

Adopting The Process View: A Case Study of Modeling Change In The Not-For-Profit Sector

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This case study focuses on the operation of an adoption agency in the UK, illustrating the issues involved in a small, not-for-profit organization seeking to respond to the pressures to streamline and automate its routines and procedures. It illustrates the limitations of inadequately planned IT-centered initiatives, and how such strategies can be redeemed by process-oriented methods—specifically those derived from a combined BPR and soft systems approach. It also exemplifies the critical importance of organizational issues and the constraints they impose on effective implementation of IT.

The methods involved demonstrate the strengths and limitations of a business process orientation, and show how BPR can be applied to an organization where professionals, employees and volunteers work together and coordinate their activities.

The overall conclusions to the case point to ways in which the organization's processes can be improved and aligned; placing it in a far better position to take advantage of IT and associated technologies, both within the organization and with regard to its main sources of support and collaboration. As such it is a case study in organizational preparedness for IT rather than a straightforward study of an IT application.

BACKGROUND

NCH was founded in 1869 by Methodist Minister, Thomas Bowman Stephenson, and was known as 'The Children's Home', providing care to orphans and children who needed care and support (Philpot, 1994, p23). The organization currently (mid-2001) provides residential care and various types of community-based services to improve the lives of many children and families suffering from poverty. Also it is influential in Government Social Policies regarding poverty, unemployment, homelessness and children's rights. Over the 130 years of its existence, emphasis on service provision has changed from residential homes and schools to community-based projects throughout the United Kingdom (UK).

The whole organization currently employs approximately 4,000 full and part-time people. There are approximately 436 projects managed by NCH that are geographically dispersed. These projects are regionally based and are accountable to a Regional Office which is overseen by NCH Head Office, based in London. The current strategic aim of NCH is 'to improve the quality of life of the most vulnerable children and young people' (NCH Action For Children, 1999).

Adoption NCH Yorkshire (A-NCH-Y) is based in the north east region of England. A-NCH-Y is one of four NCH adoption and fostering projects in England. It is a strategic business unit (SBU) of the overall organization and is accountable to the Regional Office in Harrogate (12 miles away). Its activities are governed by the Adoptions Agencies Regulations legislation. A-NCH-Y consists of four full-time and two part-time social workers, one full-time and one part-time administrative worker, one Project Manager, one Senior Practitioner and four sessional workers. Sessional workers are qualified social workers who are allocated work when the caseload of the established team of social workers is too heavy to take on new assessments. The Project Manager has an overall responsibility for the human and financial resources of the project. The social workers are responsible for recruiting, training and assessing prospective adoptive families, as well as matching and placing children with approved families, and supervising the adoption placements.

The strategic aim of A-NCH-Y is 'to enhance the lives of children needing permanent family placements, by providing a specialized quality adoption service to Local Authorities'. The project currently provides a wide range of services such as:

- Recruitment, preparation, assessment and approval of prospective adoptive families
- Post-placement support to families and children
- Post-adoption support to families
- Access to records and counselling to adults previously placed for adoption through NCH
- Adoption counselling under Section 51 of the Adoption Agencies Regulation 1983

Overview of the Adoption Process

The adoption process begins with A-NCH-Y marketing its services through information meetings and publicity to the general public and Local Authorities. Further information is sent out in response to inquiries made by interested parties. Prospective families are selected according to basic criteria for adoption, including age, relationship status, health, absence of criminal records. If the criteria are fulfilled, the family is eligible to apply to adopt children. Individuals or families who can offer a secure and stable placement, and who meet the recruitment criteria are eligible to adopt. Families undergo intensive assessment and preparation with a project social worker, and statutory references, including Health, Police, and Social Services, must be obtained. The completed assessment report is presented to the Adoption Panel, where recommendations about the suitability of applicants are made. The Regional Director of Children's Services makes the final decision about approval of the applicants. Profiles of approved families are then circulated to Local Authorities who have children in need of permanent placements. Local Authorities send profiles of children, for whom they are seeking families, to Adoption NCH (covering all four adoption projects), in order to find a suitable match between a child and an approved family. Local Authorities pay an agreed inter-agency fee on behalf of the child for the approved placement offered by A-NCH.

A child placed with a family is monitored for progress and adjustment. If the child and family are progressing well, the family can apply to the Court to gain an Adoption Order, giving them legal rights as parents. After the Adoption Order has been granted, there is no statutory involvement for A-NCH-Y or the Local Authority with the family. The family and child are, however, able to gain post-adoption support at any time. On completion of the adoption process, the completed files are stored in the Adoption Archives at A-NCH South East, for future access and post-adoption counselling.

Legislation and public sector involvement govern the adoption process. The role and responsibility of Local Authorities and voluntary agencies are defined in the Children's Act 1989. The

Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to provide an adoption service and receives Government grants to provide such services. NCH and Local Authorities work in partnership for many services such as adoption in order to provide the best service for children and families. Voluntary organizations are inspected and registered every three years by the Department of Health Inspectors, in order to be allowed to continue to function as an adoption agency.

Although a voluntary and not-for-profit organization, A-NCH thus operates in an area in which there is competition and diversity. Furthermore there are varying, and inconsistent patterns for demands for placements. As such A-NCH needs constant awareness of changes and potential liabilities, and so its operations—or business processes—need to be flexible and resilient enough to respond to such pressures.

SETTING THE STAGE

The first stage of the study involved an analysis of the specific strengths and weaknesses of the existing context at A-NCH-Y. This was done using a SWOT¹ analysis coupled with a PLEST² exercise.

The SWOT analysis highlighted A-NCH-Y's strengths, specifically:

- its good public image and its reputation for providing a high-quality service to clients and collaborative organizations;
- the project's management structure, which is simple, with clear lines of accountability, providing support and direction to the staff;
- the concept of best value is important throughout the organization, where best value for money is provided to families and Local Authorities in their inter-agency agreements.

These strengths can be used as a resource to enable the application of BPR and improve the performance of business processes to function more consistently (see Table 1).

The weaknesses that specifically relate to IT and the general use of information included:

- ineffective management information systems and database;
- lack of training to use information technology;
- lack of systematic recording of information gained from networking.

While the SWOT exercise can identify internal aspects of the organization, external ones can similarly be identified using a PLEST approach (Hill & Jones, 1992). Undertaking an external analysis is particularly important for A-NCH-Y since it is highly sensitive to factors that may affect its reputation and public standing. The PLEST exercise emphasized many external factors and future developments that need to be taken into account.

The political factors include government initiatives and policies, such as Quality Protects and the White Paper on Modernizing Social Services (Department of Health, 1998). These initiatives directly affect Local Authorities and voluntary organizations. All adoption agencies must operate according to existing legislation covering the welfare and rights of children.³ All aspects of A-NCH activity must adhere to the relevant legal framework, and the organization's practices must change in response to changes in legislation at both national and international levels.

The economic cycle has always had an impact on the readiness of people to adopt, but changes in career patterns and increasing uncertainty of future employment even for middle-class and professional people have had a significant effect on motivation and commitment to adopt children.

Levels of poverty have been increasing over the years, reaching 10.3 million people in Britain in 1995. Children are the most affected group, with 25% of British children living in poverty.⁴ Therefore, children are becoming more vulnerable and need additional care and support. Furthermore, the changing political and economic situations in many other countries have resulted in an increasing number of abandoned and orphaned children. Consequently the number of international adoptions may increase, affecting the chances of children in the UK who need to be placed for adoption.⁵

Table 1: SWOT Analysis**Strengths**

- Skilled and experienced staff with vast knowledge of the adoption field and diverse skills
- Flexibility in meeting different needs of children
- Established reputation on NCH through the corporate image
- Continuous support provided to families throughout the adoption process and provision of post-adoption support service
- Prompt response to initial enquiries
- Provide best value for customers by providing post-adoption support

Weaknesses

- Ineffective management information systems and database
- Inadequate human resources to cope with increasing demands
- Lack of training for administrative staff
- General lack of human resources
- Reliance on slow and unreliable manual systems
- Poor knowledge about the composition of the local community
- Cover a large geographical area—increases cost and pressure on staff
- Lack of staff knowledge and time about business processes
- Lack of systematic recording system of information gained through networking

Opportunities

- New government initiatives offer new opportunities of working in partnership with Local Authorities
- Location in multi-cultural city—more opportunities to develop relationships in various communities
- Expansion of the Project's services in the East Coast area
- Change in the structure of Local Authorities—more unitary authorities with which to form partnerships
- The Children's Promise campaign—sponsorship and raising profile of NCH
- Formation of consortiums—gather information about children's needs

Threats

- Financial insecurity
- Increased inter-agency fee—Local Authorities less willing to buy the services provided by Adoption NCH
- Inconsistent pattern of demand for placements—across age children's age ranges
- Formation of consortiums—preference is given to Local Authorities
- Developments in IVF treatments—fewer families coming forward with requests to adopt
- Widely available contraception—fewer babies and children coming for adoption
- Competition from new entrants

Wider social factors are also influential in this area, since changes in lifestyle and demographic trends alter the ages at which people decide to marry, the number of children they have and the ages at which they decide to try to adopt. General attitudes to births outside marriage, single-parent families and cultural diversity are also critical. There has been a decline in the number of adoptions in England and Wales from 25,000 in 1968 to 5,306 in 1997, probably a result of wider availability and awareness of contraception, and acceptance of lone parent families (Department of Health, 1999). Attitudes towards illegitimacy have changed, with more acceptance and support for children born to unmarried mothers.

There is more acceptance of and better provision for single-parent families, with an estimated 2.8 million single-parent families in the UK in 1996; although one-parent families represent 20% of families living in poverty. Changes in structures of families and attitudes mean that A-NCH-Y must be prepared to provide a service to meet changing and diversifying needs.

It was forecast that there would be a 1.3% increase in the number of children aged 0-4 years, and a 10.5% increase of older children aged 5-14 years old in the period 1991 to 2001 (Mintel, 1994, p37). So there will be an increased pressure to find placements for 5-14 year-olds. This has taken place against a background of forecasts of a 9.1% increase in the 30-64 year age group; but with an aging population, the actual figure of those in the 30-50 year age range (i.e. eligible to adopt) may not be as great.

Technological change is affecting organizational routines. In many cases people think that 'more' will mean 'better', and so organizations seek to increase their use of and reliance on technology – particularly computer and communications technology (IT). On the other hand, organizations such as A-NCH often feel that since their main focus is on human issues and professional expertise, they can ignore or downplay the impact of technology. This tension is tempered by a growing recognition that vast amounts of information must be dealt with from a wide variety of sources. This information has to be managed effectively so that the project can meet its operational and legal requirements. Consequently the demand for IT resources has grown in some project areas and across the organization as a whole. However, this demand extends beyond the use of computers, since many organizations are using the Internet to reach a wider audience to market their products and services; and it would be in A-NCH's interest to market its services on the Internet to reach a wider, more diverse audience. NCH has now (2001) established a Web site giving basic information – but nothing on the individual projects.

In general the utilization of IT at A-NCH-Y has been minimal. Until 1999 there were only two computers at A-NCH-Y, one used by a full-time and the other by a part-time administrative worker, to record social work visits and type reports for the Adoption Panel. Only these two members of administrative staff had access to the computers and the Family Placement database. There were several manual methods in place to collect and record various information, such as the number of families coming for assessment per quarter. Some manual systems were created to provide information as input to the database for production of quarterly and annual statistics. On the other hand, the Project Manager manually produced statistical information required by Regional and Head Office. Computers were poorly exploited at A-NCH-Y.

Recently the two computers that only have word processing capabilities have been supplemented with two new ones: one with database access and one with Internet access. The social workers can now use the two original computers for word processing tasks, but the software is incompatible with the two new computers. Therefore, when administration are asked to proofread or print any document from the old computers, a great deal of time is spent converting documents and checking with the social workers in case any work is lost. The Internet was introduced to the Project in 2000, although few staff were trained to use e-mail or Internet facilities. Furthermore there is contention between staff, as the Internet machine is also required for administrative work. This means that there is considerable delay in gaining access to the machine, and frequent disruption to administrative tasks.

Lack of any planned and coherent use of IT not only affects operational effectiveness of the Project, but also threatens its financial viability. The responsibility for raising fees with Local Authorities for the adoption service is managed between the Project and Regional office. There were discrepancies between the financial systems at both locations, causing delays in raising invoices, delays in receiving payments and occasional loss of payment. Attempts were made to resolve the discrepancies in both financial systems, with the Project Manager creating spreadsheets to record financial data, however these spreadsheets were used only by the Project; Regional Office recorded financial information in a different format, thus the discrepancy in recording information remained. To resolve these discrepancies, the Finance Manager agreed to meet with the Project Manager regularly

to go through the invoices, but this was not always possible due to other pressures of work. The general position is that a great deal of management time is spent counting the fees received, and nobody on the Project has the time or expertise to develop PC-based facilities, let alone train others to use them.

The Modernizing Social Services agenda introduced by the British Government in 1999 sets a clear target for Local Authorities to have improved IT-based management information systems fully operational by 2004. The Government considers IT to be a key enabler for Local Authorities to improve the provision of services to children and families in need. However, the implications of this for voluntary organizations have not been clarified. Regardless of this, organizations such as NCH have to resolve the matter. For instance, in 2000, the Government decided to create a National Adoption Register to consolidate the children and families matching process all over the UK, to prevent mismatches from occurring. This Register is a national database with which all organizations involved with adoption will have to work. In order to retain its role within the adoptions process, NCH has no choice but to improve its technological capabilities and align itself with this national database.

CASE DESCRIPTION

The situation at NCH provides a classic example of the problems faced by a small organization seeking to harness the power and realize the potential of IT. Stafford Beer writing in the 1970s noted that...

“The question which asks how to use the computer in the enterprise, is, in short, the wrong question. A better formulation is to ask how the enterprise should be run given that computers exist. The best version of all is the question asking, *what, given computers, the enterprise now is*” (Beer, 1981, Stress in original).

This sentiment was echoed more recently, and perhaps notoriously, by Hammer and Champy in their book on BPR where they state that ‘a company that cannot change the way it thinks about information technology cannot reengineer’ (1993, p83). It might now be thought that BPR is outdated and discredited, and of little or no applicability to a small, not-for-profit organization; this would be an unfortunate misconception. The application of the central principles of BPR to A-NCH-Y demonstrates its effectiveness and relevance, at the same time as highlighting some shortcomings, and how these can be ameliorated by use of a soft systems approach.

What the extracts from Beer, and from Hammer and Champy, illustrate is that IT has to be incorporated into organizations as part of a wider process of organizational change, and that it is insufficient and fallacious to see IT simply as a neutral tool that makes things happen faster. Organizations that fail to understand this will fall far short of any objectives that have been set for an IT-focused project or general strategy. Worse still, if no specific objectives have been articulated, there will often be a diffuse and indeterminate air of dissatisfaction that may pervade certain parts of the organization, impairing its operational effectiveness. In contexts such as these, the key is to move away from a focus on the technology to a larger, more complex and challenging perspective that is derived from a process orientation. This can be derived from work on BPR, but must also take account of earlier work on organizational maturity—i.e., the preparedness of an organization to develop its operational routines, and also add new ones—in the light of the potential offered by technological advances. (See for instance Galliers & Sutherland, 1999, which discusses the work of Gibson & Nolan, and others who have developed the topic since the 1970s.)

The present study shows that the process perspective can provide a deep understanding of the business context even for not-for-profit organizations, enhancing analysis of organizational performance, and providing the basis for improvement and greater effectiveness. From such a foundation it is possible to develop clear ideas about the role and potential of IT and associated technologies in the specific organizational context.

The SWOT and PLEST analyses, plus other indications of procedural difficulties, provide a foundation for a thorough analysis and redesign of existing processes. The general strategy must be

to expose and overcome weaknesses and threats, respond to challenges emanating from the external environment and build upon strengths to take advantage of new opportunities. Simply 'throwing computers at the problem' has already been shown to be ineffective, and counter-productive; it wastes resources and is proving to be demoralizing. The application of BPR in this context demonstrates the ways in which the organization needs to be reengineered. This is not BPR in the sense of radical transformation, down-sizing and other negative BPR-associated practices; but process modelling as a way of identifying responsibilities and roles, redesigning inefficient processes, providing information and training for the redesigned processes, and generally improving the overall performance of A-NCH-Y.⁶

At certain points, decisions were taken within A-NCH regarding the introduction of some form of IT; but without any overall grasp of what the organizational ramifications of IT application might be. This is a good illustration of an organization that is immature in its use of technology (see Galliers & Sutherland, 1999); there is a focus on the tangible aspects of the technology and a neglect of critical management issues such as staff, skills, effects, and resources. Here are some classic symptoms:

- Within A-NCH-Y final decisions regarding the use and introduction of IT were not the sole responsibility of any particular person or group of people.
- The introduction and integration of IT within general operations and procedures was not part of any corporate strategic planning.
- Consequently changes in use of IT had taken place by accident or stealth, rather than by any design.

The most significant development was the introduction of the Family Placement database in 1996. The need for a database originated from the Social Services Inspectorate (a government body that inspects voluntary adoption agencies every three years) in 1994, after they found inconsistencies in the annual statistics gathered from the four different A-NCH projects. Initial discussions took place between senior NCH managers and external IT suppliers, and a database solution was piloted at the A-NCH project in the Midlands. The system was then installed in the other three projects, with hands-on training given to all the Project managers and a few administrative staff. All four A-NCH Projects were provided with the database so that a standard form of quarterly and annual statistics could be supplied to the Head Office. The decision to introduce the database was made initially by the Project Managers and then by the Adoption Sub-Committee. Each Project was responsible for maintaining its own database. After two to three years of use, the database was found to be inadequate, and went through extensive modification, carried out by a different IT supplier. One source of the problems with the initial version was that the designer of the system had no knowledge of the adoption process, and made little effort to consult experts. IT support for technical problems was provided centrally from Head Office. The Regional Director of Children's Services in the North East region contributed financially to the costs of the database for A-NCH-Y, but was unable to contribute further. Once the database was operational in Yorkshire, there was little input from this person, or any equivalent colleagues, for the maintenance and improvement of the system. Seemingly senior management at NCH saw the database simply as a piece of equipment that could be purchased, installed and operated at the flick-of-a-switch: Again a classic symptom of technological immaturity—managing the technology rather than the information.

One administrator at A-NCH-Y and the Project Manager were given training on the use of the database. Unfortunately the administrator subsequently left the Project, and the Project Manager was unable to attend the full training programme. The remainder of the project staff had limited IT training in general, and so were unable to make progress on their own in learning about the database and other applications of IT. Any priority for training and implementation of IT within A-NCH was focused on the Head Office and Regional Office, rather than on Project staff. Senior management at NCH operate with the belief that Head and Regional offices have the primary information management requirements and hence the most pressing need for IT; budgetary units such as A-NCH-Y, being smaller, are

considered to have less pressing requirements. Again, this is symptomatic of a focus on the technology rather than the information, since the source of much of the key organizational information is at the project level, and the volume of information flow at this level is vast and increasing.

Even when the technology was introduced at the regional level, the limited number of computers and the different demands for access meant that the Project team relied on one person to update the database and produce statistical information. The database was not always updated on time, and so its output was not considered reliable; therefore manual systems continued to be used for quarterly and annual statistics. This resulted in a situation where no-one was sure which source of information was accurate, and so many updating, recording and reporting processes were duplicated. This was exacerbated since the introduction of the database resulted in an increase in administrative tasks. This is not unusual, since any IT system requires an element of housekeeping and maintenance. Unfortunately there was no recognition of this at the Regional management level. Nor was any specific action taken to allow for the change in demand for skills and human resources for the new system. The problems mounted:

- Existing staff did not have the skills to use the IT available to them effectively.
- The database was not meeting the Project's basic needs and the requirements were also changing.
- Regional line management was unable to recognize the issues and pressures surrounding the use of an inadequate database and duplicated processes.
- The cost of further enhancements to the existing database or the possibility of a new information system was not considered, particularly since it was felt that the existing technology was not being used in a cost-effective manner – a classic Catch 22.

Nothing could be done at the Project level since there were considerable financial constraints. The Project was meant to be developing financial independence, so it was difficult to invest funds in more hardware, more training, additional personnel or extending its use of IT in general.

In any case such decisions would have required approval from NCH itself – from both the NCH committee and the adoption subcommittee. Since the latter is accountable to the Adoption Agencies Regulations, any changes involve a great deal of bureaucracy, and hence delay. Moreover, A-NCH-Y could have not embarked on such changes without the agreement of the other adoption Projects, as NCH was keen to ensure consistency across all adoption Projects.

In addition to the managerial and operational constraints, staff felt fearful about changing from manual to automated systems. Fear originated from lack of knowledge, changing technology and job insecurity. Staff felt they would experience more pressure to ensure information is regularly updated. The administrative staff felt insecure about social workers using computers to produce their own reports, as it was considered to be infringing on administrative responsibility. Furthermore, management considered social workers using computers to be a poor use of expensive resources as they are paid more than administrative staff. Again, a case of misunderstanding: As far as management were concerned, dealing with IT was a menial task, akin to typing or filing. The Project's established culture of specialization in the childcare field led them to concentrating on the provision of a social service. IT was seen purely as a way of automating and hastening support, rather than as facilitating more effective flow of information and enhanced operational processes. This aligned with the senior management policies that seem to have been guided by a view of IT, and the Family finders database in particular, as a way of retaining centralized control, rather than as a way of enhancing and evolving operational effectiveness.

For all the reasons given above, the chances of any smooth transition to an extended use of IT – led by successful operation of the database and change in procedures – were exceedingly poor. On the other hand the external and internal pressures to develop IT-based systems were immense and growing. Faced with such an impasse the Project Manager was eager to try any solution that would alleviate the symptoms and possibly promote genuine progress towards more effective operation,

clearer responsibilities and enhanced use of IT across the various groups involved in the adoption process. The process modelling exercise was one such opportunity.

Process Identification

Following the preparatory SWOT and PLEST exercises, the next stage of the study was to gain an understanding of A-NCH-Y itself. This involved identifying the processes that constitute the main activities of the Project.

A process consists of inputs and a transformation to produce the required output. The transformation element is considered to be the 'value-adding activity' (Earl, 1994, p13). Organizations often ignore processes or do not recognize their importance, particularly since they cross departmental boundaries. In this sense BPR is a misnomer: the 'R' stands for re-engineering, but the processes were never engineered in the first place; they just developed. BPR highlights the significance of processes within organizations: if they are poorly understood, dysfunctional and mismanaged, they will disrupt organizational activities to the detriment of its performance. Moreover, efforts to improve performance that fail to take account of processes will falter or fail, particularly schemes that are limited to 'throwing computers at a problem'.

Earl's (1994) categorization of processes was used to identify the processes at A-NCH-Y. First, core processes vital to business functionality, focus directly on the external customer; usually are the primary activities of the value chain. Secondly, support processes focus on internal customers and tend to support the core processes. These are often administrative, secondary activities of the value chain. Thirdly, business network processes extend beyond organizational boundaries and include suppliers, customers and associates. The redesign of external processes can often result in a reevaluation of business scope and alter the organization's position in the market. Finally, management processes enable organizations to plan, organize and control resources. Analyzing an organization in terms of these four types of business processes often confronts the status quo since it challenges and undermines people's assumptions, accepted structures and hierarchies. At the very least it evokes a clear justification of present procedures and operations.

In order to identify the processes and activities at A-NCH-Y, the project team was consulted to share their working knowledge of the project. The Project Manager, project workers and administrative staff were interviewed face-to-face from a standard, open-ended questionnaire. The project workers were asked questions concerning:

- their involvement & responsibilities in the project;
- what they consider to be the main project processes;
- areas of difficulties or problems;
- areas for improvement;
- information management;
- communication flows;
- the Family Placement database.

The project workers were helpful in explaining the various activities that take place within the project, and identifying the areas where problems tend to occur. This does not mean that they immediately understood the concept of a process. On the contrary, many had no idea that the organization could be seen in these terms, since a process does not have the same visibility as a department, project or geographical location. More confusingly, many interviewees had their own, often esoteric, interpretation of what 'process' meant, usually one that did not concur with our definition. Therefore time was taken to explain the concept carefully, in terms of inputs, activities and outputs, with defined starting and finishing points. As a result the project workers were able to grasp the idea, and assist the researchers in identifying the processes that exist at the Project level.

One useful consequence of the interviews was that respondents identified problem areas and issues, often pointing to symptoms of problems as well as the overall consequence of delays in the

adoption process. Hammer and Champy (1993) suggest some symptoms of dysfunctional processes, such as vast amounts of information being exchanged, or spending excessive time making and storing numerous copies of documents. Responses from interviewees echoed precisely these observations, and so provided a basis for process identification and assessment for intervention. One outcome of this exercise was a list and categorization of the processes (see Table 2). This was shown and explained to Project staff, the Project Manager and the Regional Director of Children's Services for review and validation. Certain processes could be placed in several categories. For example, the placement planning process is a support process to the core placement process, yet it also extends beyond the organizational boundaries, to include liaison with Local Authorities in the category of business network process. Therefore, certain difficulties emerged in using Earl's categorization, as the boundaries of the definition for each type of process are not sufficient where there are numerous processes that cross various functions and activities of the project. Nevertheless, Earl's categorization of processes was useful to clarify and prioritize processes into the core processes of the project. Review and categorization of the processes helped in selection of processes for redesign.

Process Mapping

Once the processes had been identified and categorized, the process stages were mapped on to process flow charts. Process mapping is a useful technique as it 'provides a graphical description of the activities, inputs and outputs of a process' (McManus, 1996, p23).⁷ Furthermore, process mapping helps to identify problem areas, bottlenecks and responsibilities for each process. Exhaustive process mapping was performed for all core, support, business network and management processes—40 processes in total. Process mapping was carried out by drawing process flow charts for each

Table 2: Process Categories

PROCESS	CATEGORY	DYSFUNCTION	Important and/or Feasible
Information Management	Core	Lots of information not effectively handled	BOTH
Statutory References	Core	Various local authorities - different procedures	BOTH
Circulation	Core	Unclear responsibility; delays	BOTH
Matching	Core	Information not handled well; roles unclear	BOTH
Placement	Core	Admin & database not systematically informed	BOTH
Post Adoption	Support	Time spent not monitored	BOTH
Adoption Archives	Support	Files prepared for archives - delay	BOTH
Child Protection	Support	Unresolved cases & conflict - no partnership with LAs	BOTH
Networking with Local Authorities	Business Network	No regular meetings to exchange information; issues not recorded	BOTH
Communication	Management	Internal & external messages not effectively handled	BOTH
Human Resource	Management	Delays; conflict of responsibility; pressure - due to lack of staff	Important
Financial	Management	Monthly cost/income report not received - unaware of budget details	Important
Technology	Management	Insufficient terminals; unable to extract statistical information from database	Important
Control System	Management	No performance measures for the project or Adoption Process	BOTH

process, including step-by-step stages described by interviewees, based on their knowledge of each process. This was validated and extended via discussions with project workers and observation of what they actually did – to confirm against what they said should be done.

The process flow charts were reviewed with the Project Manager, in order to clarify the distinction between the actual processes being performed and the managerial view of what and how they should be performed. This was sufficiently successful for A-NCH-Y to make revisions to their own adoption process flow chart based on the process flow chart produced by the process mapping exercise. Process mapping can help to determine whether activities are performed sequentially or in parallel. Furthermore it assists identification of points at which processes cross functional areas, and relationships between processes.

Selection of Processes

In the course of process definition and mapping, a range of issues and problem areas became clear. In order to clarify some of these issues in more detail, a soft systems methodology (SSM) was used to move from identification of a problem situation to an understanding of the diverse nature of the problem, something that was not always apparent to all or any of the problem owners.⁸

One outcome of both the process modelling and the SSM exercises was a table of processes and their respective key issues. A combination of criteria proposed by Hammer and Champy (1993) and Davenport (1993) was then used to identify which processes to consider for redesign. The criteria involve determining:

- *Dysfunction* – identifying processes that are the cause of significant delay and impact on overall effectiveness.
- *Importance* – those processes that are critical to the project and consumers.
- *Feasibility* – identifying those processes that are likely to be successfully redesigned.

All the processes were considered in terms of all three criteria, resulting in a list of dysfunctional and important processes that are feasible to redesign. All the core processes were important, and all were feasible for redesign.

The project workers and Project Manager highlighted processes with problems, such as Circulation and Matching, as they were aware of delays in processes resulting from breaks in information flow or communication. Difficulties arose in assessing the nature and extent of some forms of dysfunction. Moreover, it was sometimes difficult to determine whether a problem had minor or major impact on the overall adoption process, whether it was a management problem, whether slight adjustments or radical redesign were required to solve the problem and improve performance.

The importance of processes was relatively easy to determine, as core processes must be considered to be the most important and critical to the functioning of the project. Nevertheless, there are processes in other categories, such as Networking with Local Authorities, in the business network category, that are key to project success and are critically dysfunctional.

The feasibility criterion has to be treated carefully; it might be supposed that all processes can be successfully redesigned. However, there are often factors that may affect the success of redesign efforts or even prevent initiating redesign – e.g., financial constraints, limited human resources, time and scale of redesign. A-NCH-Y is a strategic business unit, with a small team of employees, with a heavy caseload and numerous responsibilities, and a limited budget. Any demand for increased investment in technology or more human resources must be carefully considered. Therefore, processes requiring large-scale redesign, with significant investment in technology and development of BPR project teams, were deemed unsuitable and unfeasible for A-NCH-Y at this time.

Two processes met all the criteria. Information Management is both a core and management process; Networking with Local Authorities is an important business network process. Both were feasible for redesign.

While identifying problems in specific processes, it became apparent that there were many

recurrent problems common to many processes; particularly accumulating paperwork, delays in sending and receiving information, late payments, communication breakdown, duplication of effort. Staff were aware of these, but had been unable to confront them since there were such limited resources in the Project. Some process activities were being completed, but only after much delay, and with increasing stress placed on staff. Other activities were often left incomplete or misunderstood. Since there were no written procedures for some processes and basic tasks, many activities were being performed on an ad hoc basis. If nothing else, the process modelling exercise at least clarified what ought to be done, and it was no surprise that Project staff were keenly interested in the details of the process models of redesigned processes that emerged from the study. Indeed the process charts were left with the staff on completion.

The two processes selected to undergo process redesign were:

- Information Management (IM)—Core Process—Dysfunctional & Important
- Networking with Local Authorities (NLA)—Business Network Process—Dysfunctional & Important

CURRENT CHALLENGES/PROBLEMS FACING THE ORGANIZATION

At this point a study that concentrated on an IT application would continue with consideration of the challenges that arise after completion of the scheme. This case study, on the other hand, concerns the problems—and opportunities—that have arisen in the context of an organization that has introduced IT in something of a haphazard manner. As such, many of the problems facing the organization predate the introduction of IT; but the opportunities afforded by the technology provide a way forward. Initially the issues relating to the two selected processes are outlined, followed by a discussion of the ways in which the organization can develop, making best use of IT in the context of a process-driven orientation, eventually leading towards what has been termed ‘technological maturity’. It should be understood, however, that the solutions to the problems outlined will always require a balance of technical and organizational changes. The key questions to be asked as one reads this final section of the case relate to the nature of this balance and how best the organization can assess if it has introduced effective change.

Information Management Process

The IM process is very long and complex. Since the activities of A-NCH-Y are information dependent the IM process affects all aspects of the project, and NCH as a whole. Problems with the process have extensive ramifications on the project, NCH, client families, Local Authorities and other organizations that rely on NCH in some way. Problems occur largely as a result of breaks in information flow. These may range from a minor problem such as photocopying a medical report to be distributed and filed, to a major problem such as a family or Panel members not getting the assessment form passed on to them in time. Whatever the cause, the results are delays, conflict and confusion. The information management process is affected in the following ways:

- required information is not reaching people on time;
- the database is not updated in a timely and accurate manner;
- information is collected and processed in a haphazard manner;
- incoming information—particularly referrals—are not dealt with promptly and effectively;
- time is wasted in looking for specific information in several places—it is unclear where it should be.

These problems are partly caused by a lack of human resources, whereby a small administrative team is dealing with vast amounts of information, and requests for that information from various sources. Crucially the responsibility and ownership of tasks is unclear. Certain tasks are considered to be administrative, whereas other tasks must be performed by social workers. This leads to conflict

and misunderstanding. For example, the Matching process relies on information received from Local Authorities about children who need adoptive placements. The task of registering receipt of this information is divided between administrative staff and Project social workers. Specific detailed information about the child, background and behavior must be recorded; but administrative staff are technically not qualified to do this. So it is left for one of the social workers, leading to delay at best, or incomplete information at worst. This is a procedural issue rather than a technical one.

The situation is further aggravated, however, by the lack of training and experience in using the Family Placement database. In order for it to function as an information resource, specific data must be entered into the database accurately and regularly, only then can it be used as the source of information and statistics. Generally data can be entered into the database without a great deal of know-how, although this does not mean that all Project workers feel confident to do this. Accessing the database and extracting relevant information is another matter, and both Project workers and administrative staff experience mounting frustration with these tasks. This frustration increases when quarterly and annual statistics are required for the Head Office. Since they are unable to produce this using the database, they have to spend significant time and effort compiling the returns from various –often paper-based–sources and completing the forms manually. It was not feasible to redesign the entire process since it is too complex, and there are legal restrictions that have to be heeded at some stages.

Examples of Areas for Redesign–Information Management Process

Statutory Reference Request & Return

Problem: Currently all statutory references are requested from Local Authorities, based on the assumption that Local Authorities do all the checks; however only some Local Authorities perform all the checks required, and so any remaining checks have to be requested elsewhere and re-initiated. Administration must find out which checks are not performed by the Local Authority, usually Police References, and must start the process again, involving a great deal of time and resources spent chasing the references requested.

There is uncertainty about whether administrative or social workers should register the returned statutory references. Files are not centrally located, often they are in the possession of the social worker responsible for the case, and it is not feasible or practical for administration staff to locate the file to register the statutory references.

Paperwork for Panel Meetings

The preparation for a Panel meeting is a cause of great stress on the Project team. The assessment report must be completed and sent to the family a minimum of 28 days before the Panel date. This is a legal requirement. During this time, any issues that arise from the document have to be discussed between the family and the social worker. Any changes must be reported to Administration to make the necessary amendments, and ensure that Panel members receive the completed case files at least a week before the Panel date. Presently, the amount of time to complete this process from the typing stage to Panel date is six weeks, which includes the legally required 28 days. The time is calculated from the Panel date. For practical reasons, the Panel papers should be sent to Panel members a week beforehand. This leaves administration less than two weeks to type the documents, which are lengthy and complex, and need to be done to a specified format.

In addition, administrators have to prepare other reports to inform the Panel about the progress of placements. If a family takes the full 28 days, which is not usual, then administration has less than a week to make any amendments and circulate the copies of all the documentation. Although this time scale appears to be reasonable, it is important to note that one member of administrative staff performs most of these tasks, and has other administrative duties. There

needs to be an allowance for extra time for certain aspects of this activity, but not at the expense of delaying the entire process for a family waiting for a decision, nor by adding to the work load of the social workers or administrative staff.

Response to Circulation–Receiving Child Referrals

Problem: There is a constant stream of child referrals and associated documentation into the Project. The child referrals are placed in a tray until social workers are able to meet to register them. Once the referrals have been registered by the social workers, the referrals are passed back to Administration for all the details to be logged onto the database. However, due to the amount of referrals coming in, and a lack of Administration time, referrals are piling up and not being registered or logged onto the database, affecting the statistics relating to the number of children in need of placements.

Networking with Local Authorities Process

The second process selected for redesign was Networking with Local Authorities (NLA). Local Authorities use A-NCH-Y to provide approved families for children in need of permanent adoptive placements. This process has many goals and activities it should be achieving, e.g., regular meetings to exchange information about the need for certain types of families to meet the needs of children, and establishing good working relationships that would be beneficial when dealing with other matters such as child protection cases. However many activities were not being performed. Meetings between A-NCH-Y and Local Authorities occurred on an ad hoc basis, and there was no routine for recording the information exchanged at these meetings. The process symptoms are identified below:

- disagreements and tension between the Project and Local Authorities;
- formal complaints from families about Local Authorities;
- no systematic way of arranging meetings between Project and Local Authority workers;
- no system for recording information exchanged and issues raised at meetings;
- delays occur when dealing with Local Authorities regarding statutory references, since different Local Authorities use different procedures;
- failure to resolve issues quickly and easily;
- A-NCH-Y not finding out about the needs of children in a systematic way;
- A-NCH-Y used on a low priority basis by some Local Authorities;
- ‘Matches’ that involve geographically distant Local Authorities are not cost or time effective for the Project;
- no sharing of training resources;
- A-NCH-Y not receiving up-to-date information about changes and new initiatives occurring in Local Authorities;
- minimal and varying cooperation from Local Authorities in Child Protection cases, communication was blurred, causing delays and confusion.

Required Outputs of the Networking with Local Authorities Process:

- Identify the needs of children (for the type of family required)
- Identify the backgrounds, ages, ethnicity, gender, special needs and religion of children
- Identify clear procedures and standards for Statutory References
- Resolution of conflict
- Identify new opportunities
- Establish working relationships with Local Authorities

New Challenges

The next stage of the study involved articulating a series of challenges and targets for A-NCH-Y, establishing new process objectives and standards for the two selected processes. Having

identified specific issues within the selected processes, the next step is for the project staff – and the organization as a whole – to move towards resolving the issues. This is best done by fostering a general acknowledgment of the shortcomings and their causes, complemented by a realization that the aim is to develop more effective processes, supported where relevant with enhanced IT capability. This can be summarized in the form of a new vision for each of the processes analyzed in detail.

Process vision provides a means of identifying and clarifying the long-term goals of a specific process. The process vision acts as a point of reference from which a process can be redesigned to help meet the overall business objectives and deliver value. A new vision for an existing process consists of specific measurable objectives, which are not met by the existing process, and that should be met by the new process (Davenport, 1993). The articulated vision may include objectives relating to cost-effectiveness, timeliness and reducing the number of hand-offs (Martinsons, 1995). It is crucial that the process vision is clearly understood and shared by all stakeholders of the process. Davenport's view of the emergence of a new vision starts from asking the question 'How could we do things differently?' He sees the development of a new vision as comprising activities oriented around a sequence of four questions (see Figure 1 - The Visioning Process). This can be applied to all processes identified in the case study, particularly the two selected for detailed analysis.

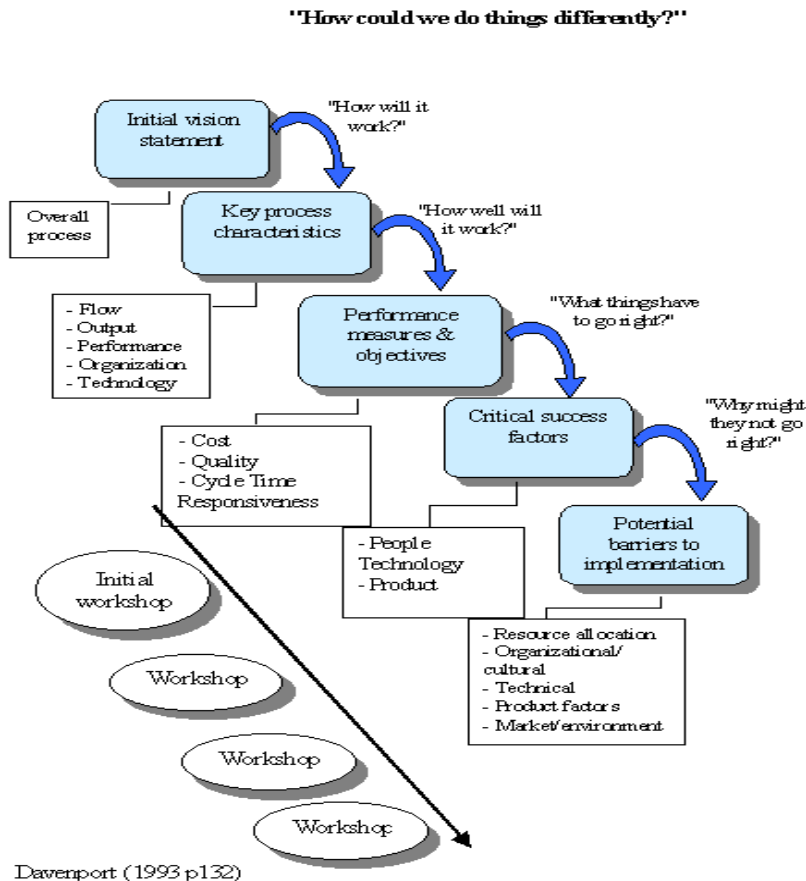
Process objectives are derived from the process vision and consist of the overall process goal and the type of improvements sought (Davenport, 1993). Process objectives break down the overall process vision into component parts, helping to identify medium and long-term goals. Measuring performance and setting process standards will enable A-NCH-Y to determine the extent to which the selected processes are achieving their objectives. Reducing the time spent in each stage of the information management process is a key objective. According to Harvey (1994), the more complex a process, the more time it takes to complete; particularly where a process consists of several subprocesses and numerous activities—e.g., the IM process. Performance measurement may be established by benchmarking against best practice. Setting performance standards provides a practical means of assessing progress towards the objectives. Establishing standards should be incorporated into monitoring and evaluation of processes, in order to determine whether a process is reaching an acceptable minimum level of performance.

New Vision for the Information Management Process

In order for the IM process vision to be established and its objectives to be achieved (see Table 3), information returned from external sources needs to be available at the right time, with clearly specified and understood roles and responsibilities. Each stage of the process must be formally identified. Furthermore, it is important that open communication exists between project workers. They must be encouraged and able to inform each other of important incoming and outgoing information, changes to assessment reports, the progress of statutory references and receipt of child referrals. In response to Davenport's (1993) visioning question of why the process might not go right, it is possible that achieving the new objectives may be undermined by a lack of training, the lack of administrative staff and delayed response from external sources. Furthermore, constraints on technological, financial and human resources are a potential barrier to this process reaching its objectives.

New Vision for the Networking with Local Authorities Process

In order for the networking process vision to be established, and its objectives achieved and targets to be met (see Table 4), specific conditions must prevail, e.g., effective planning to ensure that visits and meetings are arranged regularly. Furthermore, there must be willingness from both parties to create a working relationship, where communication must be open, in order for ideas and information to be exchanged. The purpose of meetings must be clearly identified at the outset, to ensure that the required outputs are achieved. The outputs of the networking process are identifying the needs of

Figure 1: The Visioning Process

children, identifying clear standards and procedures for statutory references, resolution of conflict, identification of new opportunities and changes in Local Authority environment. Contingencies must be built into counter factors which may hinder the process – e.g., lack of planning, additional pressure of time and workload on Project workers. Setting standards will provide guidelines for A-NCH-Y, and effective planning will help process objectives to be met.

Enablers of Change

The results that emerge from a process redesign exercise often confront existing procedures and assumptions. But such challenges have to be developed into a basis for profound change and improvement. This transformation from ‘challenge’ to ‘actualization’ requires identification and incorporation of what Davenport terms ‘enablers of change’. Examples of these potential drivers of change include financial, technological and human resources. IT is increasingly considered to be a powerful enabler of change, but this case study demonstrates all too clearly that technology is no substitute for intelligent analysis; careful preparation; and continuous assessment, learning and guidance. Organizations need to mature to a stage where they can evaluate their current problems and opportunities, and then decide if it is worthwhile seeking to incorporate technical solutions for specific organizational problems. In all cases this will require an insightful combination of technical and human enablers, and should remain focused on improved performance rather than technical gee-whizzadry. This demands not only identifying opportunities provided by human and technological resources, but

Table 3: Information Management Process Vision**Process Vision**

The systematic flow of information, to be easily and efficiently collected, recorded, extracted and collated when required, which is to be formalized and documented.

Process Objectives

- achieve coherent flow of information internally and externally
- handle information on a planned and systematic basis
- minimize delays between stages of the process and build in flexibility
- facilitate extracting of required information and statistics on a regular basis
- circulate family profiles to Local Authorities on a regular basis
- ensure that all referrals received are logged on the database
- ensure roles and responsibilities are clearly understood throughout each stage of the process
- reduce pressure on project workers

Process Standards

- reduce extraction time of statistics by 75%
- monthly circulation
- referrals received must be logged onto the database within two weeks of receipt
- approval decision must be logged on the database within one week
- adoption file must be closed within two months of the Adoption Order and sent to Archives one month later

Process Indicators

- time spent extracting statistical information
- time taken for a Statutory Reference to return and be logged
- time taken to circulate information and documents to relevant people (panel members, family, workers)
- number of circulations sent per year—minimum of 10

also being aware of constraints imposed by application of such resources.

Organizational and Human Resources as Change Enablers

Human resources and organizational structure are critical factors in process change. There are numerous benefits of team working, although the compatibility of team members must be considered. Furthermore, allowance must be made for such teams to coalesce and evolve. The A-NCH-Y Project consists of a team with cross-functional skills, where each member is a specialist with experience in their particular field drawn from the general domains of social work and administration. As a consequence of resource constraints, each team member must have general knowledge about the daily functions and processes within the Project. The team draws its motivation from satisfaction at providing a valuable service, particularly the ways in which it benefits children. Additional human resources will enable the Project to enhance its operational efficacy and develop its service. This resource growth should take the form both of additional staff, particularly support and managerial, but should also encompass better use of existing resources. An enhanced IM process will facilitate this, since it should make effective use of new, suitably skilled, support staff, resulting in far better use of the time and skills of existing professional and administrative personnel. In this sense specific improvements will be enabled by a combination of technical, human and organizational features.

Table 4: Networking with Local Authorities**Process Vision**

A systematic process to establish a working relationship with Local Authorities, through various forms of networking on a regular basis, from which information obtained must be recorded in a formalized manner.

Process Objectives

- exchange information about children's needs
- ensure that Local Authorities perform Statutory References to an agreed standard
- establish a good working relationship with neighboring Local Authorities
- market services and raise Project file
- solve conflicts and disagreements
- record meeting issues and action to be taken
- review links with Local Authorities regularly

Process Standards

- meetings between A-NCH-Y and Local Authority—every three months
- consortium meeting—monthly
- meet with 10 neighboring Local Authorities
- annual review of links with Local Authorities

Performance Indicator

- number of meetings with Local Authorities taking place per year—four per year
- number of Consortium meetings attended per year—12 per year

Constraints of Organizational and Human Resources

Lack of human resources is the prime constraint facing A-NCH-Y. There are insufficient social workers to deal with the increasing caseload. Administrative workers cannot deal with increasing volumes of information. There is a dearth of qualified IT staff. Unfortunately budgeting for increased staffing is a complicated matter. A-NCH-Y is a fee-based Project; the fee income derives from linking approved families with Local Authorities. Since the number of successful matches is dependent on a series of factors—numbers coming forward for adoption, rate of approval, disrupted placements, and so on—that are outside the control of the Project, predictions about future income are largely guesswork. With such uncertainty surrounding annual income and limited financial resources, A-NCH-Y cannot afford to employ more staff even if they do find themselves with a current surplus, since there is no guarantee that the situation will persist.

Information Technology as a Process Enabler

IT should support organizational and human resources in process change, supplying staff with information for decision-making and assisting in the performance of the process. Furthermore, computing and communications technologies enable process change, by reducing time and distance, and speeding up activities to be performed. The problem with implementing IT in organizations is that it is often applied to existing processes, seen simply as a way of automating processes which are dysfunctional (see the earlier quote from Beer). It is, therefore, critical to analyze processes in conjunction with any introduction of IT and information systems strategy planning, to ensure the

organization can benefit from redesigned, enhanced modes of working in conjunction with the potential afforded by the technology.

The employees at A-NCH-Y believe that they will benefit from having more IT resources, with at least one terminal dedicated to social workers and one terminal for the Project Manager. The Project workers want to take advantage of the information and analytical opportunities provided by IT. The processes at A-NCH-Y would clearly be enabled by IT in transferring documentation and information electronically; reducing the amount of misplaced paperwork, multiple copies and errors. Furthermore, automating certain tasks, with a lower demand for human resources, would result in a more efficient use of limited and expensive resources. The management processes would be enabled by IT, helping produce and analyze statistics, offering a basis for improved decision-making, forecasting and planning. Communication within the Project and with other offices, such as Local Authorities, NCH Regional and Head Offices, and exchange of documents would be greatly improved with the introduction of an internal communication network, such as an Intranet. A further step for A-NCH-Y would be to use IT to market their services on the Internet, therefore increasing their consumer base and their presence. Some families have come to the Project commenting on the lack of NCH Internet presence whilst they were researching adoption agencies and services available. There are numerous opportunities provided by IT from which A-NCH-Y can benefit, however there are also constraints.

Information Technology as a Process Constraint

Davenport (1993) explains that IT can be a constraint on process redesign and change implementation. The existing systems and technology infrastructure can itself impose inhibitions on possible developments. IT provides many benefits to organizations and process performance, but this is based on the assumption that employees already have skills and knowledge to use the equipment. It can be a constraint and financial liability if a great deal is invested in IT and no one is able to use it correctly.

A-NCH-Y is in such a situation with the Family Placement Database. The database has been in the Project for five years, since when there has been considerable turnover of administrative staff. Those who began to develop experience and skill with the database have left. The current staff have received some training, but not sufficient or comprehensive enough to be able to use it for the intended purpose – i.e. to input data and extract statistics on a quarterly and annual basis. Even those staff who have developed some familiarity with the system have not been kept abreast of updates and new releases of the software. Consequently staff lack confidence and tend to postpone database tasks to a later time. So there is a build up of data to be entered, and output is produced using inaccurate or outdated statistics. Training must be provided to IT users to ensure the best use of available facilities. Such training must be more than simply learning to use the technology, since A-NCH-Y deals with highly sensitive and confidential personal information that must remain secure. Widening and enhancing use of and access to the database is only feasible with secure and established measures in place to ensure that any information or documentation electronically accessed or circulated remains secure and protected from intruders and hackers. Developing intranet and Internet technology will demand still higher assurances of security and integrity.

The long-term objective of A-NCH-Y is to expand its presence in the North East of England, and to become the established market leader in its field. The process investigation exercise has provided the Project with the basis for a new process vision, objectives and standards for two critical processes – Information Management and Networking with Local Authorities. In order to realize these enhancements human, organizational and technological resources must be reassessed by members of the Project and NCH in general. A perspective that takes into account the overall maturity of the organization and its component parts is critical for the success of any development in the use and application of IT. Without this, enhancement and extensions to the database, whatever its potential benefits, are likely to have a severely negative impact. A-NCH-Y, and NCH as a whole, have to respond

to the challenges and opportunities that have started to be identified from the BPR exercise, avoiding the temptation to go for a quick technological fix in favour of a measured, open-minded and comprehensive understanding of their present situation. The results of the BPR exercise – particularly the new process visions – provide a rigorous and well-understood basis from which A-NCH-Y can initiate such change (with clear indications of where IT can play a role), and against which their progress can be judged.

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ENDNOTES

¹ Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

² Political, Legal, Economic, Social, Technological

³ This includes the Adoption Agencies Regulation 1983 (amended in 1997), The Adoption Act 1976 and the Children Act 1989.

⁴ Most of the figures that are quoted in the following section have been taken from the NCH Factfiles 1998-2000.

⁵ At time of writing the lead item in many newspapers concerns the case of twin girls *purchased* for adoption over the internet by a UK couple (the Kilshaws), but also claimed by a US couple (the Allens) who had previously bought them.

⁶ The originators of BPR - Hammer & Champy, and Davenport – later retracted and restated their views; but continued to stress that the primary importance of BPR was the **process** aspect above all others.

⁷ The American National Standards Institute symbols were used to map the Project's processes.

⁸ Lack of space precludes discussion of soft systems methods at this point - but it will be explored in the case study exercises.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

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