



Improvement

## **Customer led transformation programme** Case study – AGMA Early years customer insight

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## The Customer Led Transformation Programme

Work in this Manchester City Region project has been funded under the Customer Led Transformation programme. The fund aims to embed the use of customer insight and social media tools and techniques as strategic management capabilities across the public sector family in order to support place-based working.

The Customer Led Transformation Programme is overseen by the Local Government Delivery Council (supported by the Local Government Association).

The fund was established specifically to support collaborative working between local authorities and their partners focused on using customer insight and social media tools and techniques to improve service outcomes. These approaches offer public services bodies the opportunity to engage customers and gather insight into their preferences and needs, and thereby provide the evidence and intelligence needed to redesign services to be more targeted, effective and efficient.

## About the Manchester City Region

The Manchester City Region covers the former metropolitan county of Greater Manchester, which comprises the boroughs of Bolton, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan and the cities of Manchester and Salford. The population of Greater Manchester is around 2.6 million but it is at the core of a much wider travel to work area of over 5 million people, making it the second largest conurbation in the UK.

Greater Manchester spans nearly 500 square miles (1,277km<sup>2</sup>). There is a mix of high-density urban areas, suburbs, semi-rural and rural locations in Greater Manchester. The central business district, is Manchester City Centre and parts of Salford and Trafford. Outside Manchester City Centre there are considered to be eight major town centres in the outlying districts.

There are numerous concentrations of considerable deprivation across Greater Manchester, with around 350,000 residents living in areas classed as the most deprived nationally. The main concentrations are at the heart of the conurbation, in central and north Manchester and east Salford. Further clusters are found in the old industrial districts of Wigan, Bolton, Rochdale and Ashton-under-Lyne, with deprivation largely concentrated in neighbourhoods immediately surrounding the respective town centres.

The ten authorities in Greater Manchester are the first in the country to develop a statutory Combined Authority which sets out to co-ordinate key economic development, regeneration and transport functions. The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) was established on 1 April 2011.

To help drive forward its transport functions a new 'Transport for Greater Manchester Committee' was created.

The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) continues to act as the voice of the ten local authorities of Greater Manchester but as part of a much stronger partnership with GMCA. The new governance arrangements have been developed in order to boost economic performance and help deliver a brighter future for Greater Manchester and the North West.

## Background

As part of the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) Early Years Customer Insight programme, four complementary projects have been undertaken in parallel by Oldham, Trafford, Wigan and Rochdale all focused on improving services for families with young children. AGMA oversaw the programme and supported knowledge sharing and learning between the projects.

AGMA's Early Years focus stemmed from the findings of the Manchester Independent Economic Review (MIER), which outlined how reducing deprivation could be achieved through intervening early with families of young children. Published in April 2009, the MIER was one of the most comprehensive reviews of the economic prospects of an area in the UK ever and the first economic strategy to focus on Early Year's development as a key area. The MIER was one of the original drivers of AGMA's customer insight projects.

The Early Years focus has also been incorporated into the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS), AGMA's overarching document which outlines the Association's strategic direction up to 2020. The strategy is based around a series of 11 priorities, and the first priority listed by the strategy being to:

**"Radically improve the early years' experience for hard to reach groups, particularly in the most deprived areas."**

The programme also builds on the learning from the customer insight work that took place during the Total Place pilot during 2009 and AGMA's spatial pilots which focus on engaging more effectively with these groups.

This understanding was at the heart of the decision for the Greater Manchester Total Place Initiative to focus on early years. The final Total Place report outlined five key points:

- The case for prevention and early intervention
- The citizen at the centre of service design
- Enabling self-reliance
- Pooled budgets – in order to use reduced budgets more effectively and help inform the Community Budgets programme of work announced in the comprehensive spending review
- Reduce bureaucracy – in order to remove duplication from the system.

The projects also continue the work of the low income family customer insight project led by Bolton and Rochdale on behalf of AGMA, which was also sponsored by the Customer-Led Transformation Programme.

This project produced a family segmentation classification model and looked at the services take up by deprived families with young children based on data provided by Rochdale Council (the case study can be accessed at: [http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=02b14728-9ad8-4a6c-ab53-e4ab5221bc51&groupId=10171](http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=02b14728-9ad8-4a6c-ab53-e4ab5221bc51&groupId=10171))

AGMA's overarching Early Years programme set out to understand

- how to better engage with 'difficult to engage with' families, and the point at which intervention is most efficient and effective in reducing the need for longer term support and the risk of the families becoming 'troubled' (and thus the cost of these families to the public sector).
- how, through multi agency joined up working local authorities can remove duplication from the system whilst still having a positive impact on the life chances of those families living in the most deprived areas.

AGMA's work in Early Years is focused on delivering four clear outcomes:

- Responsive, sensitive care for infants;
- Supportive home learning environment;
- Improved health and engagement of all 0-4 year olds and
- Economically active households.

The learning arising from these four projects is being shared across AGMA and the North West region. In particular, the work is informing and adding value to the Greater Manchester's Community Budget programme. A case study detailing each of these individual projects is available on the LGA website at [http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/productivity/-/journal\\_content/56/10171/3510959/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE](http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/productivity/-/journal_content/56/10171/3510959/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE)

## Objectives

The programme seeks to better understand how to tackle deprivation and improve the life chances for families with young children in the most deprived areas, through identifying and reducing barriers and identifying the point at which intervention could be more effective to help these families succeed.

By pursuing four projects focused on similar a customer group and issues in parallel, AGMA sought to deliver insight, learning and outcomes amounting to more than 'the sum of its parts'. By sharing know-how and ideas, and discussing the key challenges and lessons learnt as they emerged, the participating authorities developed collective insight which both improved their individual approaches whilst pursuing their own projects, and enhanced the interpretation and implementation of the insight to deliver better outcomes for their collective communities.

The overarching aims of the programme were to:

- understand the point at which it is best to intervene
- understand the services that will best support these families
- identify the barriers to accessing support
- release efficiencies through better integration
- move families from dependence to self-reliance.
- complement the preventative agenda that is at the heart of the work outlined in the Greater Manchester strategy and being tested through the City Region Spatial pilots.

And through this:

- reduce child poverty
- improve education attainment
- impact on levels of worklessness.

And through this see:

- reduction in benefit payments
- removal of duplication and therefore cost from service delivery
- identify services that can be decommissioned
- a long term increase in economic productivity in the area.

## Approach

The programme comprised the four local authorities pursuing four largely separate projects. Each of these included a combination of customer insight techniques, as the table below summarises. Oldham and Wigan jointly designed and commissioned the ethnographic research. The project also shared considerable know-how relating to Customer Journey Mapping. The programme office ensured that the projects and opportunities to network and that the findings were shared across the region.

## Rochdale

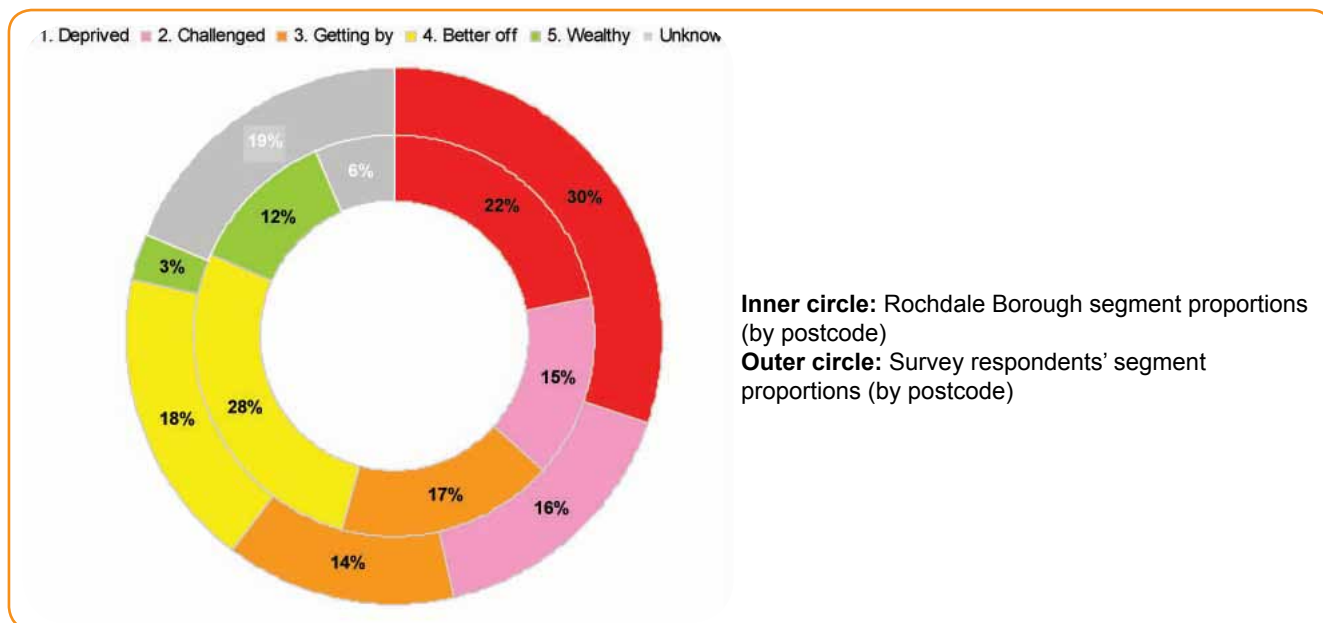
Rochdale's insight work focused on low-income families in the most deprived areas of Rochdale who typically receive support and benefits from a range of agencies. The immediate objective was to increase the numbers of children accessing support via their children centres, with the ultimate objective of increasing the self-reliance of families with young children and thereby reduce the burden on Council services.

Rochdale employed a range of customer insight tools to engage with early years families including:

- reviewing and applying customer segmentation profiles
- mapping customer journeys
- convening focus groups
- conducting questionnaires.

	Oldham	Rochdale	Trafford	Wigan
Socio demographic profiling				
Customer journey mapping				
Ethnographic research				
Value modes analysis				
Social network analysis				
Practitioner focus groups				

**Figure 1. Survey respondents by segment group, compared to borough proportions**



The segmentation data provided insight into the issues families typically face and offered the project team a basis for designing the research. The project undertook Customer Journey Mapping with 12 parents to identify the steps low incomes families take on their journey through Early Years provision, and to identify areas of duplication.

The project also held a focus group with 10 parents of disabled children (a group identified by Early Years staff as of key interest). This provided an opportunity to listen to customers talk about their lives in relation to Early Years services.

The project also conducted surveys: 181 parents attending antenatal classes completed a survey to gain insight into their views of Early Years services. The project also collected 153 survey responses from families who were not using any Early Years services.

## Wigan

In common with the other projects, Wigan customer insight project aimed to better understand how customers interact with services, and the impact those services have on their lives.

Wigan also wanted to understand how to best engage with families with young children living in deprived areas and how to target support and intervention more effectively. A particular focus for Wigan was to generate insight to help design a new integrated service for children and young people.

A review of socio demographic data underpinned the project. Wigan also conducted Customer Journey Mapping with six families. However, the main focus of Wigan's customer insight work was ethnographic research funded and conducted in collaboration with Oldham. The two councils commissioned thinkpublic – consultants specialising in ethnographic research – to help them understand how to improve the life chances of families with young children (under the age of four) living in deprived communities of Wigan and Oldham.

To develop the capacity of the Council to conduct ethnographic research in the future, the research began with thinkpublic training within officers in how to conduct ethnographic research. The newly trained 'ethnographers' applied the skills they had learned to research the experiences and needs of families with young children living in deprived communities conducting a total of 48 interviews with parents, carers and grandparents in the Wigan wards of Norley and Westleigh. These interviews explored participants' experiences, attitudes and aspirations in relation to a broad range of issues, including:

- childhood
- pregnancy and parenthood
- employment
- health and wellbeing
- housing
- kinship
- education and learning
- aspirations.

The teams from the two councils and the consultants then came together to compile their results, share findings, identify common and contrasting issues and themes. Key highlights are outlined under 'Findings'.

### **Oldham**

In addition to the ethnographic research which Oldham conducted with Wigan, Oldham also undertook innovative forms of customer insight through Social Network Analysis and Value Modes Analysis.

The purpose of Oldham's customer insight work was to understand customer needs, drivers and motivations for engaging with public services, and the barriers they faced when accessing services, from both the customer and service delivery perspective.

Oldham also wanted to understand what kinds of services and interventions make a positive difference to outcomes for these customers.

As with the ethnographic research pursued by Wigan, Oldham first analysed social demographic data describing the different types of customers living in the Borough. This indicated the relevant areas for the ethnographic researchers to focus on. Oldham also developed detailed profiles of the two wards that were the focus of the project – St Mary's and Coldhurst. Oldham then used the ethnographic research as the basis for 'Social Network Analysis' and 'Values Modes Analysis', described in more detail below.

#### **Values modes analysis**

Value modes analysis is a form of segmentation which focuses on the motivations and aspirations of customers within a specified area. Values Modes is a psychographic mapping system which looks at the values that underlie behaviour. In total 1,438 individuals within St Mary's and Coldhurst were surveyed to gain an understanding of their values. The majority of surveys were conducted in the street or in shopping centres, parks etc. This provided an understanding of what motivates and engages both individuals and their communities.

#### **Social network analysis**

The project also conducted surveys of individuals to understand their personal networks and the impact these have on their life chances. This research is based on 289 surveys completed in Roundthorn Salem in June and July 2011. All the surveys were completed face to face, most by door-knocking.



This research aimed to understand connectedness based on:

- Where people go, and which service providers do they see?
- Who people choose to spend time with, and who do they trust?
- Where people can go to find out what's happening locally, or for help with employment etc?
- Do people know people who have been to university, understand finance, can use the internet, or work for the council?

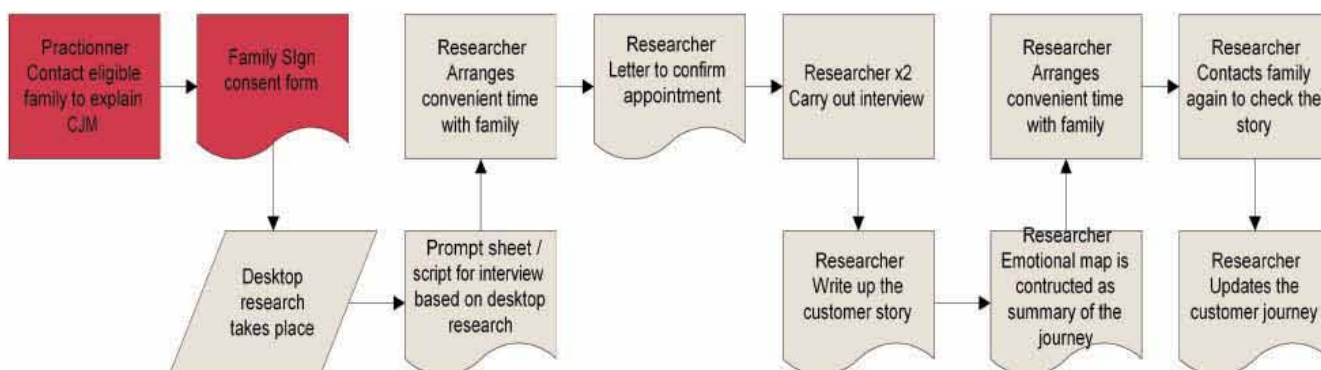
Respondents' contacts, skills, people and places were cross tabulated with key demographics, such as age, gender and ethnicity, as well as employment status and values.

### Trafford

Trafford's Customer-Led Insight for CAF (CLIC) project aimed to generate evidence to inform the re-design of their CAF processes. The project sought to understand how to engage with families with children, particularly in Partington, and provide strong evidence to support service redesign; and to help Trafford to better target support and intervention to children with needs in their early years to more effectively improve their life chances.

The project interviewed four families directly to map their journey, and mapped a further four families based on case records of their interaction with services. The project then facilitated two focus groups with practitioners to gather their ideas on how the CAF process could be improved. The process that Trafford pursued is outlined in the diagram below.

**Figure 2. Steps in Trafford's customer journey mapping process**



The interviews with the family members were conducted during May and June 2011. Two Council officers participated in each interview, with one of them acting as the interviewer – asking questions and making the family feel comfortable – and the other as the ‘scribe’ – making notes based on the customer’s responses. The project team chose this approach as it maximised the ability of the interviewer to engage fully with the family, but also ensured that all the information was captured fully and accurately.

The interviews were conducted by the project team rather than by CAF coordinators or the family’s lead professional. This was a deliberate decision by the project – the fact that the interviewers were independent and had no involvement with the families helped the families open up and tell their stories in terms of what was good and bad about the CAF process.

Each interview took approximately one hour, although some interviews were split over two meetings. The meetings were conducted at a mutually convenient location – in most cases this meant the family’s home, but in one case meant the local Children’s Centre.

The project developed interview scripts to support the Customer Journey Mapping, as well as consent forms to ensure the information gathered could be used with partners. These outputs are available to other authorities from the LGA Knowledge Hub [knowledgehub.local.gov.uk/group/customerinsight](http://knowledgehub.local.gov.uk/group/customerinsight).

These interviews generated a huge amount of detail. Following the interviews, the project team wrote-up the family’s story and then shared this with the parents of the family to review and check that the write-up was an accurate reflection of the interview discussion.

The project team then reviewed the story, seeking to identify the:

- main family events
- key points in the CAF process
- touch points with services
- ‘moments of truth’.

Following the completion of the customer journey mapping, the project then facilitated two focus groups with practitioners to gather their ideas on how the CAF process could be improved.

The findings from the CLIC project were handed over to Trafford’s ‘Transformation Programme’, who have applied the findings and recommendations to redesign the CAF form and drafted new guidance.

### **AGMA: Knowledge sharing and networking**

The AGMA programme management office convened a series of events to raise awareness of the customer insight work, share learning across the projects, support collaboration and to promote the findings more widely. Initially this involved the four councils in regular networking meetings and later involved representatives from councils and other public sector partners from across the North West region. The key events are outlined below.

One of the key benefits from working together was the fact that we extended the Rochdale customer segmentation model (based on the life stages) across GM, allowing for the first time a comparison of different customer types across Greater Manchester using a locally developed model (rather than just the nationally based Mosaic/Acorn etc)

Working together also allowed each of us to fill in the gaps of the other projects when designing our primary research (due to ours taking a slightly different timeline) – eg we carried out the GM segmentation and made sure we did similar service mapping to allow comparison across LAs.

Being able to share tips and tricks through the wider group meetings was very beneficial (the wider group also started a ‘How to’ report talking about general CI and project management tips – available from the LGA Knowledge Hub). Also Rochdale met with Oldham to ensure that the projects were not overlapping and ensured we took into account what they had found out during our research design.

The knowledge sharing event (CI showcasing event) had a great impact on our Executive Director that attended, massively raising her awareness around CI and how it can be used to better meet need and drive efficiencies.

### **Matt France**

Lead Research & Intelligence Officer  
Rochdale MBC

### **Knowledge networking meetings**

Throughout the programme the four projects conducted regular monthly meetings. This provided a very practical opportunity to:

- share learning, know-how and ideas
- tackle blockages
- develop joint work – such as the ethnographic work.

These regular meetings also supported the exchange of the challenges and know-how relating to information sharing protocols, as well as on informed consent and ethical approval. The meetings also supported face-to-face discussion and debate, and provided a safe environment for sharing ideas and problem solving.

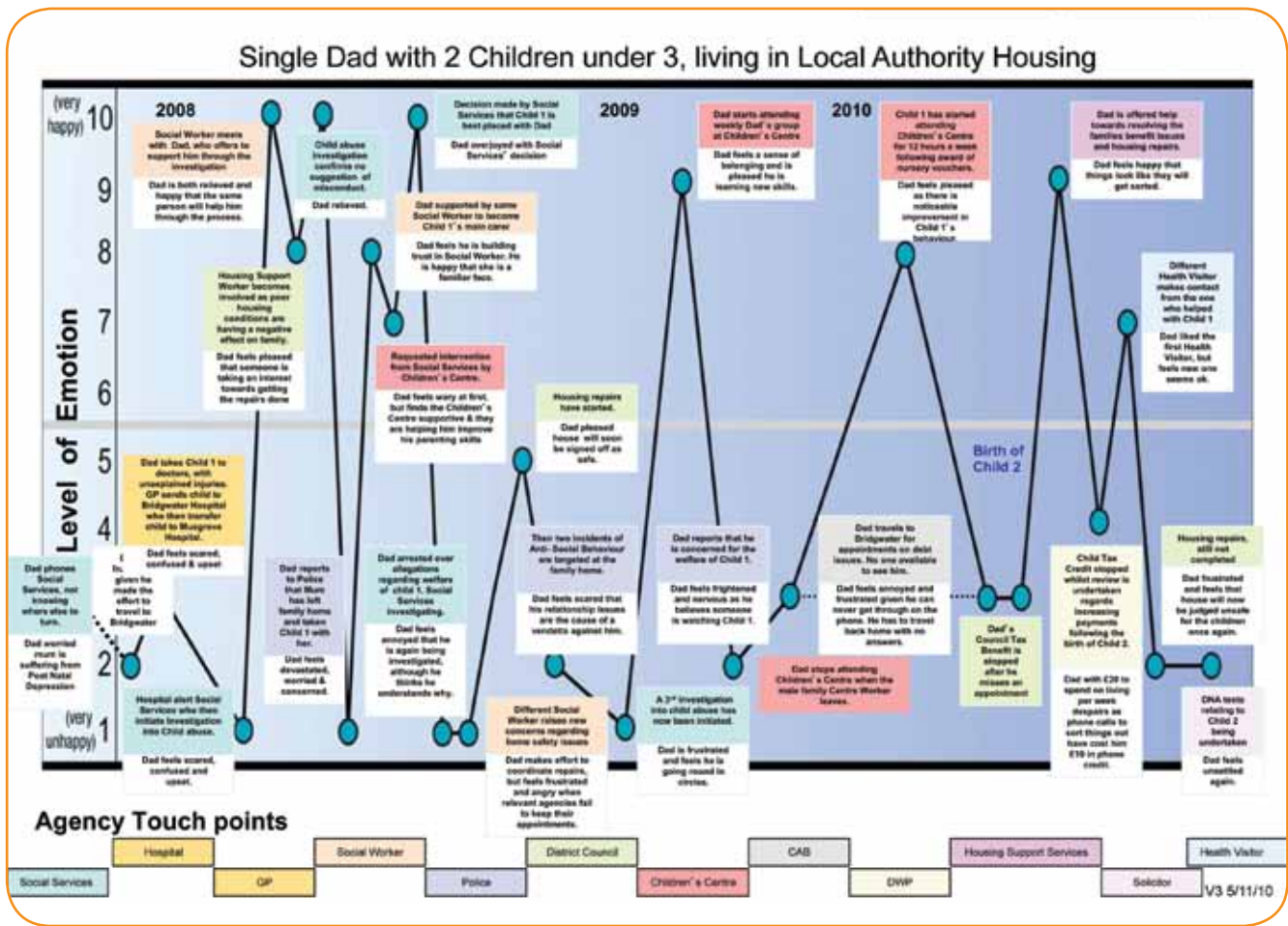
### **Customer journey mapping events,**

Two customer journey mapping events were held during February 2011 and February 2012 respectively.

The first event was attended by almost 40 representatives from local authorities across the region. The first half of the day focused on learning about customer journey mapping techniques, and sharing know-how.

A range of approaches to customer journey mapping were discussed, including the Cabinet Office Guidance (available from the LGA Knowledge Hub) and the Total Somerset Programme’s methodology (Rochdale MBC later adopted this approach in their project – see the detailed Case Study). Participants then spent the second half of the day working in groups looking at typical family scenarios and mapping the families’ journey through services.

Figure 3. Total Somerset programme's methodology



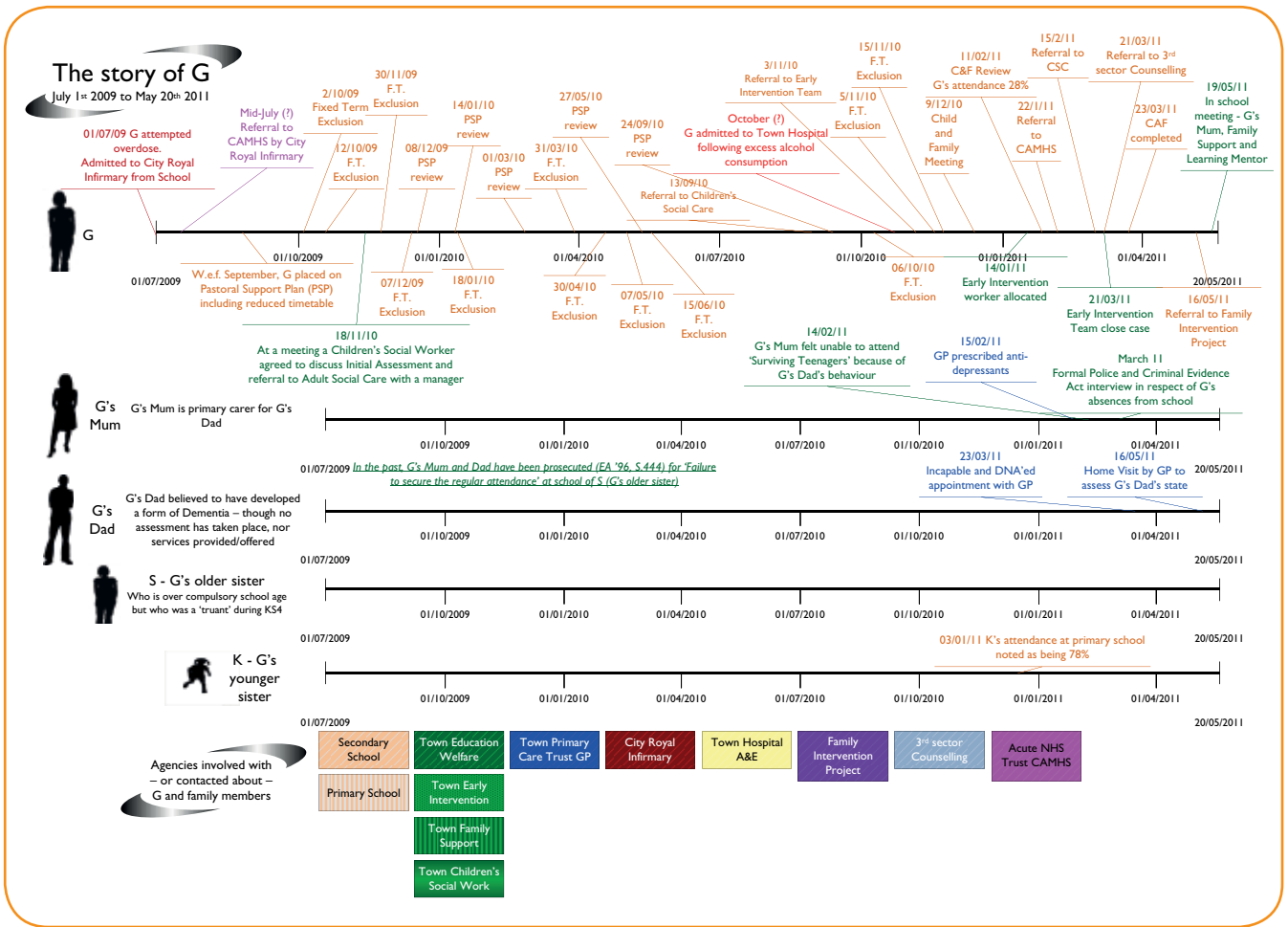
The second event was held in February 2012. Approximately 40 officers attended from across the region, including representatives from:

- Manchester Fire Authority
- Stockport Borough Council
- Tameside MBC
- Bury Borough Council
- Salford MBC

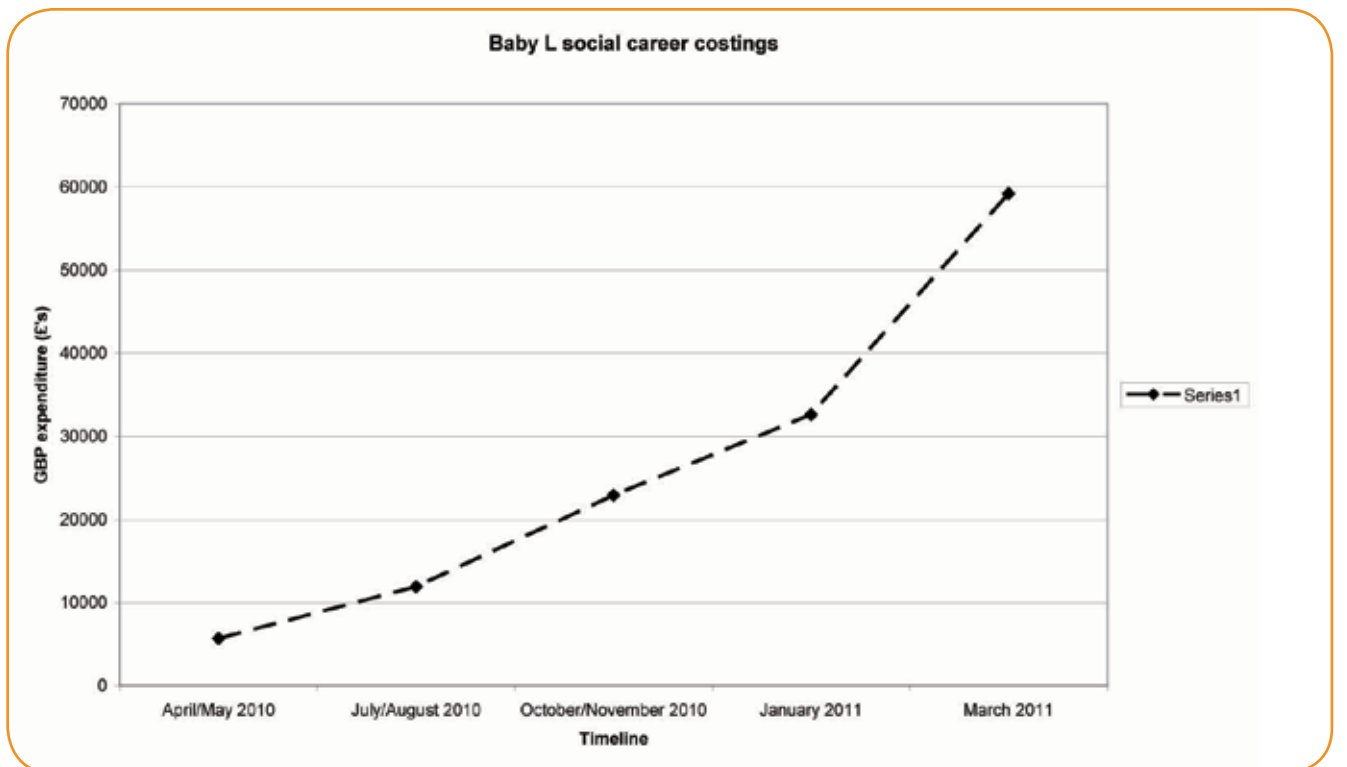
At the event the four projects reported their learning – both in terms of their experience and lessons learnt on journey mapping, and the findings of the work.

As well as presentations by Wigan, Trafford, Rochdale and Oldham, the New Charter Housing Trust also presented their approach to mapping family journeys and their approach to costing those journeys.

**Figure 4. The story of 'G': New Charter Social Housing Trust – customer journey map**



**Figure 5. The financial cost of 'G's journey**



## AGMA Customer Insight conference

The programme also convened a customer insight conference in Manchester on 4 July 2012. Over 100 delegates from across the region participated. This event comprised initial presentations and discussion led by the:

- LGA programme manager
- AGMA programme manager
- Chief Executive of Wigan Council, who was also the Chair of the Steering Group for the Greater Manchester Community Budget for Early Years.

Delegates then had the option to hear about the projects in more detail. Each project ran workshops where they outlined their work and held a question and answer session. Each workshop was offered twice, giving delegates the opportunity to learn about two projects. The workshops focused on specific aspects of their project, as follows:

Wigan	Conducting ethnographic research
Oldham	Value Modes Analysis and Social Network Analysis
Trafford	Customer Journey Mapping
Rochdale	Socio-Demographic profiling

Following the conference, the Programme Office also started an online group entitled 'AGMA Customer Insight' on the LGA Knowledge Hub, and posted all the outputs from the day to the group. The PowerPoint presentations given at the plenary session in the workshops can be accessed from the AGMA Customer Insight on the Knowledge Hub.

## Findings

### Overarching programme

Three high level findings emerged from the range of data produced by the various types of customer insight. These are issues that impact on families' ability to thrive and deliver children to school ready to learn.

1. Isolation – families were often isolated with few social networks and therefore finding it difficult to gain parenting advice. Parenting support and counselling is seen as a key need for this cohort. Additionally, providers have a role in helping develop community support and therefore create or enhance social networks.
2. Lack of knowledge/Signposting – families who were engaged with services felt that the range of services was good. However, families were often unaware of the range of support available to them and in particular those families in most need were not being reached by services. This highlighted that services across the public sector were not as joined up or as accessible as they could be and that a more 'whole family' multi-agency approach would be more effective at reaching those most in need.
3. Wider social, economic and environmental conditions – even when services were successfully engaged with families, these wider concerns often impacted on the families' ability to thrive. Issues such as access to jobs, transport, play spaces, poor physical and mental health, anti-social behaviour and housing conditions, posed much greater barriers to self-reliance than the quality of family support services.

## Use of Insight

One of the key learning's emerging from the overarching programme was the important role that interpretation plays in the generation and application of insight. Although some of the projects applied some of the same techniques – such as Customer Journey Mapping – and the findings are often consistent, how the findings are interpreted and applied can differ according to the starting point and priorities of the organisations that serve the local community. There is 'no single right answer', and no 'one size fits all'.

Furthermore, while reviewing and incorporating the findings from other local authorities can be helpful and valuable, organisations tend to absorb and enact insight and input that they generate themselves more completely. This partly arises from their investment in the process, and also because the insight organisations commission themselves will focus more sharply on their key priorities and questions. Moreover, senior management are likely to value the views and feedback of people they know to be their customers, rather than of customers of other organisations.

The individual projects generated a range of new insights, and contributed to a rich picture of the Early Years services in Manchester, and how they could be improved. The findings from the projects often converged, contributing to 'collective' insight which reinforced the messages customers were giving, and provided partners with the confidence to plan and implement changes based on the insight. These areas of commonality included:

- The gap between the internal perception of service delivery (both manager and staff), and the customer perception of the role and shape of services. All of the projects found there to be mismatch between the expectations and assumptions services make, and those of customers. In some instances the solution is simple, such as Rochdale renaming Children's Centres services to make them uniform across all sites
- The validity of taking the holistic approach to working with children and their families, rather than individual services treating issues in isolation. The Customer Journey Mapping conducted by each of projects always revealed environmental or other causal factors more fundamental than the 'presenting' problem which could not be left unaddressed if a sustainable solution was to be found. For example, this has led to Wigan MBC taking a new approach to engaging a repeat youth offender by working more closely with his father, who is on probation.
- The complexity and cost resulting from having multiple agencies supporting families. The projects analyses revealed the frequency and multiplicity of contact between family and service providers – and in many cases this took place over years. While establishing unit costing remains a challenge, the magnitude of the avoidable costs offers emphatic support for approaches based on Early Intervention and Prevention.

## Oldham

The research found that children centres were playing a role in joining up services, and were following good practice in intervening early where necessary.

However, the ethnographic interviews revealed the way in which perceptions of services and quality of life are being negatively impacted on by wider social issues within the areas. For example, a lack of social cohesion was one of the most prevalent themes to emerge from interviews with participants in Oldham – and this undermined resident's perception of the area and the role the council was playing.

“Here your neighbours don't care about you. People are not welcoming. I thought it was because I was black, but now I accept it's just the way that they live... we need information and communication – you need to mix people...[the Council] need to create spaces so that people can be involved with families' problems. It's hard to meet people here.”

A father from St Mary's ward

The most prominent issues reported were anti-social and criminal behaviour, community cohesion, and poor housing ie damp.

Furthermore, services were found not to be engaging the 'hardest to reach', residents who are likely to be the most in need. This was a finding echoed in Rochdale (see 'Benefits' below for further information). They also highlighted that better information sharing between local authorities and health care providers could help identify those families most in need.

The key finding from Oldham's Value Modes Analysis was that values seem to be shared across ethnic groups. In other words, the three main ethnic groups (White, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi) have broadly similar values. Although exhibiting different social norms, they have similar underlying beliefs and motivations. This suggests that shared environmental circumstances are more influential in shaping a resident's outlook in relation to the local community than their membership of any particular ethnic group.

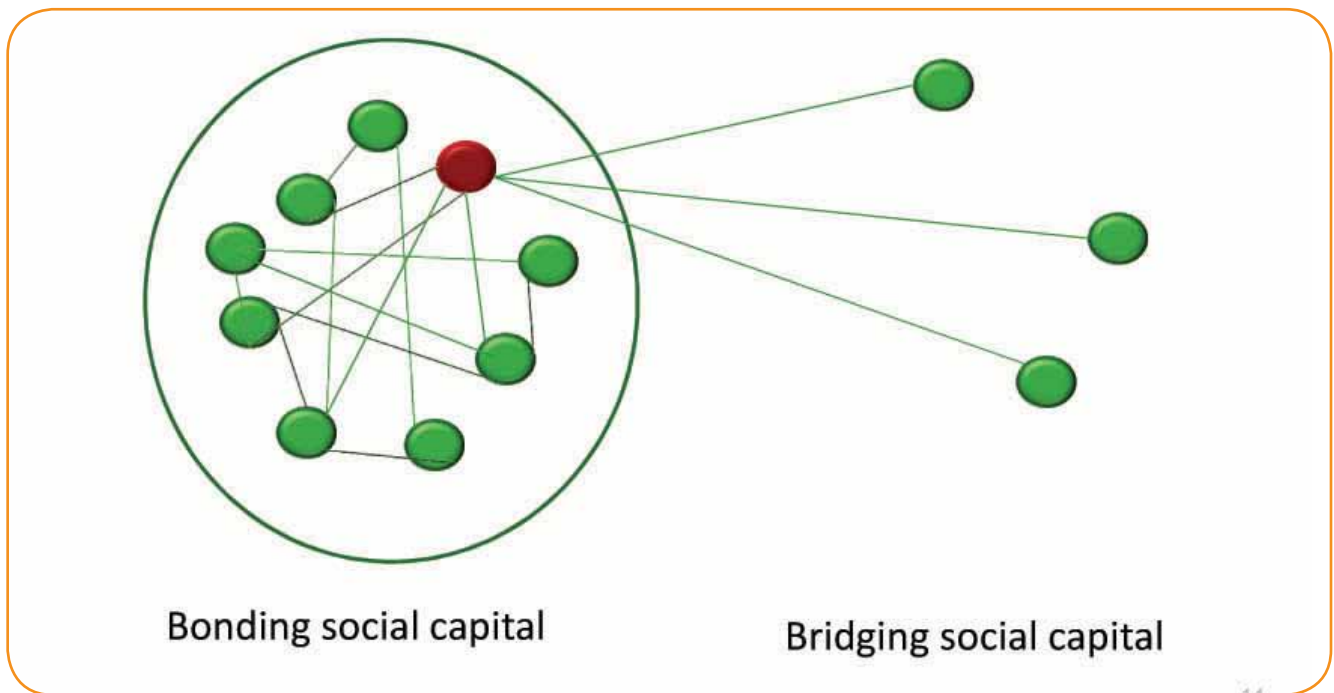
Oldham's Social Network Analysis found there to be strong social networks within ethnic groups, but weak links between different ethnic groups. People are closely linked to others in their area but have far fewer connections with people outside their own geographic, ethnic or occupational community.

The strength of social networks within groups is significant, and means that pressure from peers and the wider group:

- has a major role in delivering behaviour change and social outcomes alongside service provision
- are major determinants of attitudes towards, and levels of engagement with, those services



**Figure 6. Bonding social capital versus bridging social capital**



### Rochdale

The Customer Journey Mapping, focus group sessions and questionnaires revealed that the most common barriers preventing families accessing the services were:

- children's centres timetables not reflecting working parents' schedules
- a lack of confidence on the part of parents to come forward
- inconsistencies in the way services were named by different centres
- a lack of knowledge among parents or misinformation regarding who was eligible to use children centres
- the perceived lack of need, with parents rely on existing social networks for support instead
- difficulty in travelling to the Children Centres due to distance or the lack of a car
- the perception that the children centre could not accommodate older or younger siblings, and alternative childcare would need to be found for them

### Wigan

Wigan's ethnographic research produced a rich picture of the lives of young families in the wards of Norley and Westleigh. Key themes that emerged included:

- parenthood typically began in the late teenage years
- bringing up children was a shared responsibility of parents, grandparents, and also the extended family
- mental health issues such as postnatal depression were prevalent – but symptoms were sometimes hidden from health visitors the fear of potential intervention
- generally, perceptions and experiences social services were often negative, with residents suspecting that public services 'don't really care about me'.

The key findings from Wigan’s customer journey mapping, and further supported by the ethnographic work, was that although services were generally performing adequately on an individual basis, they were being delivered in silos so failing to treat families as a whole. The mapping exercise illustrated how disparate services were, and how they were “too many services trying to do too much, to too many people.”

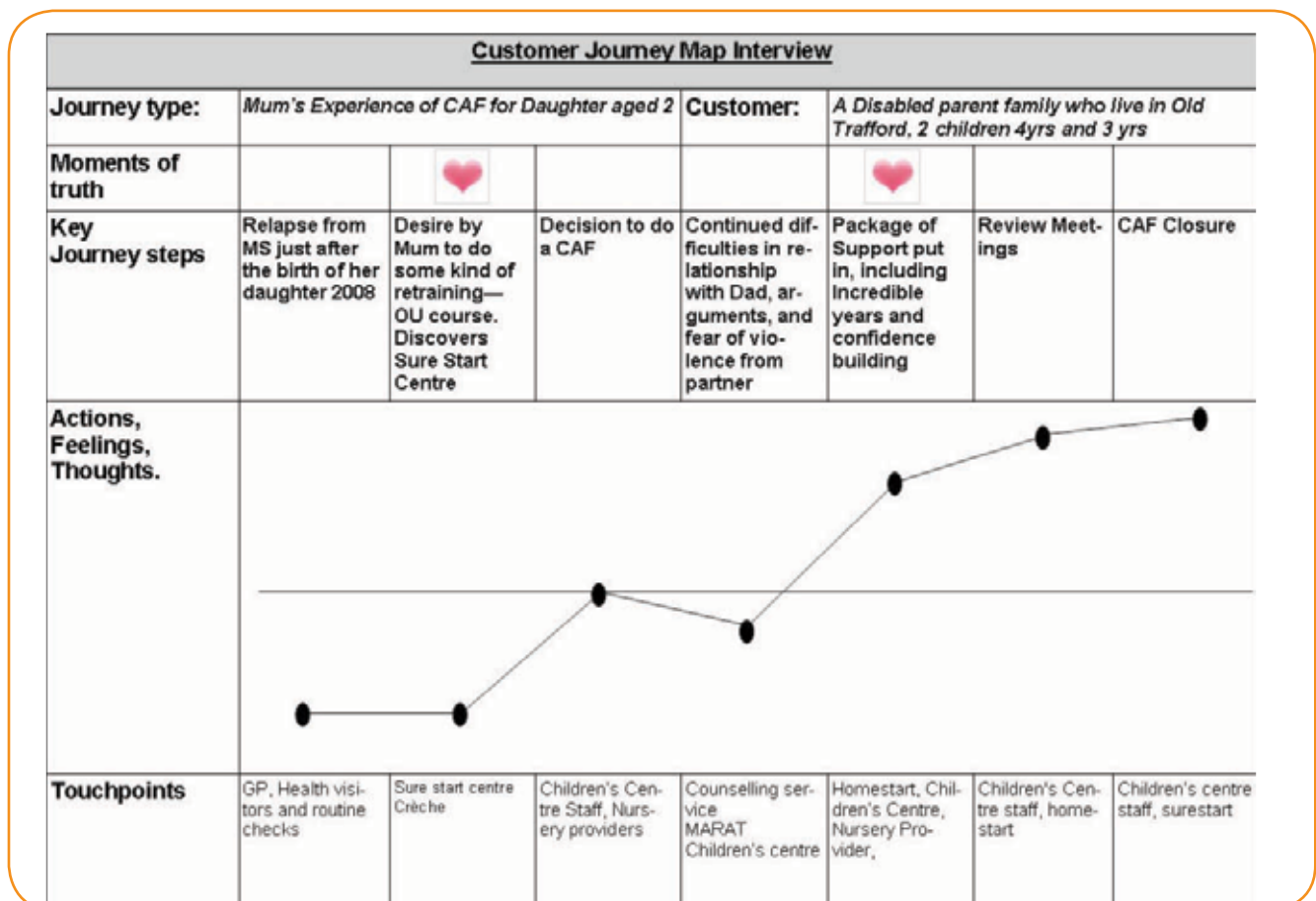
Furthermore, the emotional mapping exercise also illustrated how each service would attempt to address the ‘presenting problem’, rather than the underlying issue. The paradoxical effect was often to define the problem in a way that the family did not recognise and effectively ‘disempower’ the client from being able to overcome the problem themselves.

### Trafford

The top-line feedback from families arising from the customer journey mapping exercises was as follows:

- families were very keen to engage with the project and tell their stories
- ‘complex’ families’ circumstances and needs change very quickly
- taking an approach which encompasses the whole family is essential
- domestic violence and housing are key areas of need
- families would prefer to have fewer meetings with professionals
- families prefer one-to-one rather than group support
- families are generally happy with the services and support they are receiving.

**Figure 7. Output from Trafford’s customer journey mapping exercise**



The key findings from the practitioner focus groups were that:

- undertaking a CAF can be time-consuming
- there is a lack of clarity around the roles and responsibilities relating to CAF
- there is a reluctance to take on the lead professional role, partly due to a lack of clarity regarding what the lead professional role constitutes
- there was a lack of clarity relating to the eligibility criteria and thresholds for a CAF.

These findings were fed into the redesign of Trafford's Family CAF.

## Outcomes

Across the programme, the insight generated is informing the Councils' overarching approach to transforming children's services. The outcomes across the programme share a number of common themes and are contributing to the wider AGMA work including:

- development of early years pathways
- increase service use
- re-design of caf
- service integration
- re-usable projects
- knowledge sharing.

The key outcomes of the overarching programme are summarised below. The key outcomes arising from the component projects are summarised overleaf.

"The value modes research was particularly useful changing mind-sets of the workforce, because it taught us that, although we were delivering good early years' services, the issues that occupied the minds of customers were ones of housing, heating, transport and mental health et cetera. And that got us thinking that if we sitting in a dark room designing services for people that don't think the same way we do maybe it's no wonder that services aren't fitting their needs and engaging them in the way they want to engage"

**Liz Hume**

Divisional Lead – Regional Policy  
Oldham MBC

### **AGMA's New 'early years' model**

This work has culminated in AGMA developing a new Early Years model for Greater Manchester based on 'Points of Engagement'. The model is based on points of engagement focused on the social and environmental factors affecting a child's life – to complement the existing points of engagement that focus on health factors – and focuses on the years 0 to 5 and particularly years 0 to 2. The model has been influenced by the findings of the four projects.

### **Improving information sharing and management project**

The monthly meetings of the four projects often led to debates regarding the challenges the projects were facing relating to information sharing, and the lessons learnt. On the basis of these discussions, the Programme Team recommended a bigger piece of work to AGMA's Leadership Team.



As a result AGMA (working together with Leicester, Birmingham and Bradford) won £400,000 in Community Budget exemplar funding from the Department of Education. The project is developing tools to support information sharing relating to Early Years services and the Troubled Families agenda (among others) and the learning will be shared nationally via the website [informationsharing.co.uk](http://informationsharing.co.uk)

### **Manchester's independent economic review**

Published in April 2009, the Manchester's Independent Economic Review (MIER) was one of the most comprehensive reviews of the economic prospects of an area in the UK ever and the first economic strategy to focus on early years of development is a key area. The MIER was one of the original drivers of AGMA customer insight project.

Subsequently, AGMA took the view that early years was a major work stream across the city – as reflected in its place in the Greater Manchester Strategy, and it is now a fundamental work stream in the Community Budgets programme. The Whole Place Community Budget work stream has four areas

- troubled families
- transforming justice
- health and social care
- early years.

The work has now gone full circle, with the findings from the Customer Insight project now informing the re-refresh of the MIER, to be published in 2013.

### **Development of early years pathways**

The ethnographic and values model research carried out by Oldham, highlighted that the perspectives of the families were often not what practitioners and professionals expected and were not aligned with their own point of view. As a result, Oldham has developed a new approach to engaging with families that is centred on their experiences and aspirations. This also links to a range of relevant support services beyond the Children Centres and the Council.









This model is based on the premise that providing children with a good start in life and making sure they start school 'ready to learn' considerably improves their chances of achieving positive outcomes and avoiding negative outcomes later in life. The approach

is based on engaging expectant parents in structured conversations to establish their aspirations for their child, and to raise awareness about what they will need to do in order for these aspirations to come true. The conversation also covers what parents want for themselves.

The conversation with parents is recorded on a paper form, and if necessary the information can be used to initiate a CAF. The project has been piloted on a small scale in St Mary's and Coldhurst in Oldham and as of September 2012 is due to be rolled out across the whole of the borough. An initial evaluation of the pilot indicated that the approach is both improving outcomes for children and has likely already saved the public sector approximately £53,000 this year.



Figure 8. Early years pathway in Partington

‘Giving your child the best start in life’ by following the Partington Pathway	
What services you can expect	
From pregnancy to birth	From birth to 3 months
 <p><b>12 – 42 weeks</b> – Midwifery clinics for Parents to be. Health checks, advice on benefits, diet and nutrition, safety, childcare, breastfeeding</p> <p><b>7 months</b> – Books for bumps</p> <p><b>8 months</b> Home visit to all parents to introduce your ‘named’ family Health Visitor (HV). Support and advice to prepare for becoming a parent. Discussion about feeding your baby</p> <p><b>0- 6 weeks</b> (baby) – Register birth and register for Library services. Receive Trafford Directory of Services</p>	 <p><b>114 days</b> – HV home assessment. Baby’s health and development. Parenting support. Promoting health and well-being of the family, eg, diet, immunisation, health, safety etc</p> <p><b>28 days</b> – Health promotion visit. Advice about feeding, smoking, diet and nutrition, home safety, hygiene, social baby. ‘Let’s Play’ baby leaflet</p> <p><b>6 – 8 weeks</b> – HV home visit. Review of baby and family health, also includes support for post natal depression. GP health check/ immunisation</p> <p><b>8 – 20 weeks</b> – Baby massage groups, ‘Keep Me Safe’ groups</p>
<p><b><u>Additional services for children and families requiring extra help</u></b> such as Family Support, one to one support, groups:- Sleep group, adult learning, Chatterbox, play and interaction, home learning, Talking Together, speech and language ‘walk in’, breastfeeding peer supporters. <b><u>Other agencies offering support in the community:</u></b> Parent and toddler group, Citizens Advice Bureau, Homes start, Job Centre Plus, library, schools, childcare, leisure centre, housing, colleges, Trafford Family Information Service (TFIS),</p> <p>Trafford Early Development Service (TEDS), Special Education Needs Advisory Service (SENAS), Butterflies Young Parents Group</p>	
<p>Members of staff are available to answer your questions or discuss any concerns you may have at any point during your child’s progress through the pathway</p>	
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="margin-right: 20px;">  <p>Accessible parking</p> </div> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <div style="margin-right: 10px;">  </div> <div style="margin-right: 20px;">  </div> <div> <p><b>For more information or please contact:</b>  <b>Partington &amp; Carrington Children’s Centre on 0161 912 2122</b>  <b>or Partington Health Centre on 0161 775 1521</b></p> </div> </div>	

## ‘Giving your child the best start in life’ by following the Partington Pathway

### What services you can expect

#### From 4 months to 2 years



**4 – 7 months** – Weaning baby group and childcare questionnaire

**7½ months** – HV assessment of physical, emotional and social development. Growth measured. Health promotion. Parenting support. Dental and Bookstart packs given out

**8 – 12 months** – Weaning baby group (part 2)

**12 – 18 months** – Music and Movement group (children under 18 months). ‘Let’s Play’ toddler leaflet

**18 – 24 months** – ‘Incredible Years’ group

#### From 2 years to 5 years



**2 years** – HV full developmental assessment. Health promotion. Two year old funding. Parenting support. Dental packs given out

**2½ years** – ‘Ready Steady Nursery’. Preparing child for school or booster group. Three year funded place. Advice about diet and exercise. Looking at employment and training opportunities. Contact School Admissions about a school place: Tel: 0161 912 5007

**3½ years** – ‘Ready Steady School’. Dental packs given out. Bookstart. Learning with your child. Information about immunisations. ‘Let’s Play’ leaflet

**Additional services for children and families requiring extra help** such as Family Support, one to one support, groups:- Sleep group, adult learning, Chatterbox, play and interaction, home learning, Talking Together, speech and language ‘walk in’, breastfeeding peer supporters. **Other agencies offering support in the community:** Parent and toddler group, Citizens Advice Bureau, Homes start, Job Centre Plus, library, schools, childcare, leisure centre, housing, colleges, Trafford Family Information Service (TFIS),

Trafford Early Development Service (TEDS), Special Education Needs Advisory Service (SENAS), Butterflies Young Parents Group

Members of staff are available to answer your questions or discuss any concerns you may have at any point during your child’s progress through the pathway



For more information or please contact:  
Partington & Carrington Children’s Centre on 0161 912 2122  
or Partington Health Centre on 0161 775 1521

### Increase service use

One of the key findings of Rochdale's research was that a major impediment preventing families accessing their local Children's Centres was their lack of confidence.

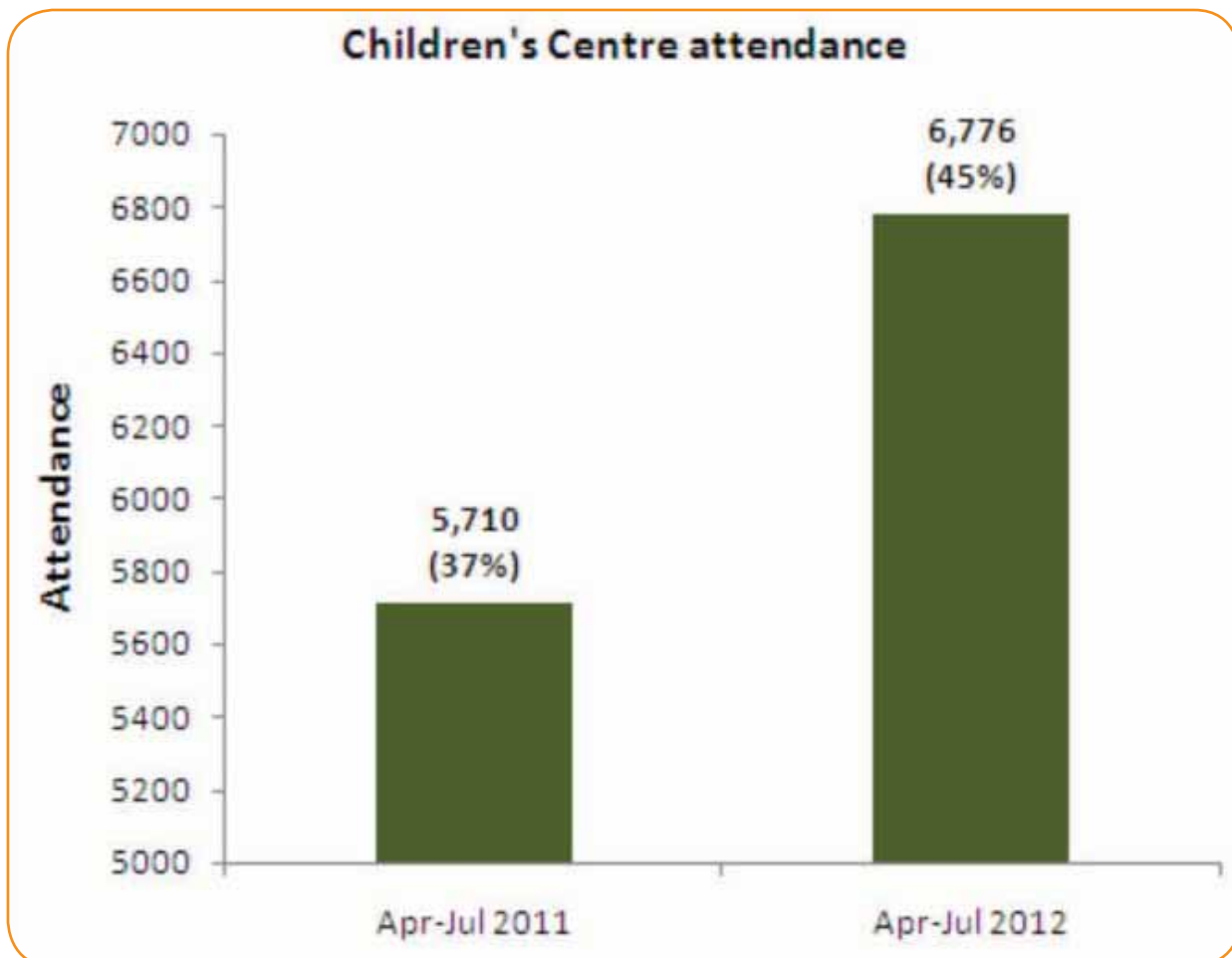
In the light of the insight generated by the project, Rochdale adapted their Family Journey Programme – an existing programme comprising a session every three months focused on an activity appropriate to the child's age – in order to better:

- give parents an opportunity to talk informally and network at the sessions, and invite the same cohort of parents back to subsequent sessions
- signpost parents to other sessions available at the Children's Centre appropriate to the age of the children.

With the same aim of improving access, Rochdale has also established and implemented a process with its partners in Midwifery whereby expectant parents attend an introductory session at a Children's Centre during one of their antenatal appointments. Expectant parents, over 28 weeks gestation are now invited to the session named Bonding with Baby which includes a tour around their local Children's Centre.

Attendance at Children's Centres since the implementation of the Early Years Customer Insight recommendations (April 2012-July 2012), has increased 8 per cent compared to the same period last year (April 2011-July 2011). These can be seen in the chart below.

**Figure 8. Attendance at children's centres since implementation of the Early Years Customer Insight recommendations**





Similarly, one of the fundamental objectives of Traffords Early Years Pathway Pilot in Partington was to improve interaction with parents, with the aim of improving levels of attendance at Partington Children Centre.

Over the course of the 12 month pilot, the number of individual child attendees at post birth and 'with child' sessions increased from 60 to hundred and 175 (ie an increase of 115 compared to the previous year). The total number of attendances rose from 303 to 479 – a total of 176. The figures indicate that a large portion of the new attendees have attended more than one session.

### **Re-design of the CAF**

Oldham's ethnographic research and service mapping indicated that parents did not see their issues as solely relating to their children, and that the outcomes the CAF process was delivering were not strongly correlated with what the family thought they needed. Essentially, the CAF process had failed to engage the families in a way that meant something to them.

This discovery helped inform the redesign of the CAF. The new process shares the same ethos as their Early Years Pathway (see above) – it focuses on the parents 'aspirations' and on identifying what successes look like from a parent's perspective.

Trafford have also used the customer insight findings to inform the re-design of the CAF – merging a range of documents into a single assessment. Now, information common to the whole family or household needs only to be captured once and can be shared with different services and professionals to deliver a more holistic approach to intervention. This streamlined approach will save practitioners and respondent's time – encouraging families to remain engaged.

### **Service integration**

The customer insight programme influenced the service redesign for Wigan's pathway for 0-19 year olds– leading to the establishment of a new 'Gateway' Service. The Gateway service provides support to children, young people and families who require a co-ordinated approach. Gateway aims to prevent their needs escalating to those met by more specialist services and to support them as they improve and withdraw from specialist services.

The timescales for Trafford's customer insight and workforce consultation aligned with the physical co-location of the Trafford's Area Family Support Teams (AFSTs). These teams include a range of professionals including Social Workers, Educational Welfare Officers, Health Visitors, Youth Service and Connexions and are the pivotal teams in delivering Trafford's early intervention approach. The learning points from the insight project have helped to inform the integration of services within the AFST's, and provided an opportunity to put the learning into practice immediately.

### **Programme outputs**

The projects have developed a number of outputs which can be used by other Local Authorities, and can be accessed from the LGA Knowledge Hub. These include:

- 'Understanding The Lives of Families with Young Children Living in Deprived Communities in Wigan and Oldham: A Report of the Findings of Ethnographic Research'
- 'Values Modes Analysis for St Mary's and Coldhurst Wards: A Report from the Campaign Company'
- 'Social Networks in Roundthorn Salem: A Report from the Campaign Company'

- 'Estimate Benefits of Accessing Services' by Rochdale MBC
- 'Customer Journey Mapping Interview Guides' by Trafford
- 'Consent Form for Customer Journey Mapping' by Trafford
- Presentations from the conference.

## Benefits

### Benefits from the projects

A brief outline of some of the highlights of the benefits that the four projects have delivered is included below. For more details of the benefits each project produced, please see the individual case studies.

#### Early Years Pathway

Oldham estimate that the Early Years Pathway and increases in service use which the insight has helped to deliver has – together with a range of other initiatives – contributed to a 7.3 per cent rise in Early Years Foundation Stage scores. Oldham estimate that this could equate to approximately £53,000 in cost avoidance for the public sector during 2012.

Furthermore, Oldham estimates that if the success of the pilot is replicated across the Borough, Oldham's public sector could save at least £75,000 every year in costs avoided.

Meanwhile, results from Rochdale's Early Years work suggest that the customer insight work, together with other supporting initiatives, has helped to increase the numbers of children accessing Children's Centres by 8-9 per cent. Rochdale also estimates that for each child that successfully engages with Early Years services the public sector as a whole saves almost £11,000 per child per year.

### Service integration

Wigan has calculated that integration of services that the insight has helped to shape will equate to £1.2 million in efficiency gains during 2012-2013. Wigan estimates that by the end of September 2012 approximately £600,000 of savings has been achieved. These efficiencies arise from:

- Reducing the number of staff working in the teams.
- Reducing the duplication of contact with customers and communication across silos.
- Restructuring and removing layers of managers, and the remodelling of roles across localities. For example Youth Services, Restorative Solutions, and Vulnerable People Services now have a single Borough wide manager instead of individual managers from each service.

Likewise, Trafford's insight work has contributed to a revised strategic approach to early intervention for families. The messages from families about how to work with them effectively are central to Trafford's planning around engagement on their Stronger Families agenda and harder to reach families in general. Within CYPS the geographical co-location of Trafford's Area Family Support Teams has provided the hubs in each locality that support this work. Examples of the feedback generated and the actions that have resulted so far is in the table on the following page.

“AGMA’s customer insight work has been a catalyst for taking a ‘whole systems’ view of the world. We participated in the Knowledge Sharing workshops, and the Customer Journey Mapping we have conducted in Tameside has revealed how each agency interacts with individuals and families in isolation. Only when you map the whole system do you realise that the different parts of the picture in the jigsaw aren’t connected-up... The CJM has been a fundamental catalyst in shifting thinking to how we as a system of organisations interact with families.”

**David Hoyle**

New Charter Housing, Manchester

**Figure 9. Trafford’s actions from engagement: ‘You Said, We Did’**

Feedback from CYPS customers (‘You Said...’)	Resulting Actions (‘We Did...’)
<p><b>Residents of temporary accommodation for the homeless unit</b>            Parents asked for more messy play activities many have said they do not want to get their flat messy            Parents have said they are more likely to attend the group if I call for them and invite them down.            Parents commented that the information they are given about the children’s centre during the induction of signing the tenancy agreement is sometimes not read as they are thinking about other things</p>	<p>Staff incorporated a messy activity into the weekly schedule            Staff now arrive at the group 30 minutes early to set up and knock on residents doors to invite them down to the group.            instead of residents being given information on Sure Start when they sign their tenancy agreement, they are asked to sign a slip inviting residents to visit them to let them know about the group and what SureStart do</p>
<p><b>Volunteers</b>            Volunteers said they needed training and support to run groups – especially around having the confidence to run a stay and play session as a volunteer, safeguarding and health and safety.</p>	<p>Staff collaborated with Trafford College to plan and run a 5 week Volunteer Training Course which has been run four times, twice in the South, once in the West and once in the North. The course covered safeguarding, Health and Safety, confidence building, and awareness of EYFS.</p>
<p><b>Dads</b>            1. 47 per cent said the best time to access services was on weekends            2. 38 per cent said holidays            3. 60 per cent of people said that the best way to let them know about services was through email</p>	<p>1. Dads groups across the borough now run on Saturdays            2. Centres run activities during school holidays            3. Newsletters are produced and sent to families via email as well as being available at Children’s Centres and community venues where services are delivered.</p>

Feedback from CYPS customers ('You Said...')	Resulting Actions ('We Did...')
<p><b>Young parent</b></p> <p>1. "Although I am now 20 years old, and have grown in myself and learnt lots, I still feel that older parents look down on me".</p> <p>2. "I feel comfortable here around other people my own age and I've been made to feel very welcome".</p>	<p>1. CYPS supported the Butterflies Young Parent's Groups with crèche workers, and an Apprentice Participation Worker now attends.</p> <p>2. Trafford set up a follow-up group called Diamonds for parents aged 20 – 25, which is planned to continue</p>
<p><b>Employment and training</b></p> <p>A large number of parents within the Old Trafford and Firwood area are looking to get into Childcare or Teaching assistant roles</p>	<p>CYPS are organising childcare Level 1 and Level 2 courses as well Supporting Teaching and Learning Level 2 courses to be delivered at Old Trafford Community School, to enable these parents to take their first steps into their chosen area as well as support to find a voluntary placement to gain further practical experience to help with their employability.</p>
<p><b>Benefits claimants</b></p> <p>"I am really worried about the changes to benefits and how it will affect me and my family."</p>	<p>CYPS have organised two successful benefits surgeries in partnership with Trafford Council Benefits Uptake Advisor and one 'Changes to Benefits' session in partnership with a Housing Group. Trafford provided info on what changes will be happening and when, and how it will specifically impact customers.</p>

### Redesigned CAF

Oldham MBC and partners have completed an additional 335 CAF's during the last year based on the revised family-based approach. The savings to the public sector arising from a CAF can vary greatly, but research by Local Authorities has calculated that in most cases the predicted savings range between £41,000 and £60,000 over the course of the lifetime of the child – or over £700 per year. By these conservative estimates, the new CAF has saved Oldham MBC and her partners nearly £240,000 over the past year already.

### Benefits from the programme

Pursuing four projects in parallel as part of an overarching programme provided a unique opportunity to share findings between partners and authorities across the wider region. This produced a cross pollination of ideas that would otherwise not have happened as readily.

Above all (and as mentioned in findings) the results of the four projects in each authority highlighted how local needs vary and context is key. As a result the findings, the interpretation and application of these findings, and the priorities and actions deriving from those findings, differ across the local authorities.

The local authorities across AGMA benefited from sharing and seeing the approaches that the other authorities were taking to the Early Years agenda. In some cases, the learning validated work that was already underway while in others it prompted authorities to rethink and adapt the approach in the light of the findings generated by the programme.

The same can be said in relation to findings. For example, both Oldham and Rochdale independently discovered that their children's centres were not successfully engaging the hardest to reach groups. This provided confirmation for both authorities which reinforced the need for change.

“Customer Journey Mapping has helped us to identify opportunities to me more effective, and to find ways to ensure that families do not fall through gaps.”

**David Hoyle**  
New Charter Housing, Manchester

“Having four projects working in parallel enabled us to try out a range of different techniques than would not have been possible if only one LA was undertaking the research.

For example, Oldham tested the use of the Values Modes methodology and shared the applicable learning with the other projects and AGMA via the workshops. The programme also generated collective insight and learning at a practical level. For example, the sharing of learning and know-how regarding effective approaches to customer journey mapping was incredibly valuable.

The knowledge sharing events enabled us to think through with a wide range of people what would be the next steps to develop our customer insight work further and develop our understanding of how to implement customer insight research into normal practice.”

**Liz Hume**  
Oldham MBC:

## Governance

The overarching governance of the project was the AGMA Programme Steering Group, which reported to the City Region Evaluation Group. The programme management for the AGMA Early Years Programme was provided by Wigan. The programme manager played an active role in co-ordinating progress reporting to both the AGMA Steering Group and also the Local Government Improvement & Development. Furthermore, the AGMA programme manager arranged workshops and events to ensure that the insight, know-how and learning generated by the project were shared between the projects and across the region more widely.

The City Region Evaluation Group includes representative from the AGMA Local Authorities plus colleagues from Health. The City Region Evaluation Group reports into the AGMA Wider Leadership Group, which comprises of all the public sector Chief Executives in Greater Manchester.

Additionally, reports were shared with the relevant AGMA commissions including the Improvement and Efficiency Commission which is made up of elected members from all ten AGMA authorities. Regular progress updates were also sent to the Customer-Led Transformation Programme at Local Government Association.

In addition to these arrangements, each project had separate governance arrangements in place in their own councils to help deliver and monitor progress (for further information, see the case studies).

## Resourcing

An outline of the programme funding is given below. For more details on how each project invested the funding, please see the individual case studies.

Activity	Amount
Programme manager – one day a week for twelve months	£20,000
Workshops and shared learning events	£10,000
Oldham project	£65,000
Rochdale project	£58,000
Trafford project	£65,000
Wigan project	£91,000
Total funding	£309,000

## Challenges and lessons learnt

### Stakeholder engagement

Both across the AGMA programme and the CLT Programme more generally, projects have tended to progress more fluently and have greater ability to inform and impact on outcomes where a senior stakeholder have been engaged from the outset.

The Early Years agenda evolved during the programme due to (among other factors) on-going austerity measures and the re-emerging of the 'Troubled Families' agenda.

Each of the project was pursued in organisations that were undergoing significant change. The projects that have been most successful in delivering outcomes within the timeframe of the programme benefited from the role of senior sponsors in promoting the work, the findings and its integration into wider working practices and transformational initiatives. The project highlights the value of engaging stakeholders early and often.

“The most effective insight is that which conveys the voice of customers directly to senior managers. Hearing customer’s talk of their experience of services and their shortcomings – and knowing that these views are representative – has led to senior managers agreeing: “This is not good enough.””

**Nuala O’Rourke**

AGMA Programme Manager  
Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council

**Achieving ‘cut-through’**

The case studies demonstrate the need for constant engagement and promotion of the findings arising from insight projects. The value of the insight generated is only a function of its ability to influence how people think and work. Hence, to achieve impact insight needs to influence how senior managers, middle managers and frontline practitioners operate.

As the individual case studies highlight, many of the ‘quick wins’ benefits that the insight generated reflected changes in the way that frontline practitioners approach their work. Meanwhile, the longer term impact is felt through the role insight plays in shaping transformation at an organisational level. Hence, the key findings need to be committed often, and expressed in ways that work for different audiences.

## Next steps

The authorities developed a series of recommendations based on the AGMA Early Years Customer Insight Programme to direct effort going forward. The recommendations have informed AGMA’s approach to Whole Place Community Budgeting. These activities focus on:

- Improving the first point of contact at which a parent learns about Children’s Centres. Work is focusing in improving information sharing with health professional before and after the child’s birth, and the role Children Centres play in developing social networks between parents
- Improving the clarity and consistency of communications with parents, to better engage parents and cultivate greater confidence among parents to access and use services
- Exploring with parents their aspirations and expectations for their children and the raising their awareness of the support available to them (such as the Children Centre’s themselves and education) to help them realise these aspirations



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