

# Review and design high level strategies

The Childcare Bill and Children Act 2004 outline the powers and duties of local authorities in relation to improving the well-being of young people, provision of childcare and provision of information to parents and others on childcare services.

Key duties of local authorities include, to:

- secure sufficient childcare for working parents
- assess childcare provision
- provide information, advice and assistance
- improve the well-being of young children and reduce inequalities

Directors of Children's Services are accountable for the delivery of integrated education and social services functions for children, and for moving towards Children's Trusts.

**Consultancy 4Children will assess development, delivery and implementation of children's services and Children and Young People's Plans, to:**

**Deliver the change agenda**

**Evaluate delivery progress against targets**

**Make recommendations for ongoing and future delivery**

**Consultancy 4Children** reviews will contribute to the planning and actions required ensuring that positive outcomes result from annual performance assessment and Joint Area Reviews (JAR). The first stage of the Consultancy 4Children review will be to analyse progress against agreed targets, bench marked against effective practice from other authorities. The review will result in recommendations for actions and priorities to meet the assessment and review requirements, and develop best practice services.

**Consultancy 4Children** will produce an action plan that identifies strategies for improving the quality and integration of children's services.

In 2005, **Consultancy 4Children** produced 'Building World Class Childcare' – an audit of childcare provision and infrastructure in 12 local authorities in the Thames Gateway Partnership. It measured progress towards the 2008 and 2010 childcare targets; established the size and profile of the current childcare workforce; estimated a trajectory based on estimated population growth; and reviewed research data to support the case that high quality childcare contributes to wider economic and social sustainability.