

North Somerset Council

REPORT TO THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES POLICY AND SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE OF MEETING: 11 OCTOBER 2018

SUBJECT OF REPORT: PERFORMANCE & FINANCIAL MONITORING

TOWN OR PARISH: ALL

OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SUPPORT AND SAFEGUARDING

KEY DECISION: NO

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Panel is asked to note the financial and performance information presented in this report and to give comment on both areas for improvement and areas of good performance.

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

The Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel requested regular performance and financial management monitoring reports to help members evaluate the extent to which the council and its partners are achieving key plans and objectives for children and young people's services, and to provide appropriate challenge and suggestions to improve performance.

The Panel's June 2015 meeting agreed the content of subsequent monitoring reports and this report presents the following standard items:

- a summary of any recent Ofsted inspections
- a breakdown of current safeguarding audits being undertaken
- an analysis of the performance of the relevant key corporate performance indicators
- a financial monitoring update

Additional data provided in this report includes:

- an overview of trends in the numbers of families receiving Early Help, Children in Need, children on a Child Protection Plan and Children Looked After.

2. POLICY

The council's Performance Management Framework includes a requirement for regular (at least quarterly) formal monitoring of our financial and performance position so that appropriate remedial action can be taken if needed.

3. DETAILS

INSPECTION AND IMPROVEMENT

Three inspections related to North Somerset Council services or North Somerset schools were carried out since the last report to this panel, and published on the Ofsted website.

Local Area SEND inspection report

- Inspection date: 14 May 2018
- Report published: 6 July 2018
- <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/north-somerset>

Kewstoke Primary School

- Inspection date: 7 June 2018
- Report published: 28 June 2018
- The school's previous grading was 'Good'. The school continues to be 'Good'.

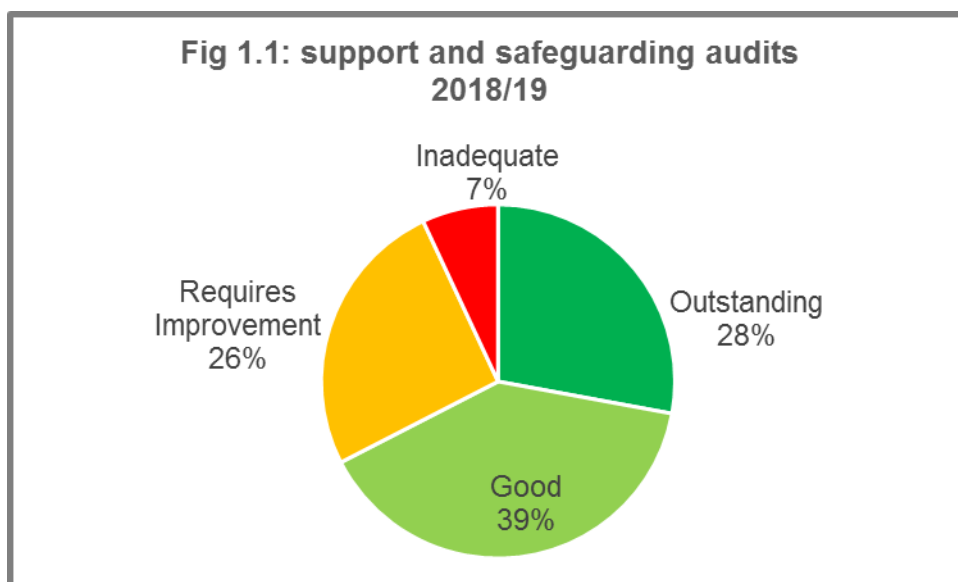
Westhaven School

- Inspection date: 10 July 2018
- Report published: 5 September 2018
- The school has been graded as 'Good' across all areas. The school was previously graded as 'Requires Improvement'.

CASE AUDITS

Case audits are an important tool to ensure quality and consistency and promote a culture of learning and improvement. There is a programme of regular case audits undertaken by managers across Support and Safeguarding. This includes members of the Directorate Leadership Team auditing a case chosen at random monthly as a routine part of the leadership team meeting and, in addition, the North Somerset Safeguarding Children Board undertaking a programme of multi-agency audits.

The audit process within Support and Safeguarding involves grading the cases sampled with gradings ranging from 'Inadequate' to 'Outstanding'. The findings from these case audits are fed back to teams and individual workers as appropriate. In the first quarter of 2018/19, 67% of cases audited were graded as 'Outstanding' or 'Good' (fig 1.1). This is above that seen in 2017/18 (55%).



KEY CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

There are seven key corporate performance indicators for children's services with data available to report, these are shown below.

Please note data is provided as at Q1 of the 2018/19 financial year.

	Result	Met target?	Comments	National benchmarking
An increase in the number of Early Help episodes	1,242 episodes	Green	The number of Early Help episodes (early interventions) continues to increase each quarter, with more episodes being opened than closed.	Locally defined measure, no benchmarking data available
A decrease in the number of Children in Need	600 children	Green	The number of Children in Need increased slightly in Q1 but is still below that of national and stat neighbour levels.	Benchmarking given as a rate per 10,000, NS was below both national and statistical neighbours in Q1
A decrease in the number of children on a Child Protection Plan	138 children	Green	Q1 of 2018/19 continued to see a decrease in the number of children on a Child Protection Plan.	Benchmarking given as a rate per 10,000, NS was below both national and statistical neighbours in Q1
Increase the number of families engaged in the High Impact Families programme	933 families	Green	This measure met its Q1 target, with more families being worked with under the High Impact umbrella.	Locally defined measure, no benchmarking data available
Increase the number of families engaged in the High Impact Families programme showing significant and sustained progress	301 families	Green	The number of families engaged in the High Impact Families programme showing significant and sustained progress increased in Q1 of 2018/19.	Locally defined measure, no benchmarking data available
A reduction in the number of children over the age of 10 years becoming looked after	Number suppressed	Green	Q1 of 2018/19 saw a decrease in the number of children over the age of 10 years entering care. <i>Please note the number of children has been suppressed due to confidentiality.</i>	No benchmarking data available
A reduction in the number of Looked After Children overall	231 children	Red	Q1 of 2018/19 saw a decrease in the number of Children Looked After.	Benchmarking given as a rate per 10,000, NS was below the national average but above statistical neighbours in Q4

FINANCIAL MONITORING

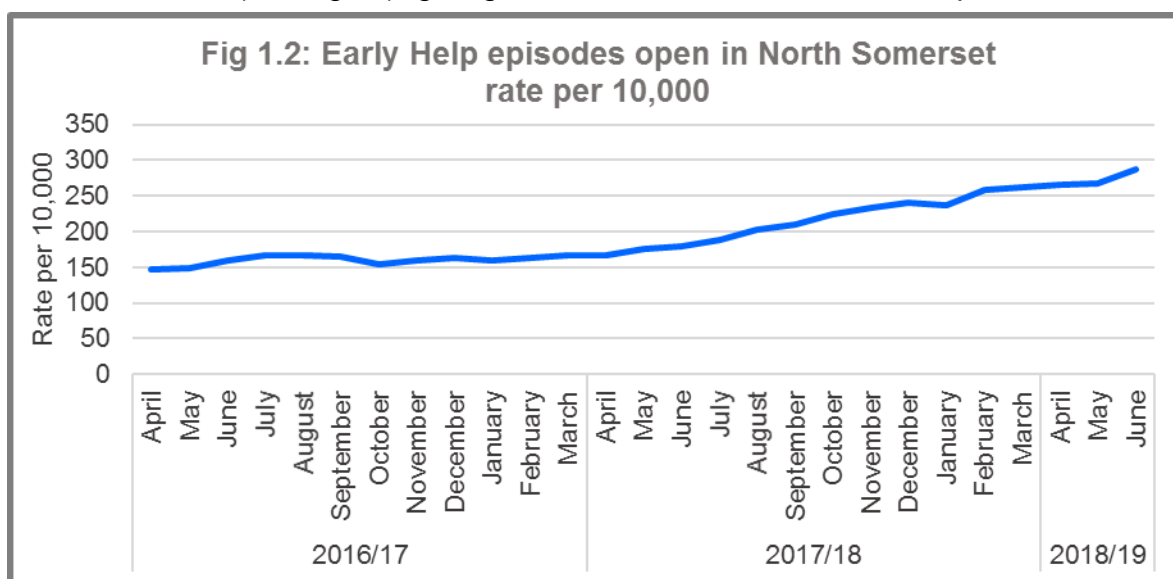
A financial monitoring update is being reported under a separate item on the agenda.

TRENDS IN THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN RECEIVING EARLY HELP, CHILDREN IN NEED, CHILDREN ON A CHILD PROTECTION PLAN AND CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER

Early Help

Early Help is available for children and young people up to the age of 18 and their families who may need extra support. Early Help is entirely voluntary and can be accessed without a referral. Services that offer Early Help include schools across North Somerset, Children's Centres, and High Impact Families. Services might include family support, parenting classes and help into employment.

In Q1 of 2018/19, there were over 1,200 Early Help episodes, with more episodes being opened than closed (a net gain), giving a North Somerset rate of 287.4 per 10,000.



Demographic analysis of the Early Help cohort throughout 2018/19 showed that:

- There were slightly more episodes open for males than females.
- The percentage of BME children with an Early Help episode (6%) is slightly below what would be expected as a comparison against the population (8%, School Census 2018).
- Approximately 10% of all Early Help episodes were for disabled children, a slight increase on 2017/18.

The categories of referral for Early Help episodes that children were most likely to be referred in on were (and in descending order):

- Other (including the High Impact Families programme).
- Family and Environment (including support for parents around housing, employment and finance).
- Development of the baby, child or young person (including emotional and social development and self-care and independence).
- Request for 0-2 funding.
- Parents and carers (including basic care, safety and protection and emotional support and stability).

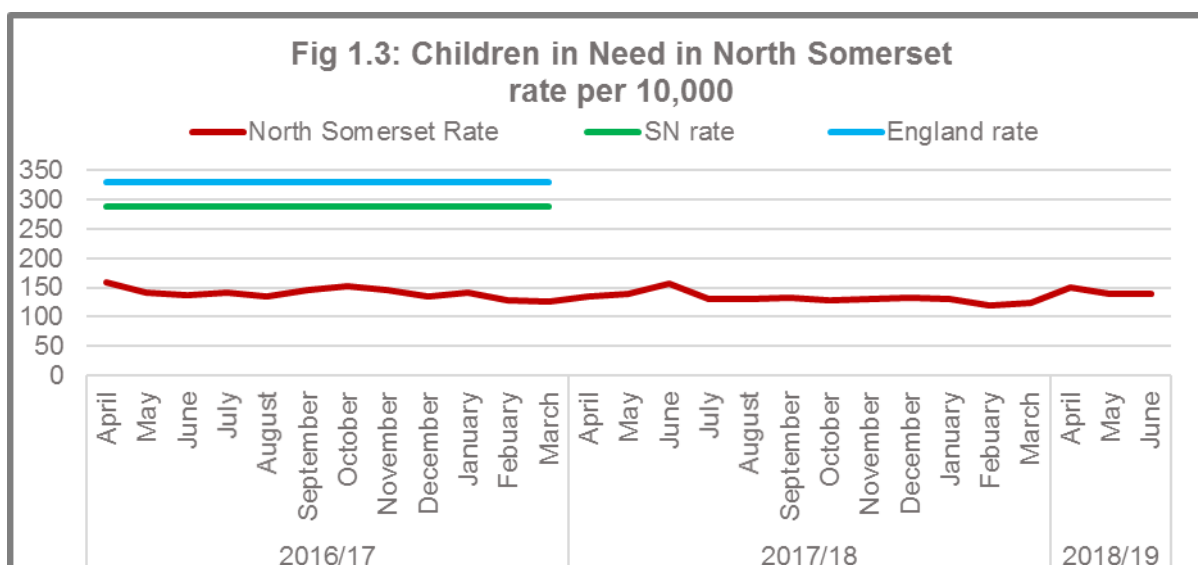
Children in Need

A child can be considered in need if there is:

- a need for local authority services to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development
- a need for local authority services to prevent significant or further harm to health or development
- are disabled.

In North Somerset during Q1 of 2018/19 the number of children in need varied between 600 and 652 (excluding those who were under a Child Protection Plan or Looked After), with the rate per 10,000 varying between per 138.8 per 10,000 and 150.9 per 10,000 (given as at months end). These rates are below the national rate and that of our statistical neighbours (fig 1.3), though it should be noted that national and stat neighbour rates are calculated slightly differently.

There are no obvious seasonal trends in terms of the number of children in need but the last 12 few months have seen a slight increase in numbers.



Demographic analysis of the CiN cohort throughout Q1 of 2018/19 shows that:

- The percentage of BME children who have been or are CiN is similar to what would be expected as a comparison against the population (School Census 2018)
- Around 27% of Children in Need are disabled children.

The categories of need that CiN children are most likely to be referred in on are (and in descending order): family in acute stress, abuse or neglect, disability, family dysfunction, and parental illness or disability.

Factors of assessment i.e. issues identified for Children in Need during their assessments for 2017/18 (*there are often numerous factors per assesment*) include:

- Alcohol misuse (child/parent/carer/other person): 21.3%
- Drug misuse (child/parent/carer/other person): 25.1%
- Domestic violence (child/parent/carer/other person): 51.7%
- Mental health (child/parent/carer/other person): 63.8%
- Disability (learning or physical) (child/parent/carer/other person): 41.3%
- Abuse or neglect (child/parent/carer/other person): 56.9%

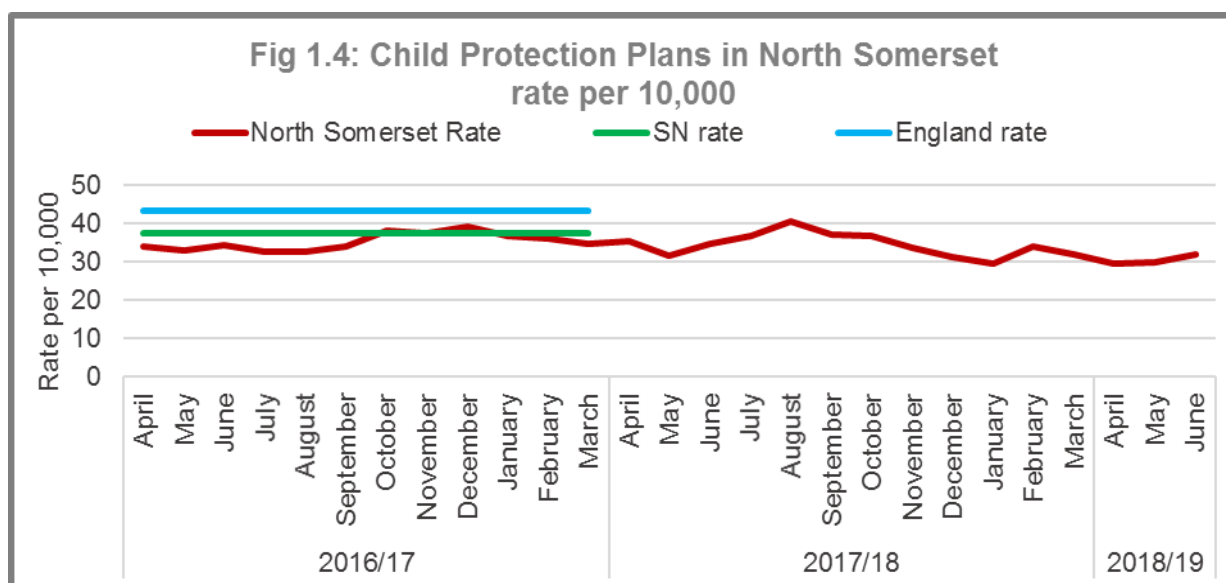
Child Protection Plans

Some children are in need because they are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. In this case a Child Protection Conference is held. If the Child Protection Conference decides that the child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, the local authority will draw up a Child Protection Plan. It sets out how the child can be kept safe, how things can be made better for the family, and what support they need.

In North Somerset during Q1 of 2018/19 between 127 and 138 children were the subject of a Child Protection Plan, with the rate per 10,000 varying between 29.4 per 10,000 and 31.9 per 10,000 (given as at months end).

This is below both the national and our statistical neighbour rate (fig 1.4).

There are no obvious seasonal trends in terms of the number of children on a Child Protection Plan, however the summer of 2017 saw a spike in the number of children on a Plan. This has since fallen.



Demographic analysis of the CP Plan cohort throughout 2018/19 shows that:

- Around 54% of children on a Plan are over the age of six years.
- On average, there were slightly more females than males during the period.
- The percentage of BME children on a CP Plan (6.6%) is slightly below what would be expected when compared to the profile of the population (8%, School Census 2018).
- There has been an increase in the number of disabled children on a Plan as of October 2017, moving from an average of 2% to just below 10%. This may in part be due to better recording of disability.

The categories of need that have been seen for children on a CP Plan have remained fairly steady throughout the first quarter of 2018/19 with neglect and emotional abuse being the most likely reason for a child coming on to Plan followed by sexual abuse and then physical abuse.

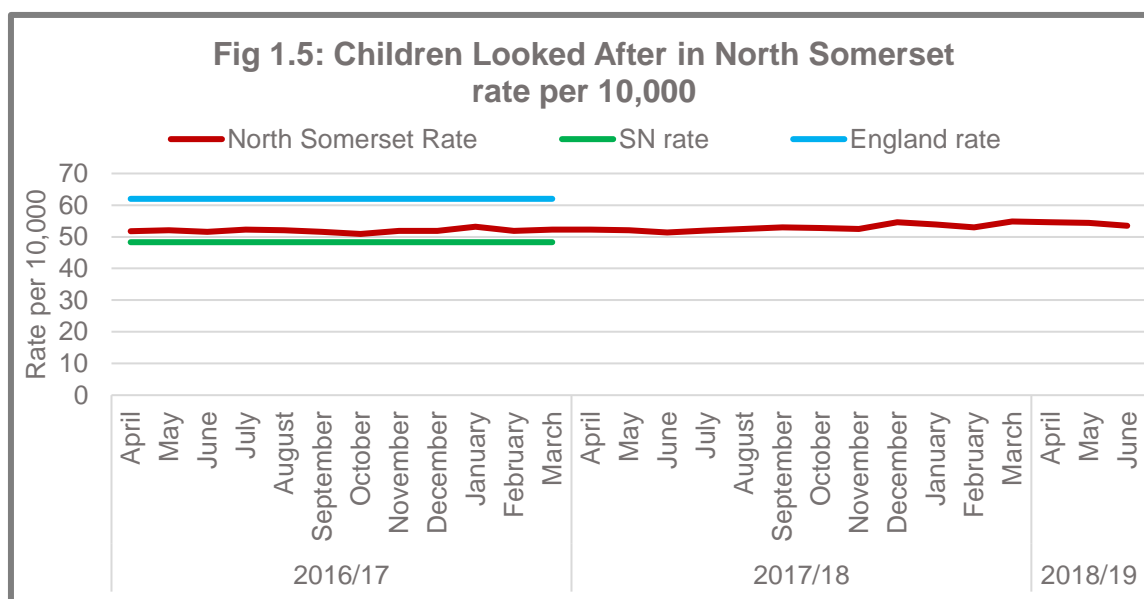
Children Looked After

When a child becomes 'looked after' the council takes on a parenting role, either with the agreement of the parents or through a court order which gives the local authority a share of parental responsibility. Looked after children cease to be looked after on reaching their eighteenth birthday, if they have not ceased previously.

The reasons for increases and decreases in numbers of looked after children are complex. The Assistant Director and service leaders tightly monitor all requests for a child to be looked after. Every looked after child is reviewed to ensure that care plans are being progressed and plans to return children home wherever possible are being actioned.

In North Somerset during Q1 of 2018/19 the number of looked after children has remained fairly steady at between 231 and 236 children, with the rate per 10,000 also remaining steady at between 53.2 per 10,000 and 54.6 per 10,000 (as at months end). 11 of the 231 looked after children were unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

This rate is below that of the national rate but continues to remain slightly above that of our statistical neighbours (fig 1.5).



Demographic analysis of the Children Looked After cohort throughout 2018/19 shows that:

- There was a fairly equal split of males and females
- The percentage of BME children who were looked after (13%) was slightly higher than would be expected as a comparison against the population (8%, School Census 2018)
- Around 12% of children who were looked after were disabled.

The categories of need that Children Looked After were mostly likely to experience (and in descending order) during Q1 2018/19 were abuse or neglect, family in acute stress, family dysfunction, absent parenting, disability and parent illness or disability.

4. CONSULTATION

Directors have been fully consulted over the content of this report.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no additional financial implications as a consequence of this report.

6. LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

N/A

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

N/A

8. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

The equality objectives (part of the Corporate Performance Management Framework) are regularly monitored and are reported to the Corporate Management Team and the Council's Equality Scheme Implementation Group.

9. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

It is important that we are aware of the areas in which we are performing well and where further action is needed to address any concerns.

10. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

N/A

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 2018/19 Q1 CMT performance reports
- 2018/19 Q1 Directorate performance reports
- Support and Safeguarding Team quarterly reports (2016/17 to 2018/19)