 in November 2013

4.2.7.2 The number of children in care rose by 171 for the 11 months to November 2013. It is anticipated that this figure will continue to increase in 2014 in line with previous years, based on the underlying increase in population of those under 18 years. An estimated increase of 200 children in care results in additional annualised payments of €3.5 million.

## 4.3 Approach to meeting the financial challenge in 2014

4.3.1 The Agency is facing a considerable financial challenge as set out above in 2014. To address this, cost containment plans together with enhanced controls are being put in place. Budgets are currently being finalised for each of the main service areas and these will be used as the basis for monitoring financial performance in 2014.

4.3.2 2014 remains a year of development for the Agency. The development of a new financial reporting system and budget base are necessary building blocks to ensure better monitoring of resources in 2014. These are currently being put in place and will be refined through out the year.

4.3.3 The plans to address the savings required in 2014 are being finalised with specific focus on the following areas

- Additional controls relating to the approval of expenditure on legal services which will be implemented (Target €5.0m)
- Cost Containment measures including savings in the area of procurement and value for money. (Target €10.0m)
- Additional savings required (further Haddington Road Agreement savings) (Target €6.2m)
- Additional measures required to address Legal and related expenditures (Target €10.0m)

<b>Table D - Summary of savings plans to be implemented in 2014</b>	<b>€m</b>
1. Initiatives to reduce Legal expenditure	5.0
2. Cost Containment initiatives and initial HRA savings	10.0
3. Additional HRA savings required	6.2
4. Additional measures required to address Legal and related expenditure	10.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>31.2</b>

#### 4.4 Capital

<b>Table E - Capital</b>	<b>€m</b>
ICT - NCCIS	0.7
Estates Projects	5.1
Minor Capital	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.8</b>

##### 4.4.1 ICT

The National Child Care Information System Project (NCCIS) is being implemented and the investment for 2014 is €0.741 million. The project is due to be completed in 2016.

##### 4.4.2 Estates

Committed expenditure relates to upgrading of Secure Care Residential Units and fit out of service locations.

##### 4.4.3 Minor Capital

Funding for Minor Capital works of €1.0 million has been advanced for 2014. This expenditure relates to minor works to be planned in 2014.

## 5. Compliance with Reporting Requirements

### 5.1. Public Service Pay and Employer Numbers Policy

*The ceiling for the Child and Family Agency has yet to be confirmed*

### 5.2. Performance Reporting requirements

Existing reporting arrangements will continue as current practice pending receipt of the Performance Framework from the DCYA. Reporting will include commentary on key outcomes; inputs including finance, personnel, equipment and materials; outputs

in terms of cost, productivity, customer satisfaction and quality; and governance and compliance arrangements.

Key items for reporting will be:

1. Progress on milestone targets for agreed priority areas;
2. Completed data for the latest period of all PIs included with analysis of trends;
3. Service pressure levels;
4. Note of HIQA reporting in the period and by exception any early warning issues for noting.

Appropriate performance indicators will be developed in the next 12 months and current metrics reviewed in order to ensure that they measure service outcomes for children effectively. Monthly, quarterly and annual metrics will be provided to report on service activity and performance. Systems for the collection and collation of data will require adaptation and review to prepare for the collection of any new measures which may be contained in the annual performance framework from the DCYA. The roll out of the National Child Care Information System will provide the necessary IT infrastructure to support these reporting requirements, when established.

The implementation of the Agency's Quality Assurance Framework will provide additional performance information through systematic audit activity and reporting in relation to service user satisfaction. A key element of the Framework will be reporting against annual area service improvement plans.



## 6. Projected Activity Levels 2014

Performance Activity	Target 2014	Reporting Frequency
<b>Early Years Services</b>		
No. of notified early years service in operational areas	4092	Quarterly
% of early years services which received an annual or first inspection	59%	Quarterly
No. of notified full day early years services	1550	Quarterly
% of full day services which received an annual or first inspection	60%	Quarterly
No. of complaints investigated	100%	Quarterly
<b>Family Support Services</b>		
i) The number of (a) children and (b) families referred to FSS by Social Work, during the reporting period;	Demand led New PI for 2014	Bi-annually
ii) The number of (a) children and (b) families referred to FSS by other sources, during the reporting period;	Demand led New PI for 2014	Bi-annually
iii) The number of (a) children and (b) families in receipt of FSS at the end of the reporting period.	Demand led New PI for 2014	Bi-annually
<b>Educational Welfare</b>		
No. of children/families supported by Education Welfare Services interventions (statutory obligations) to address general school attendance/placement issues	1500	Annually
No. of children/families supported by Education Welfare Services interventions (statutory obligations) to address serious/chronic school attendance issues	2500	Annually
<b>Children in Care in Education</b>		
i). No. of children in care aged 6 to 16 inclusive	4474	Quarterly
ii). No. and % of children in care between 6 and 16 years, in full time education	4285 96%	Quarterly
<b>Residential and Foster Care</b>		
No. and % of children in care by care type on the last day of the reporting period:	6,464	
i) Residential General Care	325(5%)	Monthly
ii) Foster care General (not including day fostering)	4,139 (64%)	Monthly
iii) Foster care with relatives	1860 (28.8%)	Monthly
iv) Other care placements	107(1.7%)	Monthly
v) Number and % of children in care with an allocated social worker	6464 (100%)	Monthly

<b>Care Planning</b> % of children in care who currently have a written care plan as defined by <i>Child Care Regulations 1995</i> , at the end of the reporting period	90%	Quarterly
% of children in residential special care with a written care plan	100%	Quarterly
<b>Foster Carers</b> The total number of Foster Carers General and Relative approved & on the Foster Care Panel (Part III Regs)	4535	Quarterly
<b>After Care</b> Number of young adults aged 18 to 23 (inclusive) in receipt of an aftercare service on the last day of the reporting period	1477	Quarterly
No. of young adults aged 18 to 23 (inclusive) in receipt of an aftercare service who are in full time education on the last day of the reporting period	700	Quarterly
<b>Child Welfare</b> i) % of referrals of child welfare concerns which required an initial assessment following a preliminary enquiry;	50%	Quarterly
ii) % of these initial assessments completed within 21 days of receipt of the referral.	50%	Quarterly
<b>Child Protection</b> No. of referrals of child abuse	20,045 (Demand led)	Quarterly
The total number of children during the reporting period who have been listed on the CPNS <sup>1</sup>	Demand led New PI for 2014	Quarterly
<b>Out of Hours</b> No. of referrals made to the Emergency Out of Hours Place of Safety Service	434	Quarterly
No. of children placed with the Emergency Out of Hours Placement Service	568	Quarterly
The total number of nights accommodation supplied by the Emergency Out of Hours Place of Safety Service	2500	Quarterly
<b>Adoption</b> <i>Inter-Country Adoption</i> - Projected waiting time for assessment (i.e. from Waiting List to the beginning of preparation)	New PI for 2014	Quarterly
Total number of completed assessments during the reporting period ( <i>Inter-Country and Domestic Adoption</i> )	New PI for 2014	Quarterly
The number of Fostering to Adoption Assessments ( <i>Domestic Adoption</i> )	New PI for 2014	Quarterly
The number on waiting list ( <i>Information and Tracing Service</i> )	New PI for 2014	Quarterly
Average length of time from waiting list to allocation ( <i>Information and Tracing</i> )	New PI for 2014	Quarterly

<sup>1</sup> Includes child abuse and welfare referrals which resulted in listing on the CPNS during the reporting period.

## Appendix 1: Functions of the Child and Family Agency

### Service Activity

The Child and Family Agency is responsible under the Child and Family Act, 2013 for a wide range of services. In particular it has specific duties under the Child Care Act, 1991 and the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000. Under the legislation, which came into effect 1<sup>st</sup> January 2014, the Agency is charged with:

- Supporting and promoting the development, welfare and protection of children, and the effective functioning families
- Offering care and protection for children in circumstances where there parents have not been able to, or are unlikely to, provide the care that a child needs. In order to discharge these responsibilities, the Agency is required to maintain and develop the services needed in order to deliver these supports to children and families, and provide certain services for the psychological welfare of children and their families
- Responsibility for ensuring every child in the State attends school or otherwise receives an education, and for providing education welfare services to support and monitor children's attendance, participation and retention in education.
- Ensuring that the best interest of the child guides all decisions affecting individual children
- Consulting children and families so that they help to shape the Agency's policies and services
- Strengthening inter-agency co-operation to ensure seamless services, responsive to needs
- Undertaking research relating to its functions, and provide information and advice to the Minister regarding those functions
- Commissioning services relating to the provision of Child and Family Services

This wide range of service duty is fulfilled by a range of current services including:

<i>Service</i>	
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>1.1     <u>Family Support Services</u></b></p> <p><b>Child and Family Agency provide;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Child Care Worker services</li> <li>• Family Support Worker services</li> <li>• Marte Meo Programme</li> <li>• Family Welfare Conference Service</li> <li>• Family Resource Centre Programme</li> <li>• Counselling Services</li> <li>• Marriage and Relationship Counselling</li> <li>• Marriage Preparation Courses</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Counselling in relation to parental separation</li> <li>• Bereavement Counselling and support on the death of a family member</li> <li>• Rainbows</li> </ul> <p><b>1.2 Non-statutory Agency services</b></p> <p>The Child and Family Agency commissions family support services from a wide range of non-statutory agencies on a local, regional and national basis.</p>
2.	<p><b><u>Child Protection Services</u></b></p> <p>National Child Protection Notification System (CPNS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Protection Referral and Assessment services ( all Areas)</li> <li>• Child Protection Case Conference services (all Areas)</li> <li>• Sexual Abuse Service co-ordination</li> </ul>
3.	<p><b><u>Alternative Care Services</u></b></p> <p><b>Fostering Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fostering services (recruitment, assessment, training, and supervision and support); (all Areas)</li> <li>• Fostering Care review services; (all Areas)</li> <li>• Foster families</li> </ul> <p><b>Special Care</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special Care Centres (Dublin, Limerick, Cork)</li> </ul> <p>ACTS Therapy and support for children in Special Care or on detention and at risk of placement in Special Care</p> <p><b>Residential services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Residential Care ( Statutory and non-statutory)</li> </ul> <p><b>Aftercare</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aftercare workers</li> <li>• Foster care</li> <li>• Drop in centres</li> </ul>

4.	<p><b><u>Emergency and Out of Hours Services</u></b></p> <p><b>Youth Homeless services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cork</li> <li>• Crisis Intervention Service (Greater Dublin)</li> <li>• Emergency Place of Safety Service (National)</li> <li>• Emergency Out of Hours Social Work Service (pilot Cork)</li> </ul>
5.	<p><b><u>Separated Children Seeking Asylum</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social work Team (Dublin)</li> <li>• Short-term, intake residential units x 3 (Dublin)</li> <li>• Longer-term residential unit (Dublin)</li> <li>• Foster family placement service (National)</li> </ul>
6.	<p><b><u>Adoption Services</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption assessment and placing (all areas)</li> <li>• Intercountry adoption services. (all Areas)</li> <li>• Tracing and Information services (all Areas)</li> </ul>
7.	<p><b><u>Monitoring and Inspection</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring and Inspection teams</li> </ul>
8.	<p><b><u>Early Years Services</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-School Inspections services</li> </ul>
9.	<p><b><u>Workforce Development</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership Development Programme for First Time Managers</li> <li>• Induction</li> <li>• Supervision</li> <li>• Children First Basic Level Training</li> <li>• Agency/An Garda Síochána Children First 2011 Joint Training</li> <li>• Practice Development and Support</li> <li>• Court room skills</li> <li>• Domestic, sexual and gender-based violence</li> </ul>

<b>10.</b>	<b>Section 20 Court Ordered Family Assessments</b>
<b>11.</b>	<b><u>Educational Welfare Services</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statutory duties of Educational Welfare Offices under the Education (Welfare) Act 2000 in relation to school attendance</li> <li>• Registration of children educated in places other than recognised schools</li> <li>• School Completion Programme</li> <li>• Home-School-Community Liaison Scheme</li> </ul>
<b>12.</b>	<b>School Completion Programme</b>
<b>13.</b>	<b>Home School Community Liaison Scheme</b>
<b>14.</b>	<b>Register of children educated at home</b>
<b>15.</b>	<b><u>Domestic, Sexual and Gender based violence</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crisis Refuges</li> <li>• Rape Crisis Centres</li> <li>• Support Services.</li> <li>• Network organisations</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2 - Workforce Development

### 1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to set out the priorities for Workforce development 2014 in the context of Child Welfare and Protection reform.

1.2 The priorities in 2014 that require investment are:

- To establish a guaranteed probation induction year for circa 200 Social Workers, a graduate placement scheme.
- To enhance the capacity to provide maternity cover within existing Social Work Teams, a formula will be negotiated with IMPACT.
- To fund the recommendations arising from the Clerical and Administrative Services review within Child and Family Agency currently being conducted in partnership with IMPACT

### Guaranteed Induction/Probation year

2.1 It is proposed that every Social Worker qualified in Ireland in any given year is offered a year's graduate placement to enable them to refine and rehearse their skills in a protected environment. This will enable graduates to consolidate their learning in practical settings.

2.2 In 2013 the following numbers qualified as Social Workers:

<b>NUIG</b>	<b>Trinity College, Dublin</b>	<b>UCC</b>	<b>UCD</b>	<b>Total</b>
20	69	66	47	202

89% of these Social Workers applied for work with Children and Family Services.

2.3 The Graduate work placement would be based on a protected workload, mentoring/tutorial support and a reduced case load. It is proposed that the salary level would be 80% of the current first year Social Work salary.

2.4 Following the introduction of this scheme, fulltime permanent posts would require an essential person specification criterion of one year's continuous work as a Social Worker. This condition would be fulfilled by participation in the guaranteed graduate Social Worker Scheme.

2.5 Guaranteed conditions of the scheme would include a salary of €31,055. Resourced mentoring time of 0.05WTE Principal Social worker time for each graduate social worker and a protected case load of 70%.

- 2.6 **Maternity Cover** - The enhanced capacity achieved by the introduction of the graduate social worker scheme would provide the basis for ensuring the workload of a colleague who is on Maternity Leave is covered. Until the scheme is fully up and running, maternity cover will be provided in all teams where failure to do so would reduce team capacity to an unacceptable level. The details of the maternity cover scheme, to agree the trigger point, will be negotiated with IMPACT measured against the agreed staffing establishment of 2013 i.e. 2010 staffing levels plus Ryan posts.
- 2.7 **Clerical and Administrative Review** - A consequence of disaggregation has been that there is a lack of structure for essential clerical staff that provide quality support to Ireland's social work, community staff and education welfare services. A review has been agreed with IMPACT and it is proposed to allocate resources to implement our recommendations.

<b>Financial Totals</b>	<b>€</b>
Graduate Placement Scheme	
Graduate Social Workers full year costs	€7,841,438
Mentoring Costs	€806,562
Essential Maternity cover	€2,602,000
Clerical and Administrative review	€750, 000
<b>Total</b>	<b>€12 million</b>
<b>Full Year</b>	<b>€12 million</b>
<b>2014 Cost</b>	<b>€6,700,000</b>

- 2.8. The total resource available is €6.7 million in 2014, €12 million full year. This resource is to assist in the reform of child welfare and protection services, as set out above particularly in Sections 3.6 and 3.7. Investment in Workforce Development will support such reform based upon agreed improvement in performance standards at area, region and national level.



## Appendix 3 – Summary of Priorities

### Priority 1: Accountability

Outputs	Timeline
1. Scheme of delegation established and reviewed	Q1
2. Governance code and structure in place	Q3
3. Risk register established and operational	Q4
4. Budget development plan published	Q4
5. Re-issue and review child care reform programme	Q2
6. Audited risk arrangements in place accountable to the agency board and its sub-committees	Q3

### Priority 2: Quality Assurance

Outputs	Timeline
1. Performance Framework established	Q4
2. Reporting cycle agreed and monitoring requirements met	Q3
3. A system of performance audits and quality reviews in place	Q3

### Priority 3: Partnership

Outputs	Timeline
1. Review of Memorandum of Understanding with HSE	Q4
2. Review of Joint Protocol with HSE	Q4
3. Development of research capacity and commissioned research activity with CES	Q2
4. Agency participation/facilitation and, where appropriate, leadership of the development of Children's Services Committees	Q4

#### **Priority 4: Workforce Development**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. An agreed workforce development Strategy	Q4
2. Clear partnership arrangements with the relevant professional bodies	Q3
3. An agreed graduate social work scheme with recruitment commencing	Q4
4. Agreed maternity cover in defined circumstance	Q2
5. Review of clerical and administrative Staff	Q3
6. Implementation of lead recommendations following the review of clerical and administrative staff	Q4

#### **Priority 5: Family Support**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. Quality review of implementation of family support processes in each Area	Q4
2. Integration of Family Resource Centres within the Service Delivery Framework	Q4

#### **Priority 6: Early Childhood Care and Education**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. Registration system operational	Q3
2. Standards-based inspections in place	Q3
3. ICT system in place to support the inspection process	Q2
4. Additional inspectors appointed	Q4
5. Publication of inspection reports available online in a timely manner	Q3

### Priority 7: Service Delivery Framework

Outputs	Timeline
1. Intervention thresholds introduced and reviewed	Q1
2. Standardised intake and assessment processes introduced and reviewed	Q2
3. System for diversion to community and voluntary sector in place	Q3
4. National Child Protection Notification System in place	Q2

### Priority 8: Emergency Out of Hours Service

Outputs	Timeline
1. National contact point available to Gardai	Q3
2. Local on-call social workers available to respond throughout the country	Q4

### Priority 9: Child Care Information System

Outputs	Timeline
1. NCCIS testing and user acceptance in test site completed	Q1
2. NCCIS – planning for full roll out commenced	Q4

### Priority 10: Children First

Outputs	Timeline
1. Quality review of consistent implementation in each Area	Q4
2. Impact assessment of pending legislation completed and reported to DCYA	Q1

### Priority 11: Alternative Care

Outputs	Timeline
1. National strategy for residential care completed and implemented	Q4
2. A Practice Handbook for alternative care will be produced and implemented	Q1
3. A single entry point for all applications to Special Care	Q1
4. Improved access to step down placements	Q4
5. National multidisciplinary team for children in special care	Q1
6. Aftercare implementation plan rolled out	Q4

### Priority 12: Adoption Services

Outputs	Timeline
1. National Manager in place	Q1
2. Regional managers reporting to National Manager	Q1
3. National policies and procedures in place	Q4
4. Review of equity of access undertaken	Q2
5. National applications list introduced and Maintained	Q2

### Priority 13: Educational Welfare

Outputs	Timeline
1. Educational welfare intervention is a constituent part of the Service Delivery Framework	Q4
2. School attendance, participation and retention targets integrated and aligned with other relevant Agency functions	Q4
3. Publication of Guidelines for Schools on the Development of School Attendance Guidelines	Q4
4. Revised guidelines on assessment of education in places other than recognised schools	Q4

**Priority 14: Domestic, Sexual and Gender based Violence Services**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. System of national oversight in place	Q1
2. Regional co-ordination and local management arrangements in place and reviewed	Q1

**Priority 15: Psychology Services**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. Strategic plan developed, implemented and reviewed	Q4

**Priority 16: Community Sector**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1. Funded services are provided in line with Agency priorities	Q4
2. Funding arrangements concur with correct provisions of the new legislation	Q4
3. A recording system is in place to record the correct statutory provision under which funds are being made available	Q4
4. A value for money review is undertaken	Q4
5. A Commissioning Strategy is developed	Q4