

Public Document Pack

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Date: Wednesday, 2 March 2022

Dear Sir or Madam

The Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel – Thursday, 10 March 2022, 10.00 am – New Council Chamber - Town Hall

A meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel will take place as indicated above.

The agenda is set out overleaf.

Yours faithfully

Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer

To: Members of the Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Councillors:

Wendy Griggs (Chairman), Mark Aplin, Caroline Cherry, Ciaran Cronnelly, Mark Crosby, Hugh Gregor, Ann Harley, Steve Hogg, Nicola Holland, Ruth Jacobs, Huw James, Lisa Pilgrim, Timothy Snaden and Richard Westwood, vacancy, vacancy

Added Members: Claire Hudson (Church of England Representative), Caroline Holstein (Catholic Church Representative), Vacancies: Primary and Secondary/Special School Parent Governor Representative

Right to Speak: Fiona Waters (Weston College), Kenton Mee, North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together Vacancy: North Somerset Youth Parliament

This document and associated papers can be made available in a different format on request.

Agenda

1. Election of Vice-Chairman for the 2021/2022 Municipal Year (Agenda item 1)

Recommendation of election of Vice-Chairman, Councillor Steve Hogg, at Informal Panel meeting on 30 June 2021 (for ratification)

2. Public Discussion (Standing Order SS 09) (Agenda item 2)

To receive and hear any person who wishes to address the Panel on matters which affect the District and fall within the remit of the Panel. The Chairman will select the order of the matters to be heard.

Members of the Panel may ask questions of the member of the public and a dialogue between the parties can be undertaken.

Requests to speak must be submitted in writing to the Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer, or the officer mentioned at the top of this agenda letter, by noon on the day before the meeting and the request must detail the subject matter of the address.

3. Apologies for Absence and Notifications for Substitutes

4. Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interest (Standing Order 37) (Agenda item 4)

A Member must declare any disclosable pecuniary interest where it relates to any matter being considered at the meeting. A declaration of a disclosable pecuniary interest should indicate the interest and the agenda item to which it relates. A Member is not permitted to participate in this agenda item by law and should immediately leave the meeting before the start of any debate.

If the Member leaves the Chamber in respect of a declaration, he or she should ensure that the Chairman is aware of this before he or she leaves to enable their exit from the meeting to be recorded in the minutes in accordance with Standing Order 37.

5. Minutes and Notes (Agenda item 5) (Pages 5 - 50)

5.1 Formal Panel Meeting Minutes – 11 March 2021 recommended for approval as a correct record at Informal Panel meeting dated 30 June 2021 (for ratification)

5.2 Informal Panel Meeting Notes – 30 June 2021 (attached) for information

5.3 Informal Panel Meeting Notes – 21 October 2021 (attached) for information

6. Matters referred by Council, the Executive, other Committees and Panels (if any) (Agenda item 6)

7. Family Support and Safeguarding Update (Agenda item 7) (Pages 51 - 92)

8. Children's Improvement Focus Group - Front Door - Forward Plan (Agenda

- item 8) (Pages 93 - 94)
9. **CYPS Working Group - Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) - Terms of Reference and Forward Plan (Agenda item 9)** (Pages 95 - 96)
 10. **Q3 Performance Monitoring Report (Agenda item 10)** (Pages 97 - 114)
 11. **CYPS Working Group - Care Leavers (NEET) - Terms of Reference and Forward Plan (Agenda item 11)** (Pages 115 - 118)
 12. **Joint CAMHS (CYPS & HOSP) Working Group - Overview of Findings (Agenda item 12)** (Pages 119 - 124)
 13. **Month 10 Children's Services Budget Monitor (Agenda item 13)** (Pages 125 - 136)
 14. **Panel's Work Plan (Agenda item 14)** (Pages 137 - 162)
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Exempt Items

Should the Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel wish to consider a matter as an Exempt Item, the following resolution should be passed

“(1) That the press, public, and officers not required by the Members, the Chief Executive or the Director, to remain during the exempt session, be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the ground that its consideration will involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972.”

Also, if appropriate, the following resolution should be passed –

“(2) That members of the Council who are not members of the Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel be invited to remain.”

Mobile phones and other mobile devices

All persons attending the meeting are requested to ensure that these devices are switched to silent mode. The chairman may approve an exception to this request in special circumstances.

Filming and recording of meetings

The proceedings of this meeting may be recorded for broadcasting purposes.

Anyone wishing to film part or all of the proceedings may do so unless the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting or there is good reason not to do so, as directed by the Chairman. Any filming must be done as unobtrusively as possible from a single fixed position without the use of any additional lighting, focusing only on those actively participating in the meeting and having regard to

the wishes of any members of the public present who may not wish to be filmed. As a matter of courtesy, anyone wishing to film proceedings is asked to advise the Chairman or the Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer's representative before the start of the meeting so that all those present may be made aware that it is happening.

Members of the public may also use Facebook and Twitter or other forms of social media to report on proceedings at this meeting.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

On hearing the alarm – (a continuous two tone siren)

Leave the room by the nearest exit door. Ensure that windows are closed.

Last person out to close the door.

Do not stop to collect personal belongings.

Do not use the lifts.

Follow the green and white exit signs and make your way to the assembly point.

Do not re-enter the building until authorised to do so by the Fire Authority.

Go to Assembly Point C – Outside the offices formerly occupied by Stephen & Co

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Minutes

of the Virtual Meeting of the

Children & Young People Services Policy & Scrutiny Panel

Thursday 11 March 2021

held via Microsoft Teams

Meeting Commenced: 10.00 am Meeting Concluded: 12:23 pm

Councillors:

P Wendy Griggs (Chairman)
A Steve Hogg (Vice Chairman)

P Marc Aplin
P Steve Bridger
P Mark Crosby
P Ann Harley
P Ruth Jacobs
P Lisa Pilgrim
Richard Westwood

P Caroline Cherry
P Ciarán Cronnelly
Hugh Gregor
P Nicola Holland
P Huw James
A Tim Snaden

P: Present

A: Apologies for absence submitted

Other Councillors in attendance: Catherine Gibbons, Sandra Hearne

Officers in attendance: Carolann James, Mike Newman (People & Communities)
Michèle Chesterman, Brent Cross, Mike Riggall, Katherine Sokol, Ayesha Tinsley (Corporate Services)

Right to Speak: Kenton Mee, North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together (The Parent Carer Forum in North Somerset)

Other persons in attendance: Lorraine McMullen, Associate Director of Children's Services, Sirona Care and Health, Heather Kapeluch, Head of Operations for CAMHS, Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust, Sarah Jones, Clinical Director, CAMHS, Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust, Anna Norris, Senior Contracts Manager, NHS Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire CCGC

CAY Chairman's Welcome

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The Chairman welcomed everyone to this virtual Children and Young People's Policy and Scrutiny Panel meeting. She explained the procedures to be followed at the meeting and confirmed that proceedings would have the same standing and validity as if they had taken place at a physical meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel meeting in the Town Hall

The Chairman reminded everyone that the meeting was being livestreamed on the internet and that a recorded version would be available to view within 48 hours on the North Somerset Council website.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting with a particular welcome to health colleagues, Kenton Mee, Parent and Carers Together and Ann Hartley from Shropshire Council, LGA Advisor.

At the invitation of the Chairman a roll call was taken of the Panel members by Democratic Services for the benefit of those in attendance and members of the public watching the meeting online.

CAY Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (Agenda item 3)

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None.

CAY Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 October 2020 (Agenda item 4)

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Resolved: that the minutes of the last meeting held on the 29 October 2020 be approved as a correct record.

CAY SEND Action Plan Update Report (Agenda Item 6)

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The Strategy and Policy Development Manager, Children's Services presented the report. Members were informed that the report was an update on the progress of the SEND action plan, presented at the panel meeting on 18 June 2021. The paper noted specific actions and risks, and graded each area of work as green, amber or red based on risk. Finally, the recommendations of the recent LGA Peer Review and feedback from the Department of Education and NHS England were considered in terms of the Authority's current plans.

Members were reminded that the SEND Action Plan was agreed by partners across the local area in January 2020 alongside the first joint SEND Strategy and Co-production charter.

The aim of the plan was to provide an overall strategic view of the programme of work required to bring together all remaining actions required to meet the issues raised in the Ofsted/CQC Local Area Review (LJAR) and to detail further actions required to ensure that outcomes were sustainable, and that the impact of the work on the lives of children and young people could be demonstrated.

The plan had a horizon of two years, with a review to be undertaken by the SEND Programme Board in early 2021. Each area of work was expected to be subject to more detailed delivery planning, including development of timescales, by partners.

Members' attention was drawn to the highlights of the work undertaken since the update to the June 2020 Panel meeting which included:

- The reduction in the rate of 'refused assessments' (which were often the result of inappropriate referrals by partners) from 50% to 6%
- The agreement to jointly fund the Supportive Parents SENDIAS service and North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together forum with BNSSG CCG on a three-year agreement, providing some certainty and sustainability for these key services.
- The use of accurate projections and analysis to ensure that capacity in key services was improved and capital projects supported
- A range of capital projects were now at various stages of positive progress: a second site for Baytree School's expansion, a new Free School supporting children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs (SEMH) and hubs at mainstream schools to support children with Autistic Spectrum Conditions.
- Additional investment in CAMHS and forthcoming expansion of Off The Record pre-CAMHS services into North Somerset
- Relationships with parents and carers were improving, with considerable progress made in delivering new guidance documents

- The Inclusion Summit took place in November 2020 and renewed a commitment to inclusion and mutual support across mainstream and special schools

Many of the district's vulnerable children and young people had continued to attend school throughout the pandemic and the schools had served them well in sometimes very challenging circumstances. North Somerset had one of the highest attendance rates during the pandemic in the South West and had recovered much quicker than other authorities with 85% attendance in schools which was encouraging to hear and a vote of thanks to them.

Members noted that alongside highlights there were also Risks which included:

- Continued pressure in terms of increased assessment requests, EHC plans and requests for places in specialist provision with projections showing this increase was set to continue;
- The rate of EHC assessments delivered within the 20-week statutory timescale was recovering, but still low (16%) following issues with Educational Psychology capacity;
- A significant number of the 'refused assessments' which were received resulted from partners being unable to access CAMHS mental health services for children with anxiety and EHCPs being seen as a 'last resort' by schools;
- While the equity of health provision across the BNSSG footprint had been improving and clearer leadership around SEND health services was in place, there were further actions needed to agree how complex care packages were jointly commissioned;
- Waiting lists for Autism assessment were still too long despite improvement, with parents reporting little support whilst on the journey to diagnosis;
- Parents' confidence in home to school transport (HST) arrangements remained low following challenges in September 2020 (there had been issues around home to school transport which had been an issue over the course of the last few months but it was hoped that some progress was being made);
- There was still some way to go to ensure that parents engaged in all decisions about services, and in particular to engage children and young people in co-production. Plans for this work had been heavily impacted by Covid-19. (Schools had been so compromised and challenged that getting into schools to carry out some of that work had been really difficult but it was something that the Authority was expected to get back to soon)
- Further improvements in the use of technology to support the EHC system needed to be progressed, including funding the online EHCP portal.

Members were directed towards the RAG rated action plan in the report and also some of the responses noted on the LGA recommendations – where they were picked up, those that the Authority differed on and what the Authority proposed to do. The action plan referred to a Head of Education Partnerships. Members were advised that the position of Head of Education Partnerships had been re-examined and the Authority would now be recruiting for an Assistant Director of Education Partnerships instead.

The Strategy and Policy Development Manager and Interim Assistant Director, Children’s Support and Safeguarding responded to the following Members’ queries (with officers’ responses in italics):-

- I wondered whether it would be possible to be provided with some more information about Home to School Transport and when members will be involved in it next? I was aware there was due to be an update in January 2021 but that did not happen - *I am waiting for the same meetings to happen. I know there have been some meetings and an action plan has been drawn up with the Integrated Transport Unit which is in the Place Directorate. They have been in touch with the SEND team to see how links can be improved with the team and also to be more aware of students’ needs and issues that may arise. More work is being undertaken and hopefully there should be an update soon.(MN)*
- North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together raised a number of challenges in relation to home to school transport that arose in September 2021. A number of meeting had taken place with the home to school transport team and there had been significant progress. The organisation was just waiting for some reassurances from the home to school transport team that the issues in relation to the electronic system for scheduling and recording information and delivering information to parent carers had been resolved and that the same challenges would not be faced again –*The priority at the moment is the fully re-opening of schools and testing but I will get a specific update to all councillors about the progress we have made so far in relation to home to school transport and what we still have to address before the end of March 2021 (CJ).*
- I was reading about the Inclusion Summit that took place in 2020 and was expecting to hear more detail about it. It sounded like it was a very interesting discussion - *Yes it was. It was an opportunity for us to get together what is quite a disparate group of schools. As you are probably aware school leadership is more disaggregated than it used to be and sometimes schools have grown apart from each other. The summit brought them back together into a collegiate sense of how schools worked together to present an education system in North Somerset which is coherent, works together and avoids exclusions and parents feeling that they need to leave the formal education system to teach their children at home – a growing issue nationally and certainly one that has been growing in North Somerset.*

- *The summit also provided the opportunity for the Authority to reaffirm its role as commissioner of education in North Somerset. With a new Assistant Director joining the Authority there was an opportunity to provide not just the helpful role to schools, to bring them together, but also to provide a little challenge to them around standards and outcomes and inclusion. The summit was the start of that and schools have been working together quite effectively since. Some of the impacts have been seen, particularly in secondary schools. There are inclusion panels that meet every couple of weeks to look at children who are at risk of perhaps falling out of the school system. There has been excellent joint working between some of our secondary schools. Some of that joint working was in place before but since the Inclusion Summit they have begun to understand how each other work and effectively join up. It is hoped that this will be replicated in the primary sector but there are many more of those schools so this is more challenging but very positive.*
- *A follow up meeting took place at the end of the Inclusion Summit. One of the commitments for inclusion was trying to work together across all the SENCOs based in schools to equip people with the skills to be able to better support children and young people in mainstream education. Academies and local authority-maintained schools across North Somerset shared skills, knowledge and ideas to be able to support and work together and also to improve on the Inclusion Panels. That also includes primary areas.*
- *I noted the anxiety in relation to EHCPs being seen as a last resort by schools and would like to know whether, with BNSSG joining, North Somerset has the same funding and whether there will be any funding from the government for Covid? - In terms of EHCPs – there is the issue around schools tending to refer people in for EHCPs when they feel it is a last resort and they are not managing very well. The inclusion summit and some of the joint working is the way we have looked to address that. Skilling up schools to recognise and address need and to be able to meet by sharing their expertise is much more effective than trying to pull children out of the system into a separate system except where that is absolutely critical and the only way of meeting that need. We have said in our education commissioning strategy we want children in North Somerset to go to a local school, to be educated in their community and to grow up and become independent in that community. We want that to be the same for children with SEND. Only in very few cases should it need to be different. In terms of parity of funding this issue will come up in the next agenda item. Colleagues are here from BNSSG and AWP and also Anna Norris, the Contract Manager from BNSSG CCG will be able to answer the parity of funding across the areas. I know we have seen some improvements and some changes but she will be able to answer that.*

- It is important to engage all parents and carers. I have some concerns about issues when children return to schools. How do we as an authority deal with communicating to parents that their child needs help. Is there anything in the action plan to identify where there will be need and how to address it? - *All of our work has indicated that parents are recognising needs and quite often demands on us are increasing as a result. I am confident that parents are telling us when they need services. Organisations such as Parent Carers Together and Supportive Parents are very helpful in terms of helping parents to formulate questions, challenges and requests for services. I am not too worried about parents not engaging with us. Schools and our early years team have some excellent ways of working with parents and children to detect some of those issues very early. MAISEY (Multi-agency Identification and Support in the Early Years) supports provision planning from early identification of need until school entry, ensuring where possible that transfers to pre-school and school are successful for every child. It is nationally regarded as a very strong way of identifying need and that transfer into schools is managed really effectively through MAISEY. Our primary school SENCOs are very adept at supporting parents. Whilst I recognise the concern it is not something we are seeing in North Somerset at the moment.*
- Should we be using 'we will ensure' in the action plan? Unless it is statutory it is saying we are going to do it. This means that unless we do it we will be held to account - *Generally speaking the actions in the action plan are drawn from our statutory responsibilities so 'we will' is a sensible thing to write. I think some of it is also about the commitments we have made to parents and carers that we will absolutely do those things. It is an action plan and we are a year in and we have made some progress on it. I am not aware of anything that we haven't made any progress on despite the circumstances. I am therefore confident that where we have said 'we will' we will do those things. We will keep reviewing it because it is important.*
- I read SEND action plan with interest and can see there has been a great deal of progress but there was a reference to background information that was not included. I do hope that we as CYPS can be shown the co-production charter and have some input on the child sufficiency strategy. In terms of how we improve access to our local offer I have seen that there is reference to online portals for obtaining EHCPs and that this has been trialled in other areas. Is this something we are going to do? – *The charter and action plan is published and I can certainly make sure that it is circulated to members of the Panel. In terms of the online offer the online EHCP portal is something that we are committed to, has been very successful in other areas, and the Department for Education is very committed to areas having. We are aware that the process of applying for an EHCP is quite demanding on parents and requires them to do quite a bit of work and input. At the moment they need to chase and challenge by phoning the SEND team during office hours (9-5). The ability to log in at a time when a parent has some time to think about what they want to write to us or what they want to put in*

their plan, check on progress or be able to access the feedback from health or from educational psychologists is invaluable to improving the experience for parents. We have looked at a number of systems and we are currently identifying funding. This ties into the local offer on which we have received support from the CCG and external partners in terms of usability and how we can invest in making sure that it is more accessible to parents and particularly to children and young people who we know want to use it and to improve the quality and the coverage. That work is underway. It has been interesting to work with outside people who have a totally different view of LA websites to us and have challenged us to think differently. Thank you to the CCG for setting that up for us and getting us in touch with them.

- *Sufficiency strategy is predominately around ensuring there are placements for children - children in care and care leavers. There are two aspects to sufficiency. The one that is referenced in the SEND strategy is around those school placements for children in relation to when the children need to be in a residential school. A document is being drawn up and the draft will be circulated for comments. It is a statutory requirement. There is a smaller community of children with SEND who are not children in care but those will be addressed as well and that includes their emotional health and wellbeing. Sometimes we place children in care in 24 hour curriculum where their care, education and emotional health needs are placed in one environment. There is also the sufficiency of school placements which is an area of challenge particularly around the SEMH needs of young people. That links back to the inclusion strategy and our vision for children to keep them in mainstream education with the right support where that is right for the child as opposed to alternative or external or out of the area education. These areas are very much aligned because you cannot work in isolation. Historically we haven't worked as strongly as we can but we are on a journey.*
- *Could I ask about the shortfall of educational psychologists? – that was part of a contract with Somerset County Council as part of their traded services arm. There was an underestimate in the number of EHCPs that they needed to service in 2019. We have carried out some projection work and we have increased what we have contracted them for 2020 and 2021. We now have the appropriate amount in place and the Authority is in much better position.*

The Chairman thanked the Strategy and Policy Development Manager for the update on the SEND Action Plan.

Concluded:

- (1) that the panel receive the update on the SEND Action Plan and the initial response to the LGA recommendations;
- (2) that the panel consider the highlights and risks identified;

(3) that the panel identify any responses necessary via the Chairman of the Panel (who sits on the SEND Programme Board)

(4) that the Interim Assistant Director, Children's Support and Safeguarding provide an update to Members on Home to School Transport by the end of March 2021.

CAY 22 SEND Presentation and Q&A Session – NHS representatives (Agenda Item 7)

The Associate Director of Children's Services, Sirona Care and Health provided Members with a presentation on an Introduction to the Children's Community Health Partnership (CCHP), a copy of which was filed in the minute book.

Members were informed that Sirona was the prime provider and directly accountable to the CCG and the three local authorities (Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire) on how children's commissioning services were run. The services provided under the umbrella of Children's Community Services were outlined to Members.

Members noted the complex landscape of how business was carried out in children's services across BNSSG. It provided an opportunity for Sirona to think BNSSG wide and create an equitable, responsible, responsive service for all children, families and communities. Strategically Sirona was reviewing every service within the Children's Directorate to ensure that it was responding to the needs of local services such as those in North Somerset. The Associate Director of Children's Services had created strategic leads that sat across the whole BNSSG framework to lead on the service reviews and to make sure that services were being delivered within the geographies that were consistent and equitable across all the areas served.

The Associate Director of Children's Services outlined the staffing structure in Sirona with particular reference to the Head of Children's Services Therapies, Autism and SEND whose responsibilities included therapies (speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physio therapy), early years practitioner service, autism hub service, associate designated clinical officer service, associate designated clinical officer service and children's traded service.

Particular attention was drawn to the fact that it was crucial to ensure the SEND and EHC requirements were correct across the three local authority areas. It was the responsibility of the Head of Children's Services for Therapies to ensure that Sirona had the commitment and interface between education, health and the local authority via the SEND partnership.

Reference was also made to the Head of Specialist Services for Children whose responsibilities covered children in care, lifetime immunisations, neurodevelopmental services, continence services and transition. The specialist nursing team who were looking at transitions and some of the 'cliff edges' that needed to be addressed in supporting young people as they moved into adult services.

It was reported that a new Clinical Director had been appointed (supporting the Associate Director of Children's Services in the community paediatrics framework, some of the ASD and education health care requirements and children in care). Responsibilities of the role were paediatrics (BNSSG), delivery of service, paediatricians, safeguarding.

The Associate Director of Children's Services, Sirona (LM) and Head of Operations for CAMHS, AWS (HK) responded to the following queries from panel members (with responses in italics):-

- With regards AWP who you subcontracted – it is very difficult as part of the CYPs to work out how we can scrutinise some of the performances of so many disparate partners. One of the things I was looking at was 'Kooth' and 'Off the Record'. Who commissioned them and how are these scrutinised? 'Kooth' is an American funded app and I can't see how we work out its effectiveness. 'Off the Record' is more open because it is a charity based organisation in Bristol and we would be able to see the trustees. How do we manage 'Kooth's' performance? - *I will begin to describe the contractual responsibilities if that would be helpful. Ultimately, myself, Sirona, is responsible for all of the prime and I am responsible in a contractual and commercial basis and for the whole service offer. Within the prime responsibility I share that responsibility in a sub-contracted way to AWP. AWP subcontracts 'Off the Record' and 'Kooth'. Ultimately, I am responsible for everything that is delivered in Children's Services. However, there is a responsibility from a professional and commercial basis and that scrutiny goes in a matrix so that Sirona commissioners have a line of sight to all sub-contractors in order to test, understand, review and reflect around service offers. (LM)*
- Have you reviewed 'Kooth' and can you share with us what their performance has been? – *I don't have the data in terms of 'Kooth'. 'Kooth' is an online professionally qualified children's counselling provision. There are a number of performance measures – assuring that young people meet a number of goals and they set goals with young people. We can measure the goals and check improvements against that. Kooth also maintain a large library of resources and peer led resources that are available online which is moderated, not unlike 'Off the Record'. The entire platform is online and national. Wherever they set up across the country (and I have worked with them in different parts of the country) they always have to have close links with the mental health providers and clear mechanisms for escalating any concerns about young people as well as safeguarding young people. There are very detailed quarterly reports monitoring their performance as part of this contract. (HK)*
- I was going to ask where children's mental health fitted into that structure LM but I think you have said you manage that relationship with AWP. Given the pandemic that area is huge and has grown even more over the last 12 months - *As children return to school we will learn more and more about the challenges facing children over the next 12 months. In relation to the children in need of crisis intervention there is something for them going forwards but it is the well kids that would have been ok that we need to make sure there are tools in place for them to face some of the challenges. (LM)*

The Head of Operations for CAMHS, AWS Partnership NHS Trust (HK) outlined the key members of the team which included herself as responsible for the day to day running of the service, Clinical Director CAMHS, Clinical, Lead CAMHS, Associate Director, CAMHS, Head of Operations – BNSSG CAMHS, North Somerset CAMHS Service Manager.

The services provided by CAMHS were as follows:-

- Children's and Adolescents Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Eating Disorders
- Substance Misuse (not within North Somerset)
- Youth Offending Teams (within the LA in North Somerset)
- Urgent Care Assessment Team
- Provide a specialist in patient specialist CAMHS provision primarily for Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire – closed at the moment for refurbishment but providing a day provision. Will be re-opening with an increase in beds in June.

The Head of Operations for CAMHS, AWS, explained that one of the first actions that had been carried out very early in the contract moving to AWP was the introduction of an electronic patient record. This had resulted in there being a very robust record and also enabled the monitoring and support of both the risks young people presented with and also the waiting list in North Somerset.

The focus was on developing the workforce and new members of staff were now joining the team. The team had been without a substantive psychiatrist for some time but the first one was starting in May and another advertisement had been published to attract some more applicants.

There had also been investment in crisis. Previously there had been a very small team in North Somerset. After benefitting from some new investment a recruitment campaign had been undertaken to ensure that it would be available 24-7. This would have a significant effect in terms of improvement in the area.

'Off the Record' would be introduced which was similar to the offer to Bristol and South Gloucestershire – face to face counselling and wider resilience particularly focused pre specialist CAMHS. Members were informed there was a strong working relationship with 'Off the Record'.

There was also a desire to incorporate mental health support in schools. It would not be possible for there to be a team in North Somerset this year as the goal had been to introduce Off the Record and get that support into North Somerset over the next year and introduce the mental health team the following February. There would be pre-CAMHS support and the recruitment process was currently taking place.

Members raised the following questions/queries (with responses in italics):

- What does North Somerset want from you and what do you want from North Somerset as a partnership? – *to think in terms of the offer and the parity of the offer in North Somerset compared to Bristol and South Gloucestershire is an ambition. At the moment the offer is quite different. There is something about how we come together within specialist CAMHS. It is a very small resource. We need to think about the model and framework of delivery and how we can strengthen some of those pathways. Some of that has been covered in the strategy going forwards (HK).*
- I am concerned in relation to children's mental health. I can understand you are in a difficult situation but I want to see that we have people who can deal with it now. A year down the line is not acceptable. I would like to see something done and an urgency put on it. It is not one fix fit all – you have to identify something and if it is not done it will have consequences. What is going to be put into CAMHS now? – *The service does still have quite a long waiting list. We are working very hard to re-develop the pathways to make sure children are being seen quickly. There has been focused investment there and there is a much bigger piece of work to see what we do pre-specialist provision. We are seeing a lot more children presenting. There needs to be focus on what we can do earlier with early intervention and prevention. The mental health teams in schools will be part of it. We may not have seen some of the children pre-Covid (increasing anxiety etc). We are investing in our specialist practitioners who are trained in the evidence to treat anxiety. We are over recruiting around supporting children with eating disorders as that is one of the areas we are seeing an increase in. We are re-aligning services. There is a lot of work to be done but we are really thinking about the pathway and working in partnership is the way forward. At the moment I have some additional funding. We have spoken to 'Off the Record' which will go live in April 2021. We will be able to support a lot of people in terms of lower level resilience. I have a whole re-design project in terms of what that community should look like across the areas. (HK)*

Mental health is everyone's business and we are trying to raise that profile with parents and schools so that they have some of the tools to deal with that. It is also crucial that we have specialists to deal with high levels of need. (LM)

- Comparing North Somerset to South Gloucestershire and Bristol can you clarify how much per unit we receive? How do we also compare with waiting times? – *I don't have the splits to hand and we are working with North Somerset and AWP to identify what the funding is in both the areas. They are contracted and commissioned differently and have now moved across to AWP. CAMHS need to look at the funding available to all services and ensure equity across the 3 areas. This includes working with the local authority and public health as in Bristol and South Gloucestershire. I am happy to find out and feedback to you with those figures. (AN)*

We recognise there is a gap in the service offer in North Somerset from a health perspective. As Sirona, the provider, I have got to make sure as a result of North Somerset being part of my portfolio it does not dilute the offer to Bristol and South Gloucestershire and we work with North Somerset in

respect of the levelling opportunity that needs to happen. We are really trying to work with what is an offer for Bristol and South Gloucestershire (mental health and therapies perspective) and how does that compare with North Somerset and how do we get that up rather than dilute the offer. (LM)

We want to look at levelling up the services. We have contributed additional funding to the CAMHS services in North Somerset on a recurrent basis, for example funding for 'Off the Record and the other end re crisis services – moving North Somerset from a 9-5 offer to 24/7. (AN)

The waiting list is longer in North Somerset. The key success of some of the waiting list work in Bristol and South Gloucestershire (and we are now bringing that learning into North Somerset) is that it is not just about us bringing in additional resources, although that is part of it. It is also about the re-design of the service so that young people are supported in the right pathway (and don't have to go through so many hoops to get the specialist provision) and access it earlier on in the process, where appropriate. We are already doing that in terms of how we are changing some of the systems and processes. There is a benefit for North Somerset as it is joining a much larger service. Some of the transformation will be different in North Somerset but there is a lot of learning that we are already doing in North Somerset. (HK)

- I am not getting the impression that North Somerset is getting access to CAMHS services for this year and instead we are getting 'Off the Record' but they are not yet appointed. I am concerned there is going to be a gap. We, as a local authority, have a statutory duty to provide adequate services. It is absolutely at a crisis point because it is impacting specifically SEND pupils in particular. There is a huge need. I do not accept that North Somerset can be left out and told to wait. We need details about levelling up and we need to do it now. The amount of need is extraordinary. I appreciate that CAMHS is spread out and you are dealing with other areas, other than just North Somerset but can we please have some feedback and honesty on this. There aren't appointments yet at 'Off the Record' and I am afraid children will fall through the gap. Can you tell us when CAMHS will be covering North Somerset? – CAMHS services are available in North Somerset already. They require some pathway development and changes to bring them in line with Bristol and South Gloucestershire now that AWP are providing them, but CAMHS services are absolutely available to our North Somerset population (AN).

We are seeing young people in North Somerset. We are doing a significant piece of work to reduce the wait times. We have put in additional practitioners now in terms of crisis. I have already doubled that offer since April in terms of the staff who I have providing that support. We have a very large recruitment campaign and we have had some very successful appointments joining the existing CAMHS team. It is not a quick piece of work. I agree that with the pandemic we are talking of what additional resources can come on side to support traditional services too. (HK)

- In respect of the services you offer – what, if any, specialist teams and advice have you got for young people struggling in terms of anxiety over sexuality, sexual orientation and gender identity? I feel the pandemic has

magnified these concerns for many young people. I receive communications from families that they are not getting the support and finding it hard to find – *We have a pathway for young people that we support within CAMHS and we also have support from some of our national colleagues from London who work alongside us to support us. We will also refer to some of the specialist pathways who provide support and some charities as well. We could certainly look at the pathway and I know 'Off the Record' also provide support alongside our services (HK).*

It is important to create health awareness of those issues so that we signpost people to the services and there is no wrong door. We make sure our health visitors understand it and encourage parents to talk about it and teachers and therapists. Where there is a child who has need and it gets to a level of need to create that specialist pathway it is there. (LM)

- *Could we work more closely with the LGBTQ in this area? – we are in the process of developing our new website as well and absolutely that is a critical part of our service provision (HK).*
- *I have seen countless times children waiting for CAMHS appointments. It is not a new phenomenon. What makes the service new now that you are offering? You are realigning resources, when you mention pre-CAMHS, is this the triage system? With the CAMHS situation and the number of children needing urgent attention we are not hitting the goals. Why have we not managed it before and how are we going to manage it now? - *It is difficult to talk about the historical issues in North Somerset. It is well recognised that children's mental health is a key priority. There is a need for increased investment in children's mental health both in a specialist pathway but also early intervention. Apologies if I have said we have got it right. We are making improvements. Within North Somerset there is a need to think about children's early emotional wellbeing support, mental health support pre-specialist and having some of those services available. 'Off the Record' will be the starting point for that. There is more that can be done and more investment in schools of which the mental health teams will be a part of particularly around young people presenting with anxiety and behavioural problems. What we need in terms of the specialist provision is to make sure children are seen as quickly as possible. We have changed the triage system. Young people are reviewed every day. Young children who are on the waiting list are telephoned. We have a robust RAG rating for risk. We have increased the crisis provision for the North Somerset team. The pathway redesign is really important. It is about ensuring that children have the right support. Triage is critical in terms of understanding the issues that children are presenting, having a really comprehensive assessment of that young person and getting the right pathway. We are emphasising that support around high risk at the moment but that needs to be across all of our pathways (HK).**

A discussion took place on the parity of funding. It was agreed to set up an investigative working group to look at the parity of funding and access issues to service – pathway and service re-design.

The Chairman thanked the NHS representatives for attending the Panel meeting and for the presentation.

Concluded:

(1) that the Panel convene a Joint CAMHS (CYPS & HOSP) Working Group (to include Cllrs Wendy Griggs, Huw James, Caroline Cherry, Steve Hogg, Sandra Hearne, Kenton Mee and NHS representatives - Anna Norris, Heather Kapeluch, and Lorraine McMullen).

(2) that panel members submit any further questions via meeting chat or to the Democratic and Electoral Services Officer to be answered by the health representatives after the meeting and attached as an appendix to the minutes.

CAY 23 Children's Improvement Focus Group Feedback (Agenda item 8)

The Chairman referred Members to the Panel's Work Plan in relation to the work of the Children's Improvement Focus Group. Members were informed that a separate update Teams meeting had been organised for Wednesday 17 March 2021 at 4.00 pm to provide an update on the Improvement Plan.

Concluded:

(1) that Panel Members noted the Improvement Plan update session scheduled for Wednesday 17 March at 4.00 pm via Teams.

CAY 24 Corporate Parenting Report (Agenda Item 9)

The Interim Assistant Director, Children's Support and Safeguarding presented the report. The report informed panel members of the key current issues in relation to children who were looked after, young people leaving care and the fostering service to thereby enable panel members to evaluate how effectively the whole council was discharging its Corporate Parenting Responsibilities and Duties. In particular, in relation to determining how effectively the council and its partners were achieving key plans and objectives for children and young people's services and to provide appropriate challenge and suggestions to improve performance.

Members were informed that the report outlined key updates and described how children's services continued to deliver its services despite the global pandemic and a third National Lockdown. Despite the challenges posed by Covid-19, Children's Services had continued to deliver face-to-face support wherever safe to do so, and when necessary undertaken more creative practice to support children looked after, young people leaving care and foster/kinship carers. Such creativity had seen a greater use of digital technology to support visits and interactions with children, young people and carers. As well as presenting significant challenge it had also opened opportunities to consider new ways of working with children and families that had not been tried or tested previously. There had been a great deal of resilience within young people, foster carers and staff members during this time which had been positive.

It was reported that in the re-alignment of Children's Services which concluded in February and was effective from 1 March 2021 the area that covered corporate parenting had been renamed Corporate Parenting with a new role set up as Head of Corporate Parenting. Children's commissioning would be moving over to Children's Services which would help in the sufficiency area with the team being part of Children's Services instead of being merely linked to it. Also, as part of the re-alignment participation had been moved under one section. A vacant head of service post covering quality assurance and participation was in the process of being filled. In terms of participation this would involve working with all young people rather than focusing on children in care and care leavers.

Members noted that North Somerset had 221 children in care at the end of Q3 which equated to a rate of 51 per 10,000. This was lower than the Authority's statistical neighbours (53) and England (67). It was not necessarily a negative but it meant that the Service was able to support, through aligning with its visions, children and their families to remain at home or within their family network as opposed to becoming children in care.

In relation to unaccompanied asylum seekers Members were informed that in Q1 there were 12 whilst in Q3 that figure was reported as being 18. The Authority had participated in the national challenges with colleagues in Kent whose numbers were becoming unmanageable. There were challenges in North Somerset in terms of language, culture and identity but the Authority was ensuring that planning was taking place for those children to ensure their best interests. Unaccompanied asylum seekers were generally older children (16+) but there were some under 16 year old asylum seekers.

The primary reason for a child becoming looked after) in the first three quarters of 2020/21 was abuse or neglect.

Members were advised that 74% of the Authority's children at the end of Q3 lived in foster care either the Authority's own or outside the district's foster cares. The number of children living in North Somerset was increasing. It was noted that close to home was better for children in the majority of cases but for some children it was safer and better for them to be out of area or live with extended family members. This percentage being 65% compared to 58% for the same period in 2020. Whilst these were not large numbers it was a positive.

In relation to health assessments and dental appointments, Members noted there was a period of time during the pandemic when dentists were closed and when they re-opened they were required to take priority cases first. The Authority was working nationally and locally on this issue as sometimes children who were neglected could have major dental issues.

Members were informed that in 2020, 16 children secured permanence through Special Guardianship orders. This was a significant increase from 2019 and 2018. Members were re-assured that there would be a robust drive to keep children with their families wherever possible and explore and seek out all family options with care planning for children's futures as a priority.

An improvement from Q1, were 19-21 year old care leavers, not in education, employment and/or training (NEET) which was 2% above the Q1 figure. This continued to be a clear focussed area for improvement. Partnership work was ongoing with schools, further education, education and skills, colleagues in the LA and health colleagues to identify ways to resolve this. It was stressed to Members that this was not just an issue for care leavers but for all children in North Somerset. The Authority had participated in research with the Universities of Oxford and York with five local authorities. It was hoped to glean some knowledge to identify the barriers to employment and address the area of temporary employment or zero hours contracts which for many care leavers was their only option due to their educational status. Further, with Rebutel the Authority was seeking to extend Social Impact Bonds with trauma informed care leavers across the west of England extending to 2024 with a bid submitted for an additional 20 North Somerset care leavers.

It was reported that permanency was an area in the Children's Improvement that was challenged in the Ofsted Inspection in 2020 in respect of the fact that the Authority did not match permanency for children in long term fostering quickly enough. An improved computer system and tracking system had been introduced to ensure that all pieces of work were joined up. An action had been completed for all of the young people.

Members were reminded that missing children was an area that was part of the children's improvement journey. Contextual safeguarding was a very key area. A children's society survey was being undertaken with police colleagues and the LA taking the form of a self-evaluation of North Somerset.

Members were informed that In Q1 there had been 116 episodes of children missing. Examples included those children and young people that did not return home when they expected, those who were supposed to remaining inside due to COVID but went out. It could also be more worryingly, in the case of a child or young person who was missing over 24 hours which the Authority was not aware of. In Q1 there were 116 episodes with 48 children (18 children in care) Q3 103 episodes 56 children (20 children in care) – less episodes but more children. A robust operational system had been instigated which had been very effective because it not only looked at the individual children but also the strategic aspect in terms of what actions needed to be taken.

In discussing emotional wellbeing, a consultation service was in place, partly funded by North Somerset and CCG working with children and young people. There was a continuum of need from acute specialist (CAMHS) to awareness raising as problems emerged. A local Somerset Company 'Painted Horse' provided equine therapy which research indicated was impactful particularly with children in care. A grant was available to support 330 children in care and the Authority had been offered a minimum of 20 of those places.

The Children in Care Awards ceremony had been hosted virtually using Theatre Orchard. The feedback had been positive from both young people and foster carers. The advantage of hosting a virtual ceremony was that it had been possible to invite more young people than usual. Permission was currently being sought to share the Awards Ceremony video with members.

In terms of sufficiency for foster carers the positive news was that there were more children in in house foster placements than before. This move was in the right direction but not at the pace required. There were also more children in North Somerset. Members noted that 18 more foster carers had been recruited. A marketing post had been established in the Fostering Team working across health and schools. The previous sufficiency strategy referred to developing the range of in house foster placements for some of the more complex young people as opposed to placing them in independent fostering or residential care (when that was not their need but because a foster carer was not available locally) but the support of CAMHS colleagues would be needed to enable the wrap around support package to be in place for the young person.

Young people had referred to mental health and emotional support as being a real issue for them. Peer mentoring had been requested for older children in care and care leavers. The Interim Assistant Director, Children's Support and Safeguarding had confirmed this would be implemented but emphasised that it needed to be done correctly and in a safe way for young people.

The Interim Assistant Director, Children's Support and Safeguarding responded to the following questions from members (with responses in italics):

- Just over a year ago the central role of being a corporate parent was emphasised to members including how seriously we should take our role which was not just about scrutinising but also sharing experiences from work. A number of us submitted a list of offers outlining we would like to help. In terms of mental health, I would have been already able to help. However, my offer was not taken up. I did raise this with the Executive Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning and was reassured it would happen but nothing has happened. We have talked about the effect of the pandemic on children's mental health and I find it really disappointing that no-one has come back to me. Can we please do something about those offers which are still there. If we need to re-submit we can do so and alternatively if it is not the right thing to do we can stand down. - *As Executive Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning I have had a number of conversations with the Interim Assistant Director of Children's Support and Safeguarding in relation to this. The pandemic has affected much of what we can progress. We have gone forward with some of the offers and the team is going through what they can push forward. It is hoped that with the easing of lockdown things will begin to happen. The thing we always have to remember is that it is very much driven by what the young people want.*

The Interim Assistant Director, Children's Services and Safeguarding responded that she was aware of a couple she had passed on in Corporate Parenting Panel and agreed to obtain a copy of the list of offers and circulate it to those councillors on the list before the end of March 2021 to identify whether the offers were still live and whether there were further offers to add. She agreed to meet with the heads of service and convene a meeting with councillors to discuss the way forward (either progressing the offer or explaining the reasons why it could not be progressed).

- We all have talents that can be utilised. We should be identifying the skills that young people have to guide them to where they can go. In terms of

missing children, are we conducting interviews with them when they return? In terms of asylum seekers – do we interview them to find out where they come from and if they have any contacts and pick up any trafficking issues? – *We have a statutory responsibility for every child in care and education to understand their needs and issues. Plans are reviewed and there are supervision systems for monitoring. In terms of missing children there is a statutory requirement that the police carry out a welfare call and that a return interview takes place. We will be addressing all of these areas. In relation to the return home interviews the take up is not as strong as it could be. There is a duty to assess unaccompanied asylum seekers. It addresses whether they already have family living in the UK and whether they have been trafficked. Not all of the children have arrived by airport – some arrive via Gordano and some via Kent. We work with them very closely. They have an allocated social worker in placement. We also investigate whether we can contact their family but in a safe way. Some are very vulnerable. We work with them to identify if they have been exploited. We have a small group of young people who have accessed emotional support and education areas. We need to make sure that we are going to be a good corporate parent to those young people.*

The Chairman thanked the Interim Assistant Director of Children’s Support and Safeguarding for the report.

Concluded:

- (1) that the Panel receive and consider the updated information presented in the report;
- (2) that the Panel offers comments on both areas for improvement and areas of good performance;
- (3) that the Panel raises the profile of corporate parenting responsibilities among elected members;
- (4) that the Interim Assistant Director of Children’s Support and Safeguarding to convene a meeting with councillors to provide an update on offers submitted in relation to Corporate Parenting.

CAY 25 Executive Member Report – The 2021/2022 Budget – What does it mean for our Children? (Agenda Item 10)

The Executive Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Services provided members with a verbal report on the 2021/22 Budget covering what it meant for the children in North Somerset

Members noted that although there had not been a cut in funding in Children's Services nationally there was disappointment that children were not specifically mentioned in the chancellor's budget. The Executive Member explained that she would be focussing on where the additional £150k of funding that had been put into children's services this year was being spent. Much of the work was in connection with supporting all the work in the children's improvement plan. Members of the Executive had to identify a few short-term priorities for this money which was essentially a one-off uplift for this year.

The Mockingbird project was being progressed along with another constellation. It had been an incredibly successful programme offering a support network to foster carers.

Emphasis on fostering during the pandemic included streamlining the process of approving foster carers. The Authority had recruited additional foster carers. The priority was to work around children's centres. Funding was being provided to three children's centres to transform them into family hubs. Some of the money would go towards making the environment more attractive and accessible to families with older children and encourage to them to engage with services there.

It was hoped there would be a relationship with a movement in Weston to create food clubs. Representatives from children's services had attended the steering group meeting. The concept was for the Authority to work with Fair Share and other agencies in North Somerset to locate food clubs in some of North Somerset's children's centres. Members were informed that the scheme worked well in Bristol, for example, addressing food poverty. But the main purpose was to address food waste. It provided opportunities for families to pay a small subscription fee of £3 per month to shop at food clubs buying a minimum of £20 worth of food and also quite often access free vegetables that might come from allotments that could not sell the excess.

Members noted the benefits of food clubs which included developing a community feeling around food, sharing recipes, talking about health and nutrition. Considering the issues around childhood obesity this was considered to be very important. The food club was just one area where the Authority was developing its children's centres into something wider which tied into other elements of what was going on in the community and benefited all members of the community.

The main priorities identified had been addressing the barriers care leavers had to getting into education, employment training. A small amount of money had been set aside in the budget to put towards a dedicated programme of mentoring working very closely with the economy team.

Conversations were ongoing around combining money available in children's services with money around skills and targeting care leavers in particular. There should be an opportunity to develop a dedicated programme of mentoring, careers advice and careers support for the young people of North Somerset.

This would tie into a lot of work around the skills agenda generally. A consultation would be taking place and it was hoped to carry out that initially with care leavers so that they had the first opportunity to respond and identify what skills they required to achieve their goals and what support they needed from North Somerset.

The Chairman thanked the Executive Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning for the report.

Concluded:

(1) that Panel members receive the verbal report of the Executive Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning:

(2) that Panel members contact the Executive Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning with any questions/comment in relation to the verbal report.

CAY 26 Month 9 Children Services Budget Monitor (Agenda item 11)

The Finance Business Partner (Adults and Children's Services) provided a brief summary of the main highlights of the report. Members were reassured that Month 9 was an improving position and it was hoped to get closer to a balanced budget at the end of the financial year. The savings were more than hoped for savings – efficiency savings, not cuts.

It was reported that there was growth in the Children's Services budget for next year. This included technical growth the reflect the demand in the area and the savings were things that the Authority wanted to do, for example, getting more appropriate local placements for looked after children. They would save the council money as well as being good for young people.

The Chairman thanked the Finance Business Partner (Adults and Children's Services) for the report.

Concluded:

(1) that panel members receive the 2020/21 forecast spend against budget for children's services and the risks and opportunities associated with the medium-term position;

(2) that panel members forward any questions in relation to the Month 9 Children's Services Budget Monitor to the Finance Business Partner (Adults and Children's Services)

CAY Performance Monitoring Report (Agenda Item 12)

27

The Interim Assistant Director, Children's Support and Safeguarding reported that the Performance Monitoring Report had been presented in a more simplified format than the previous panel meeting in October 2021.

Members were informed that there was anxiety about further demand. There was currently capacity but if more was required the Service would have to provide for that and were prepared for it, if necessary.

The Chairman thanked the Interim Assistant Director, Children's Support and Safeguarding for the report.

Concluded:

- (1) that the Panel receive and consider the report;
- (2) that the Panel members forward any questions to meeting chat or email the Interim Assistant Director, Children's Services and Safeguarding.

CAY Panel's Work Plan (Agenda Item 13)

28

Members considered the Panel's Work Plan.

Concluded:

- (1) that the Work Plan be received and any comments forwarded to the Democratic and Electoral Services Officer.

Chairman

APPENDIX 1

MEMBERS QUESTIONS IN RELATION TO AGENDA ITEM 7 (SEND PRESENTATION AND Q&A SESSION) – RESPONSES PROVIDED AFTER THE PANEL MEETING

Q Could you provide the following:-

A) details of the services that you are providing

In April 2020, Specialist Children's Community Services transferred from Weston Area Health Trust and North Somerset Community Partnership to Sirona Care & Health and Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnerships.

This included:

Sirona care & health

- Community Paediatrics
- Therapies (Speech and Language, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy)
- Continence Services
- Autism Pathway
- Safeguarding
- Children in care
- Neurodevelopmental services
- Lifetime
- School Nursing (due to be recommissioned by North Somerset Council)
- Health Visitors (due to be recommissioned by North Somerset Council)

AWP

- Children & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Urgent Care Assessment Team (UCAT)
- Kooth
- Off the Record (commissioned post service transfer and is currently being implemented with expected delivery from July 2021).
- Crisis Helpline – implemented during COVID-19. Helpline that can be accessed by children and young people, parents and carers, and professionals 24/7.
- 24/7 Crisis Service (commissioned post service transfer and is currently being implemented across BNSSG during 2021)

It is important to note that there were known issues relating to the CAMHS services prior to the service transfer with an inadequate rating from CQC in place. There were a number of Must Do's from CQC that the service was required to undertake. Once it transferred to AWP in April 2020, AWP embarked on a project to ensure that an action plan was in place to address the issues identified by CQC and to make the service 'safe'. This included:

- Risk and Incident training and processes
- Implement processes to ensure that children on the waiting list are prioritised based on need and contacted whilst they are waiting
- High risk - booked in for an immediate assessment

- Medium risk are placed on the waiting list with contact every 4 weeks to review the situations and risk.
- Low risk are placed on a waiting list and are contacted every 12-weeks
- Implementation of an electronic record system, transferring paper records and data validation
- Significant workforce issues remain and AWP have implemented a recruitment plan to incentivise people to work in North Somerset

Sirona, AWP and the CCG have met with North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together, twice during 2020/21. At the recent meeting, Sirona & AWP outlined the additional work that has been undertaken since the transfer of services and as a result of parent carer feedback. This included:

- Piloting drop in clinics for parents, carers and professionals with North Somerset Therapies service
- Setting up advice and guidance lines
- Commissioning Off the Record to provide sub CAMHS provision for children and young people
- Identifying service gaps in North Somerset
- Restructuring Sirona management to ensure a BNSSG focussed service
- Implementation of an electronic record system for CAMHS and Community Paediatrics services which was achieved in September 2020.
- New project taking place to ensure all children's community health services are on an electronic record system

B) What the measures of success are and performance against these measures

There are a number of local and national measures that the service must report against. This includes access to services, referrals data, and children and the time children and young people are waiting for services. The provider works towards the following KPIs (though to be aware, due to current pressures within services these are extremely challenging to meet)

- Emergency referrals within 24 hours
- Urgent referrals assessed within 1 week
- Routine referrals assessed within 4 weeks
- New people receiving treatment (At least 2 sessions)

There are challenges within the North Somerset services such as long waits to be seen which was inherited at transfer. This is partially due to the high numbers of referrals received coupled with the capacity of the service to undertake assessments. As noted above, AWP are working to recruit into vacancies and to build the resilience of the services as well as develop a pre CAMHS service (Off the Record). These capacity issues are having a significant impact on AWP's ability to achieve national and local measures.

Additionally, it is known that there is a gap in service provision in North Somerset which is currently being identified by Sirona and AWP and being discussed with the CCG. A plan will be developed to address the historical gaps in service to ensure that North Somerset services are developed and aligned to the offer in Bristol and South Gloucestershire.

As mentioned, AWP have now implemented an electronic record system for North Somerset CAMHS and undertaken a process of data validation. Now this process has been completed, the provider has developed a performance dashboard which will be shared with commissioners later this month.

C) If, for example, you are unable to meet a measure, eg waiting list for a CAHMS referral, what recourse is there?

The CCG has regular contract meetings with Sirona and AWP where performance issues and concerns are raised. Where there are significant concerns, the provider will identify mitigating actions that need to be put in place.

The CCG has a wider meeting with associate commissioners which now includes North Somerset Council and providers called 'Integrated Care Quality and Performance Meeting'. Any concerns that require escalation can be discussed at this meeting with partners to understand the problem in more detail and the plans to address.

Additionally, there are contract levers available to Commissioners called Contract Performance Notices. These can be used by Commissioners where performance continually drops below standards and this will trigger a joint meeting and action plan to be developed.

The CCG works closely with providers to develop actions to address issues which can negate the need to use CPNs and enables a more system approach to problems to take place.

Q I am going to go about this from a perspective more as a long term low level service user. When HOSP started building relationships with AWP about a year ago community services seemed to be a much lower level. A lot of people are very cautious about the digital approach, but as a service I found it really hard trying to access mental health resilience networks and seeing all these online materials available for other Local Authorities but not ourselves. I really Off The Record coming here particularly. They are very innovative and really good at improving reach. Just wanted to note how positive the direction of change seems to be.

Q We're talking about 'what you are doing to respond now' on websites I can see countless jobs hiring online, we've talked about things taking a year – if they're recruiting in April will these service providers not come quickly? The only other thing I was going to add is that I was a wellbeing chair of my university college when it had a suicide epidemic, we were able to transform things in York but a real learning point is that we need to be really careful about how we talk about youth suicides in public meetings in the future.

Off the Record has been commissioned to expand into North Somerset. The service has started to engage with local organisations and children and young people to help to tailor the offer to the North Somerset Population.

OTR have gone out to recruit with interviews now taking place with an expectation that individuals will start in post during May.

The next steps will be to meet with existing organisations such as CAMHS, YMCA, School Nurses, 65 High St to build up a network of services in the area in order to understand the offer in North Somerset and how existing services can complement

and flex with OTR. OTR will build on engagement with Children and Young people to begin talking about and promoting services.

Currently, the service is exploring how it will phase the roll out of the services and to look at what can be put in place to support with demand. It is expected that the phased implementation will start in June / July with some interventions beginning at this time. There is also a plan to deliver specific training to schools and other therapeutic groups during this time.

Q How is it possible for councillors to scrutinise the performance of Kooth, the online app for mental health.

I just wanted to know which partner organisation commissioned this and how is the service scrutinised? If there are audits could the CYPs Panel see these?

The CCG contract with Sirona to provide the Children's Community Health Partnership Contract which North Somerset services are now part of. As part of this contract, Sirona contract with AWP to provide CAMHS services and AWP hold a sub-contract with Kooth.

Kooth is an online mental wellbeing community with access being free, safe and anonymous support. Young people have the ability to chat with live counsellors as well as being able to access self-help information.

Kooth operates to a Quality Framework and shares detailed performance data on a quarterly basis. This includes a number of outcome measures and goals for children and young people that Kooth are then monitored against.

Notes

of the Informal Virtual Meeting of the

Children & Young People Services Policy & Scrutiny Panel

Wednesday 30 June 2021

held via Microsoft Teams

Meeting Commenced: 10.00 am Meeting Concluded: 12:20 pm

Councillors:

P Wendy Griggs (Chairman)

P Steve Hogg (Vice Chairman)

P Marc Aplin

P Geoff Richardson

P Mark Crosby

A Ann Harley

P Ruth Jacobs

P Lisa Pilgrim

A Richard Westwood

P Caroline Cherry

P Ciarán Cronnelly

Hugh Gregor

P Nicola Holland

P Huw James

Tim Snaden

P: Present

A: Apologies for absence submitted

Other Councillors in attendance: Catherine Gibbons

Officers in attendance: Carolann James, Mike Newman, Michèle Chesterman, Brent Cross, Katherine Sokol, Sally Varley, Sheila Smith, Sindy Dube, Naomi Addicott

Right to Speak: Kenton Mee, North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together (The Parent Carer Forum in North Somerset)

CAY Election of Vice-Chairman for the 2021/22 Municipal Year

Recommended: that Councillor Hogg be elected as Vice-Chairman for the 2021/22 municipal year - to be ratified at the formal Panel meeting on 21 October 2021.

CAY Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 March 2021 (Agenda item 3)

Concluded: that the minutes of the last meeting held on the 11 March 2021 be recommended as a correct record - to be ratified at the formal panel meeting on 21 October 2021.

CAY Chairman's Update on CYPS Panel Working Groups (Agenda item 5)

An update was provided on the Children's Improvement Focus Group which last met on 19 April 2021 to receive a presentation from officers on the development of the Children's Improvement Plan. At the next meeting in September 2021 the focus group would be looking at the new front door. The Chairman thanked officers for the opportunity to look through a case audit.

Members were informed that the next meeting of the CAMHS Working Group would take place on 8 July 2021 which would be focussed around a gap analysis around children's mental health would be discussed.

Concluded: that Panel members receive the oral report on the update on CYPS panel working groups.

CAY Annual Directorate Statement – Children's Services (Agenda item 6)

The Director of Children's Services presented the report. Members were informed that each year the directorates within North Somerset Council produced an Annual Directorate Statement (ADS). The ADS translated the commitments in the North Somerset Corporate Plan into a series of directorate level commitments.

Members noted that many of the commitments linked directly to the Children's Improvement Plan and the Action Plan that was compiled following the Local Joint Area Review (LJAR) of the special educational needs and disabilities services and it also encompassed the Education Commissioning Strategy which had been to CYPS and also agreed at the Executive. It also brought together some of the broader commitments particularly in relation to refugees, asylum seekers and families settling in North Somerset. In determining the future workplan of the CYPS Panel it was suggested that Members may wish to decide which particular commitments should form the basis for future performance reporting to the Panel.

In discussing the report the Director of Children's Services responded to questions and queries from Members in relation to integrated care systems, the importance of the inclusion of school transport in the CYPS Panel's remit, performance management targets.

Concluded:

- (1) that the panel receive and consider the report;
- (2) that the panel decide which, if any, of the Children's Services Directorate's commitments should be the subject of further detailed reports at future meetings;
- (3) that the panel consider and agree the Work Plan

CAY Multi-agency Response to the SEND Re-visit (Agenda item 7)

The Director of Social Services presented the report. Members noted that Ofsted & CQC visited North Somerset during May 2018 to inspect Local Area SEND services. These visits, or Local Joint Area Reviews (LJAR), did not deliver a grading or overall judgement, but provided a narrative response. This response included 'areas of significant weakness' (ASWs) in which improvement was required by the statutory agencies in the Local Area and their partners. LAs, as the lead agency for SEND, were then required to submit a Written Statement of Action (WSA) which detailed the plans to address these areas.

A revisit to North Somerset was widely expected to take place during March-May 2020, however Ofsted ceased inspection activity when the initial Covid restrictions were implemented. While the inspection did not expressly consider the Council's Covid response in terms of SEND services, the impact of the pandemic on North Somerset's progress and on the experience of parents, carers and families was part of discussions with the Inspection Team.

The Director of Social Services informed Members that at the time of writing the report the letter following on from the re-visit in regard to the Council's arrangement for children with special needs and disabilities had not been received. It was published on Monday 28 June 2021. Members were provided with the following link: <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50165308>

After providing Members with detail on the Ofsted feedback, the Director of Social Services reported that the conclusion was that against the original eight areas in the written statement of action, North Somerset as a local area (not local authority), sufficient progress had been made against only two areas. As a result, North Somerset would be required to produce an accelerated progress plan and access support from the DfE. The DfE and NHS England would continue to monitor the Authority (as they had done since 2018) meeting with the Council, the CCG and others and attending SEND Programme Board meetings.

The inspectors noted that progress had been made in all areas and that in some instances it was significant however, the pace of change had not been swift enough meaning that the impact of changes and improvements for children and families was not yet fully in evidence. The inspector had indicated that if the visit had taken place a few months later there would have been more progress.

Members were informed that since the re-visit the SEND Programme Board had convened a number of additional meetings and had identified areas where there would be quicker wins (including the development of an online portal) where progress could be accelerated and tailored support with some of the other ones.

In discussing the report Members asked and received clarification in relation to there being no financial implications. The offer of support was made if required including more resources. Members were reassured that the Executive had agreed a permanent Assistant Director post with interviews being held week commencing 5 July 2021. There had also been additional

money in the last year to bolster the SEND team. Advice was also being sought from one of the individuals who undertook the LGA peer review. Reference was also made to the Inclusion Summit convened with Multi Academy Trust colleagues and the fact that they signed an Inclusion Charter.

On behalf of the Panel, the Chairman thanked officers for their work on the SEND review.

Concluded:

- (1) that the Panel receives details of the process following the LJAR revisit;
- (2) that the Panel consider the letter published by Ofsted following on from the SEND re-visit.

CAY Winterstoke Hundred Academy Expansion Progress Update (Agenda item 8)

The Panel received a presentation from the Senior Projects Manager, Major Projects on the Winterstoke Hundred Academy Expansion Progress Update. Members were informed that the project entailed an extension to the existing Winterstoke 100 Academy run the Cabot Learning Federation (CLF) multi-academy trust. It was expected that the new building would house year 7-11 and the existing building would house further education students. There would be some overlap. CLF were working to timetable the children's day to avoid them having to travel between sites. In relation to the HIF bid and timing the build was required to be completed by March 2024.

The Senior Projects Manager, Major Projects reported that:

- The planning application had been submitted (which was currently within a 3 month consultation period) and could be accessed on the Council's planning portal;
- archaeological excavations were due to begin in July 2021 on site and would be completed mid August 2021;
- The diversion of services was underway, currently waiting on a schedule of works to include in the programme;
- The Council was engaging with the DfE to agree sign off as per the GDA requirements. The Employers Agent was pulling together a cost plan as required by DfE – division of funding and general milestone requirement;
- Ongoing discussions were taking place with St Modwen's regarding the land transfer and recharging S106 costs. Lack of engagement from St Modwen's meant that there had been an inability to agree on the way forward so the Council may need to trigger the 3 month notice period.

The key tasks for the month ahead were outlined to members as follows:

- To agree a way forward regarding the land transfer – either by agreement with St Modwen’s or by triggering S106 period;
- To oversee the planning application;
- To begin preparation for the construction contract

Panel members received clarification on a number of issues including the scope of the project; pressures on the budget and the amount of the contingency. Members were informed that In terms of value engineering anything that was not essential had been removed with a view that it could be introduced at a later stage if the budget was available.

Members were directed to the Education Provision in North Somerset Commissioning Strategy 2021/24 for further information on schooling and the Winterstoke 100 Academy Expansion which was presented to the Executive on 23 June 2021:-

<https://n-somerset.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s1094/11%20Draft%20Education%20Provision%20in%20North%20Somerset%20-%20A%20Commissioning%20Strategy%202021%202024.pdf>

Concluded: that the Panel receive and consider the update on the Winterstoke Hundred Expansion.

CAY Performance Monitoring (Agenda item 9)

The Interim Assistant Director, Children’s Services and Safeguarding presented the report. It was reported that the CYPS Panel received regular performance management reports to help members to evaluate the extent to which the council and its partners were achieving key plans and objectives for children and young people’s services and to provide appropriate challenge and suggestions to improve performance.

The report presented the following standard items: any recent Ofsted inspections of council services; an analysis of the performance of the relevant Key Corporate Performance Indicators (KCPIs) for Quarter 1 2020/21, that fall under the remit of the Panel; an overview of the performance of various Key Service Measures for Support and Safeguarding services within the council.

Members were provided with a summary of the highlights of the report including:-

- Areas rag rated red – care leavers and education, employment and training;
- Areas of strength – low levels of contacts and referrals compared to our comparators; low levels of re-referrals; child in need, child protection and children in care numbers,
- Children’s stability and foster carers. The Authority had been very successful in increasing the number of foster carers. The challenge now was to continue to do that.

Members were informed that at the March Panel meeting reference was made to the fact that work was being carried out to improve performance reporting. This work was ongoing. The Interim Assistant Director, Children's Services and Safeguarding was liaising with the Business Intelligence Team and the DfE Advisor to ensure that format would be improved to include data on exclusions and CAMHS.

In discussing the report Members thanked the Interim Assistant Director, Children's Services and Safeguarding for the detailed information which aided understanding and obtained clarification in relation to the Child Poverty Indicators; domestic violence; statistics on children on free school meals; target numbers, benchmarking and data for previous years.

It was reported that a briefing would be provided for Members in the autumn of 2021 to aid understanding of the children's services performance data, direction of travel and RAG rating.

Concluded:

- (1) that the Panel receive the report;
- (2) that the Panel comment on areas for improvement and areas of good performance;
- (3) that the Panel receive a briefing in autumn 2021 on children's services performance data.

CAY Month 12 Children's Services Budget Monitor (Agenda item 10)

The Senior Service Accountant, Corporate Services, provided a summary of the main highlights of the report. Members were reassured that overall Children's Services closed the year with a £700k underspend to budget. Members' attention was drawn to the second page of the report which provided an overview to the budget. The Council was able to meet all of its Covid 19 related cost pressures from a combination of government specific grants and some reduced spend within services as a direct result of Covid 19.

One of the main areas of underspend was placements for children looked after. A table in paragraph 3.7 provided an overview of the position by the main placement types. There was an underspend to budget of just over £400k. When compared to 2019/20 the position was even more favourable and spend reduced by over 860k 2020/21. The main factor driving the situation was the number of children looked after. In 2019/20 the numbers peaked at 245 whilst during 2020/21 the numbers were at a peak of 225. This was a significant reduction as some of the Council's placement types had very high unit costs.

Members noted one of the other main variances was staffing with an underspend of just over £700k. Members were informed that some of the underspend would be a one-off because some of the Council's services such as children's centres and nurseries were impacted by Covid 19 resulting in a

delay in some posts being filled so it was not anticipated that there would be such a large underspend on staffing in the current year.

Moving on to paragraph 3.25 which talked about the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Members' attention was drawn to the table which gave an overview of the budget growth and savings that had been applied to the 2021/22 budget. One of the key things to note was that there was a large savings target but it mostly related to efficiency savings rather than actually cutting services and it was mainly around reducing costs for children looked after placements. Members were reassured that there had been good good progress so far to deliver on the savings target.

The final section covered the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). A large deficit was carried over from 2019/20 (just over £3.8m) and this had increased significantly during 2020/21 standing at over £7m. Members noted that the DSG was ringfenced and did not impact on the Council's general funds. The position reflected the ongoing pressures around education costs for children with SEND. Those pressures were reflected within the finance position as well. The commissioning strategy would be key in terms of helping to manage the deficit in the short and long term.

In discussing the report Members received clarification in relation to query in relation to the DSG.

Concluded:

(1) that panel members receive the 2020/21 final spend against budget for children's services and the risks and opportunities associated with the medium-term position;

In agreement with the Chairman there was a change to the Agenda order with the following item considered next:

CAY Executive Member Report (Oral Report) (Agenda Item 12)

The Executive Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning provided Members with an oral report on key areas in her portfolio of interest to Members of the Panel.

The Executive Member referred to numbers of care leavers not in education, employment and training and informed Panel members of a recent event attended by Mark Rodell who spoke about what the Council could do to support its care leavers in terms of identifying opportunities in the local authority and with its partners and helping them to overcome barriers.

Discussions had been taking place on how to spend the £20k identified at the beginning of the year to support care leavers. Originally it had been decided to spend the money on mentoring schemes but at subsequent discussions from talking with young people it was suggested that the funds be used as one-off grants to aid people into employment. The Executive Member explained that she would like to demonstrate the value of the £20k and hoped to persuade

that it became a regular allocation to help young people to get into employment and feel more confident.

The Executive Member referred to the Winterstoke Hundred expansion. A former refugee care leaver had been employed by the contractor with the goal of introducing another apprenticeship. She informed the panel that the council was actively pursuing such opportunities for North Somerset young people and hoped to achieve more.

The Executive member agreed to provide feedback on how the £20k fund for care leavers was being utilised including successes at the next CYPS Panel meeting on 21 October 2021.

Concluded:

(1) that the Panel receive and consider the oral report of the Executive member;

(2) that the Panel be provided with a report on how the £20k care leaver's fund has been utilised including successes at the next CYPS Panel meeting on 21 October 2021.

CAY North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together Annual Report (Agenda item 11)

The Panel received a presentation from Kenton Mee, North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together on the Forum's Annual Survey and Report. He explained that that the North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together was the parent carer forum for North Somerset. The forum received a small amount of core funding from the DfE and represented the collective voice of parent carers with children with additional needs (0-25) in the local area. The forum fed into national parent carer forums in relation to national policy.

Members noted that in relation to the annual survey 223 responses had been received with most questions being optional as the forum only wanted to receive responses from individuals who had experience of the relevant area in the survey. Members were informed that social care was one of the areas where the forum was surprised at the low number of responses which raised a broader question over the SEND community and how many were accessing social care which led to discussions with Children's Services on how people are tapping into the services and ensuring parent carers were aware of what services were there and the appropriate routes they can access and where personal budgets for children and young people would be an appropriate approach.

Members asked and received clarification on the percentage of parent carers who responded (1400 children with education health care plans (EHCPs) probably increased to 1500 and approximately 4000 on SEN support. In terms of percentage it was quite good in terms of take up on EHCPs.); how many parents completed the whole questionnaire (223); whether the survey was a standard national survey being the same throughout the country and

comparable with other areas (no, as different terms in different areas and needs to be tailored to the particular area).

Concluded:

- (1) that the Panel receive and consider the presentation on the Annual Survey and Report;
- (2) that the Panel members contact Kenton Mee via email with regards any questions in relation to the presentation and report.

CAYPanel's Work Plan (Agenda item 13)

The Chairman presented the Work Plan.

Items to be added:

- Home to School Transport
- Briefing Children's Services Performance Data, Direction of Travel and RAG Rating – autumn 2021 (TBC)

Concluded:

- (1) that the Work Plan be received and any comments forwarded to the Democratic and Electoral Services Officer.

Notes

of the Informal Virtual Meeting of the

Children & Young People Services Policy & Scrutiny Panel

Thursday 21 October 2021

held via MS Teams

Meeting Commenced: 10.00 am Meeting Concluded: 12:20 pm

Councillors:

P Wendy Griggs (Chairman)
P Steve Hogg (Vice Chairman)

Marc Aplin

P Caroline Cherry
P Ciarán Cronnelly

P Mark Crosby

A Hugh Gregor

A Ann Harley

P Nicola Holland

Ruth Jacobs

A Huw James

P Lisa Pilgrim

Tim Snaden

A Richard Westwood

P: Present

A: Apologies for absence submitted

Other Councillors in attendance: Catherine Gibbons

Officers in attendance: Sheila Smith, Carolann James, Pip Hesketh, Sally Varley, Sindy Dube, Naomi Addicott, Brent Cross, Michèle Chesterman

Right to Speak: Angie Griggs, North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together (The Parent Carer Forum in North Somerset)

CAY Election of Vice-Chairman (Agenda item 1)

Recommendation of election of Vice Chairman, Cllr Steve Hogg at informal Panel meeting on 30 June 2021 (to be deferred for ratification at next formal panel meeting).

CAY Minutes and Notes (Agenda item 3)

Formal Panel Meeting Minutes – 11 March 2021, recommended for approval as a correct record at Informal Panel meeting dated 30 June 2021 (to be deferred for ratification at next formal Panel meeting).

Informal Panel Meeting Notes – 30 June 2021 attached for information.

CAY Provisional Dates for Panel meetings 2022/21 (Agenda item 5)

16 June 2022, 20 October 2022, 9 March 2023

Concluded: that the Panel note the provisional dates for Panel meetings in 2022/23

CAY Chairman's Update on CYPS Panel Working Groups (oral report) (Agenda item 6)

The Chairman provided an update on the CYPS Panels working groups.

Joint CAMHS Group – Further meeting scheduled to discuss the gap analysis.

Children's Improvement Focus Group – Further meeting scheduled to scrutinise the effectiveness of the front door.

School Organisation Scrutiny Steering Group

The Head of Strategic Planning and Governance, Children's Services provided members with the following updates:

Ravenswood

Members were informed that a flood had occurred in the annex and main building and some children were being educated at the Campus as a contingency measure. It was anticipated that with effect from 22 October 2021 the resources would be returned to the annex building with repair work continuing over the half term and the students returning to the main school building on 1 November 2021.

Baytree

It was reported that a pre-judicial review application had been lodged on 8 October 2021 by a local resident which challenged the appropriation and planning decisions in relation to the Baytree scheme. The Council had provided a response, to the pre-planning process, stating that it did not consider there were grounds for a judicial review.

The recommendation was that no actions should be taken on site before the decision was taken in relation to a judicial review. Members discussed communications and contingency built in for delays and also impact on family life. Members noted that the Authority could not statutorily delay any child's education. The issue would not be one of delay to education but the cost of

commissioning the education elsewhere. It was essential to be clear about what those costs were.

Churchill SEMH

Members were informed that the DfE led the project with the Council invited to attend meetings, for information. The case had proceeded for formal sign off for the Secretary of State to pay for the process at the end of September 2021. Funding of £7m was available to build the school. The DfE intended to work with the Council to provide facilities for the school to open temporary accommodation a year earlier in 2022.

As a free school LERNITMAT were required to undertake various Section 9 consultations on their plans with the community from 1 November 2021 which would involve liaising with key councillors (including the local ward councillor). Along with the positives it was flagged that there would be challenges from residents in relation to the building of a special school in Churchill.

Concluded: that the Panel receive and consider the oral report

CAY LJAR – Response to DfE with proposed Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) (Agenda item 7)

The Director of Children's Services provided members with a brief introduction to the report and invited the Assistant Director, Education Partnerships to present the detail. Members were informed following the outcome of the LJAR visit in May 2021 the authority had provided its response to the DfE and the proposed accelerated progress plan.

Members had been provided with the letter of written representation sent to the DfE jointly from the Authority and the CCG. Although the Improvement Notice was issued to a local authority there was an acknowledgement of the joint responsibility and accountability across the CCG and the local authority. The local authority had yet to hear the outcome as to whether the DfE had decided to issue such a notice but that was not affecting progress on the APP.

Of the 160 actions in the APP 82 were due by the end of December 2021. It was originally anticipated there would be 33 actions with green status at the end of this month but the actual figure was 16. It was anticipated there would be 25 amber but the actual figure was 45. However, there were fewer red actions than anticipated with more actions completed.

Members queried the 9 red ratings. Three were connected to the JSNA which had been delayed. Two were in relation to the way attendance and attainment were being measured. There had been different parameters around attainment and attendance over the last couple of years which was the reason for the red RAG rating. One of the reasons was in relation to capacity for Quality Assurance (QA). It had been agreed that some capacity would be added to the SEND team to undertake more QA work. It was anticipated that the red RAG rating would change due to the time lag between the point at which it was agreed that resources would be added and the individual taking up the post and starting to make a difference. Some were waiting for sign off from managers before they could turn green.

Members asked and received clarification on in relation to the following queries:-

- *We are receiving additional EHCPs from Somerset Services. Is that what the additional QA resource is for or are we are appointing additional staff?* – the QA resource involves recruiting two senior members of staff allocated to the SEND team for a year to identify and understand what the 'business as usual' need for resources is.
- *Why are the tables which have been circulated to members of the panel different to the ones being displayed and could an updated version be circulated to members?* – Members of the panel have received the version of the document sent to the DfE. The RAG ratings are currently being monitored on a weekly basis and as a result some of the colours are changing. An updated version will be emailed on a monthly basis to panel members.
- *North Somerset has inputted extra resources and capacity. Have our partners, who need to support or lead on some of those actions, done the same?* - Yes, they have to a degree. There are areas of pressure still which are SALT and CAMHS where waiting lists have been lengthy for some time. There is a commitment to do the work but when resources go in there is always a time lag. Our partners are starting to join our Friday meetings so the next update may provide a more vivid picture of what is going on in their areas.

Concluded:

(1) that the Panel receive and consider the report

(2) that the Panel be provided with monthly updates of the North Somerset Local Area Accelerated Progress Plan.

CAY Children's Improvement Plan

Quality Assurance Update (Agenda item 8)

The Interim Assistant Director, Children's Services provided panel members with a progress update in relation to Quality Assurance activity and its impact on social work practice. The report provided members with evidence of the impact of the changes which were still in the early stages of development.

In line with the Children's Improvement Plan members were informed that a focus had been placed on dedicated leadership capacity in the areas identified for improvement; teams and work were being streamlined in a way which enabled and supported consistent high quality and effective practice; improving social work practice with a single unified approach to recruitment, retention, learning and development; ensuring all children and families received the right support at the right time to achieve good outcomes.

To support the improvement work to enable the authority to maintain and improve practice and ensure the best possible practice and most effective

support for children and their families a stronger, more strengths-based model of practice was being developed. This model was built around signs of safety/wellbeing of learning, confident practice and feedback. In addition, the Quality Assurance service was being developed and the Principal Social Work role enhanced to support learning and reflection.

The audits had revealed that supervision was more task focussed and not reflective enough or following on the impact on the child. The revised audit process continued to enable the service to measure the impact of the work undertaken with the authority's children and families and hear the child's voice. Members were encouraged to hear that 90% compliance of auditor engagement was achieved over Q3 and Q4 for 2020/21 and that 100% compliance of auditor engagement was achieved in Q1 2020/21. It was noted that moderation of case file audits better enabled children's services to consider the robustness of auditing. In addition, children and their parents/carers were invited to participate in every audit, providing rich otherwise uncaptured feedback.

Members were made aware of the areas of concern which included the fact that moderation of audits had evidenced auditors could be over optimistic in consideration of the grading; all children needed chronologies that included all significant events/milestones and the impact of those events; improvements were needed in the quality of assessments and in the development of SMART children's plans; further improvements were needed in ensuring meaningful direct work with children was undertaken; further improvements were needed to ensure high quality, consistent reflective supervision and robust management oversight; further practice improvements were needed to enable more children's case audits to be graded good or outstanding.

Members were informed that steps taken to address these concerns including a training programme for auditors and the use of exemplars to aid understanding of what good looked like in terms of chronologies. The vision was for a strengths-based relationship, trauma informed practice model using the signs of safety as the framework within in that. Children's Services would sign off the multi-agency three-year learning and development programme in the near future. The QA framework was being updated along with child protection conferences, childcare reviews and some themed audits (including child protection) were scheduled to take place by the end of 2021.

The Children's Improvement Focus Group members were appreciative of being able to examine a sample of case audits and noted it had been a learning experience. Members were also encouraged by the positive progress with the quality assurance of the case audits and the progress had been encouraging.

Concluded: that the Panel receive and consider the report.

CAY Children's Improvement Plan - Progress Update in relation to Corporate Parenting Care Leavers Performance for Education, Employment and Training (Agenda item 8)

The Executive Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning provided members with an update on the challenges in North Somerset in relation to improving the performance for Care Leavers being in Education, Employment and Training and how the authority was progressing to improve this performance area which was one of the priority areas within the Children's Improvement plan.

The report outlined the current support to care leavers in relation to EET, support services available to the local authority care leavers in achieving EET, development of staff and services to better support improved outcomes for care leavers, including EET performance and activities and actions to further improve performance within EET for care leavers over the next six to twelve months.

Members noted that in September 2021 North Somerset had 109 care leavers aged 18 to 21 with 51% (56) of those young adults currently in EET. The national average for this same cohort was 53% EET, the authority's statistical neighbours and regional neighbours were both also 53% - therefore the authority was slightly under the average for this cohort.

A discussion took place on the gap in the careers advice and help to children in care. Members were informed that a questionnaire was being developed asking young people about their aspirations and experience of careers advice generally. It had been agreed that this would be carried out with children in care and care leavers initially. The Assistant Director, Education Partnerships informed members that a weekly meeting had been set up to look at all children and young people receiving fewer than 25 hours a week to ensure that plans were in place to change that.

Members asked and received clarification on the following:

- *Are there regular meetings with care home managers regarding the education of the children?* – There is constant monitoring of the children's holistic needs including EET for all children in care. There is a personal education plan that is led through social work. The virtual school will go into the homes wherever the children live.
- *What about the children who are not on the roll with schools in our district? How much control do we have?* - If we have an EHCP from an area outside the district is it true we don't have any control about how often that is updated or how much information we get? – The social worker is engaged with the child and activity takes place regardless of where a child lives.
- *If we have a child living in North Somerset but registered with a different authority and on roll with a school outside our area how much influence do we have over changes to the EHCP and how much information do we get about the education the child is receiving?* – Whether a child has an EHCP or not we would be talking to their schools and carers and visiting them. If there were any issues with the host local authority educationally and there were challenges

with our colleagues in virtual school we would be reminding that school what they have to do. Even when we move children we cannot place a child without having every aspect of their care considered.

Concluded: that the Panel receive and consider the report.

CAY Presumption Competition for a new 630 place primary school in Haywood Village, Weston-super-Mare (Agenda item 9)

The Head of Strategic Planning and Governance, Childrens Services, presented the report which provided details of the need for a new 630 place primary school in Haywood Village, Weston super Mare to open in September 2023 (subject to planning approvals and developer delivery).

Members asked and received clarification in relation to the following queries:-

- *What support will the schools who are going to lose student numbers because of this new school receive?* – Numbers of children in schools peak and trough naturally. The formula allows for cutting significant numbers of children. The Authority provides support and advice on a regular basis to the schools but is unable to provide monetary support due to finite resources. With any new school there comes a risk that other schools could be impacted by that.
- *Which trust is going to take on the new school?* – We don't know. This is a new school and the government requires the Local Authority to go out to competition. The report explains that we are going to start the process of the competition to find out which multi trust it is going to be. It may be one that we already have in North Somerset or it may be something new.
- *Could a caveat be put on when it goes out to tender to the MATs that they have a resource hub for additional needs children within the school site?* - This would not be possible as the requirement to build the school was determined with Persimmon before the facility to have resource bases so the build would only take place based on the Section 106 agreement 6/7 years ago before the facility to have resource bases. We have, however, within the agreement, rooms we would recommend be used for SEND. Key to our success is the selection of the provider and making sure that they have the right cultural approach and can evidence that cultural approach so that we can build our capacity in mainstream schools. That has got to be our emphasis over the next couple of years.

A discussion took place on the risks of not proceeding with another school in the area which included the costs of Home to School Transport and an increase in the council's carbon footprint by not taking up the developer's option to provide the school. The caveat within that was that it was subject to planning and developer delivery. Negotiations were currently ongoing with regards the submission of the planning application by Persimmon. Although the aspiration was for it to be completed in 2023 another risk was that it went beyond that date.

Panel members were supportive of a decision to be taken by the Executive Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning to approve the progression of a Presumption Route competition to deliver a new 630 place primary school on the Haywood Village Development in Weston super Mare to open in September 2023 (subject to planning approvals and developer delivery).

Concluded: that the Panel receive and consider the report

CYPS Performance Monitoring (Agenda item 10)

The Interim Assistant Director, Children's Services, presented the report The Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel receive regular performance management 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 report presented the standard items: any recent Ofsted inspections of council services; an analysis of the performance of the relevant Key Corporate Performance Indicators (KCPIs) for Quarter 1 2021/22, that fell under the remit of the Panel and an overview of the performance of various Key Service Measures for Support and Safeguarding services within the council.

In discussing the report members congratulated the Interim Assistant Director, Children's Services on producing a report that was easier to read and contained more accessible data. The Interim Assistant Director, Children's Services acknowledged that inroads had been made but there was still a journey to go and the work would continue into the next financial year. Members also noted that performance information should not be considered a straightforward measure of good or bad practice but should be interrogated.

Members were informed that the numbers of children in care were decreasing and the numbers in foster placement were increasing. The vision was for the North Somerset children to be in family homes.

A mini review of the Front Door had recently taken place which had been carried out with the North Tyneside (Partners in Practice). There had been many positives including decision making in a day and Phase 2 would begin in autumn 2021. Phase 2 would focus on a much more robust and effective multi agency safeguarding activity so that when decisions were made they were local authority decisions about whether or not a child met the level of need for statutory care but with a level of multi-agency input.

Members asked and received clarification in relation to the following queries:

- *I was really interested with the statistic on page 81 of the report which mentioned that at the end of September 71% of all children in care were place inside North Somerset which I thought was really encouraging and down from last year. Do you think this is a trend that can continue in North Somerset, given the finance and resources? – Yes, because the delivery of our practice model is about making sure we bring the right children into care in a timely manner. We work with the young people and parents and carers and our partners to collectively support*

young people at home. We are involved in regional joint pilot of joint funding which commenced in July 2021 and will be evaluated. The pilot relates to young people, who historically we have failed, in out of county placements and historically outcomes were not great.

- *Are children in independent living in our area and is it possible for councillors to be provided with information on what that accommodation is and whether it is in the private rented centre or if it has been purpose built?* – I will arrange for that information to be provided. With regards supported independence, most of them are in our area. Sometimes we will place children in Bristol or surrounding areas if we have issues or sometimes that is in their best needs. We would always want our children and young people to be close to home if it was right for them. But for some children if they have been schooled outside the area and their friendships and relationships are there we will do our best to try and support their independence where they want.

It is a real challenge for us because understandably the other local authorities have their other cohorts – some of them are private rental areas (we have a mixed economy of what we use). We are also working very hard on our pathway planning and preparing our young people for independence. That is a piece of work that has been going on for some time and the newly appointed Head of Corporate Parenting is driving forwards.

Concluded: that the Panel receive the performance information presented and comment on both areas for improvement and areas of good performance.

CYPS Month 5 Children's Services Budget Monitor (Agenda item 11)

The Principal Accountant, Children's Services, presented the report which summarised and discussed the 2021/22 forecast spend against budget for children's services, highlighting key variances, movements and contextual information. It provided members with further details on the month 5 report which would be presented to the Executive on 20 October 2021. The report also made reference to the principles and outcomes associated with the setting of the 2022/23 budget.

Members' attention was drawn to page 88 of the report which provided an overview of the position. The report highlighted that overall Children's Services were in a favourable position with a projected underspend against budget of just over £360k. The table in section 3.6 of the report summarised the main variances.

Members were made advised that one of the key variances was on placements and was a favourable variance. There was a projected underspend of just over £1m which was quite significant. This was largely due to the fact that when the budget was set in 2020 the numbers of children in care were much higher than they were currently. In addition, because it was at the height of the Covid 19 pandemic, and the outlook in terms of what the future demand would look like was quite uncertain, additional budget was also provided in expectation that numbers would increase even further but quite

clearly that demand had not materialised and therefore there was the current significant underspend on the budget.

Mention was also made of the work being carried out by the service on reducing placement costs and more importantly stepping down young people into more appropriate and cost-effective placements. Compared to the spend in the last financial year there had been quite a big reduction in spend of just over a £1m.

Members noted that there were some cost pressures within the services – the main one being in relation to supporting families with disabled children.

Members were directed to page 92 of the report which provided some narrative on the Dedicated Support Grant (DSG). The grant was ringfenced and funded the school and education budget. The pressures around special school places and education costs for children with SEND were ongoing. The year had started with a balance that was carried forward of just over £7m and it was projected that that would increase to around £12m by the end of the year mainly due to the demand for special school places. There is a lot of work going on to increase our local provision but quite clearly also there are challenges. The hope was that once all the projects and strategies were in place and implemented some of those costs could be mitigated.

Concluded: that the Panel receive and consider the 2021/22 forecast spend against budget for children's services and on the risks and opportunities associated with the medium-term position.

CYPS Panel's Work Plan (Agenda item 12)

The Chairman presented the work plan and referred to item 6 – Chairman's Update on CYPS Working Groups.

Concluded: that the work plan be received and any comments forwarded to the Democratic and Electoral Services Officer.

North Somerset Council

Report to the Children & Young People Policy & Scrutiny Panel

Date of Meeting: Thursday 10 March 2022

Subject of Report: Family Support & Safeguarding Update

Town or Parish: N/A

Officer/Member Presenting: Becky Hopkins, Assistant Director, Family Support & Safeguarding, Children's Services

Key Decision: No

Reason: To update Scrutiny Panel on Family Support & Safeguarding

Recommendations

Members receive an update and evaluation of the current position in the Family Support & Safeguarding Service so they have a full understanding of the strengths and ongoing areas for development.

1. Summary of Report

Set out below is an up-to-date overview of the strengths, challenges and identified areas for development within the Family Support & Safeguarding Service. It highlights what we are doing well and areas we are focusing on to continue to strengthen and improve the service we offer to children and their families.

2. Policy

This update is supported by North Somerset's Children and Young People's vision and plan.

3. Details

3.1 Summary

Children's Services data 2020/21

- 7% of our children's population were open to Children's Services at some point in 2020/2021.
- In 2021 there were 9684 contacts from either the public or professionals to Children's Services.
- Of these 9684 contacts 598 (6%) converted to referrals to Children's Social Care.
- At the end of December 2021:
 - 528 children had an Early Help offer

- 257 children were subject to a Child in Need plan
- 80 children were subject to a Child Protection plan
- 192 children were in care
- 11 children were adopted between April 2021 to December 2021
- 200 young people were care leavers.

Strengths

There has been strong member support for the children's services improvement journey with the leader and the lead member attending the partnership board, the establishment of the corporate parenting board, now chaired by the lead member, as a formal committee of the Council and through the scrutiny sub-subgroups.

A permanent senior leadership team has been established and recruited to; an assistant director and 7 heads of service, giving sufficient and stable capacity and a shared sense of collective purpose.

We have responded positively to the advice and challenge from our sector-led improvement partner, North Tyneside and have moved ahead with the redesign of our Front Door. It launched in February 2021 and is providing stronger information, advice and signposting to professionals and the public, as well as a single-entry point into our targeted early help (family well-being service) and children's social care. These streamlined front door processes enable more timely and responsive provision of support and ensure proportionate responses to children and families based on their needs.

Performance is very stable; demand at the front door for social work intervention continues to be low in part because of relatively low overall deprivation (despite some pockets of very high deprivation) but also because of a well-developed range of early help services. Re-referrals, open cases and Child Protection plans per 10K children are also low by national comparators and stable over the last two years. The number of children in care has been steadily decreasing over last two years, during which time both placement stability indicators have significantly improved.

Challenges

While there has been considerable progress made, a strong and consistent model of practice is not yet well embedded or consistently applied. We know that children's plans need to be achievable and outcome-focused and taken forward more authoritatively by social workers in a high support and high challenge environment. Assessments and plans need to reflect and be informed by the child's lived experience and their voice.

Alongside the development of a clearer model of practice we need to support team managers to ensure that their supervision and management oversight evidences reflection, clear direction of travel and responsive planning.

Although there have been a number of active plans to improve and embed quality assurance in recent years, the quality assurance system remains weak. The focus of quality assurance needs to move from compliance and process to a focus on children's needs and the impact and outcome of our intervention. Developing and adopting a new quality assurance system is one of our more urgent tasks and will support the strengthening of the quality of practice and learning and development.

3.2 Overview of current position and demands

- Our performance information evidences proportionate intervention – the right intervention at the right time to support children to remain in the care of their families and communities wherever possible. Going forward it will be important to maintain our focus on strength and relational-based practice and proportionate intervention whilst ensuring that we clearly evidence our understanding of the child's lived experience, their needs and identified risk in our assessments and clearer analysis of the impact of parental problems on their ability to meet their children's needs. There is further work to do to ensure that assessments and plans are sufficiently focussed on the needs and experiences of children and that focus on parent's/carer's needs is about what needs to change to enable them to meet the needs of their children.
- Repeat Child Protection Plans – 24% of children who were made subject to a Child Protection Plan in the last 6 months had been made subject to a plan previously. Recent initial audit indicates that, in the majority of cases, the reasons for the repeat plan are the same as the reasons for previous plans. Social work intervention where there is previous involvement with a family needs to focus on the history (use of chronologies), the experience of the child, the likelihood of positive and lasting change and the impact on the child if this is not achieved. The main reason for children being made subject to a Child Protection Plan is neglect.
- Placement sufficiency, as per the national picture, is a challenge. We are experiencing a significant pressure on placement capacity at both a local and national level. This current paucity of available placements can limit our ability to appropriately match children to carers and can result in children being placed away from the local area and their family and social networks, schools and community support however, our performance in relation to children placed in foster placements (74%) and children placed in our own provision (55%) is higher than the national average and our statistical neighbours. We are planning a significant recruitment drive in 2022 to increase our numbers of in-house mainstream and specialist foster carers.
- Within North Somerset we do not have any local authority owned residential capacity and there is limited residential capacity to meet the needs of North Somerset young people. At present North Somerset places a high proportion of children (9 out of 11) in commissioned residential placements outside the authority. A small number of children and young people in North Somerset present with very complex needs in crisis, often primarily related to emotional and mental health. We do not have provision locally or sufficiency of provision in the region if any of these children need to come into our care. We are working with colleagues on the regional sufficiency work, and we plan to develop a local specialist foster care service to meet this need,

including being able to provide a crisis response, with the support of partner agencies.

- We have seen an expected increase in the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) that we will need to provide care for, either through the agreed National Transfer Scheme or spontaneous arrivals through such routes as Bristol Airport. We have seen a steady increase over the last 6 years in the number of UASC. We currently have 17 young refugees. This is 9% out of the total Children in Care cohort which is higher than the latest England figure of 6.2% and our statistical neighbours – 6.1%. These young people require care placements and allocated social worker support (under 18 years) and personal assistant and leaving care services (post 18 years).
- The development of 16+ Supported and Independent Living schemes within the area has been successful in meeting demand and providing best value.
- The percentage of 19-21-year-old care leavers who were in education, employment and/or training (EET) at the end of December was 58%. This is higher than the same time last year at 43% and higher than that of our statistical neighbours at 53% and England data at 53%. Of the care leavers who are NEET, the main reasons are illness and pregnancy.
- The percentage of 19-21-year-old care leavers who were in suitable accommodation at the end of December was 89%. This compares favourably against the most recent statistical neighbour and national averages of 85%.

3.3 Key strengths and areas for focus and development

What is working well?

- A focused Improvement Board (Children and Young People's Partnership Board) is established, enabling a more strategic space for partnership discussion about how collectively to improve children's outcomes, with an aim of developing strengths-based and trauma-informed practice and greater inclusion. This began by agreeing a partnership vision statement for what North Somerset and partners are seeking to achieve for children and young people and has enabled more honest conversations and collaborative working.
- Newly formed, focused and positive leadership team building on the realignment of teams including the implementation of a new Head of Service structure in March 2021 to support a sense of collective purpose and to lead change.
- Caseloads for social workers remain manageable (average 14/15) although we are seeing a steady increase.
- Maintenance of a stable, supportive and committed workforce (agency rate 5%). Social care staff are positive about working in North Somerset.
- Extensive and well-regarded range of early years and early help services (now known as the Family Wellbeing Service). The remit of the family support workers

in the Family Wellbeing Service has been expanded from 0-5 to 0-19 (25 SEND). Family support workers are delivering parenting groups such as Mellow, Time to Shine, Non-violent reduction, Parent Plus Programmes for adolescents and children with SEN, working things out direct work with adolescents, Incredible Years, Caring Dads and Domestic Abuse groups. Family support workers are also in the Resettlement Teams, supporting refugees into North Somerset, working within our start to finish programmes helping integrate re-offenders back into society and also offer a drop-in group for advice and support with a multiagency approach. Since January family support workers have been on a rota to complete the missing children Return Home Interviews for children who are not in care and they will also provide a duty worker on the front door to work with multi-agency colleagues.

- Children's Centres offer a variety of groups for parents and children to attend for example muddy boots, construction fun and young parents. Health services and midwifery are co located in all localities along with local libraries Request for rooms and space from multiagency partners and voluntary sector are increasing to deliver services alongside us within our communities. Outreach work continues in partnership with community learning and local community projects to deliver services in hard-to-reach areas.
- Plans are underway to develop Family Hubs to coordinate multi-agency early help activity for children, young people and their families; our satellite and linked Family Hubs have been identified. As part of the plan for Family Hubs we have asked our young people what they want and they have told us, *'somewhere to get away from those who might encourage them to get in to trouble and someone to talk to'*. We are looking at setting up a space for young people in our hubs to enable us to provide this and develop trusted relationships.
- The redesign of the Family Wellbeing Service and the Front Door, working with North Tyneside as our Partner in Practice. The new service was launched in February 2021 and is providing stronger information, advice and signposting to professionals and the public (including a consultation line for professionals), as well as a single-entry point into targeted early help (family well-being service) and children's social care. The step-up/step-down process is working well. These streamlined front door processes enable more timely and responsive provision of support and ensure proportionate responses to children and families based on their needs. Further partnership development of the multi-agency safeguarding hub is underway.
- Focus on proportionate intervention and strength and relationship-based interventions. This has included using pre-proceedings to create the environment for change and the introduction of permanence tracking to prevent unnecessary drift and delay. The number of children in pre-proceedings for 3 months or more has decreased during 2021.
- The Children's System Governance Board chaired by the Director of Children's Services and Assistant Director is supporting the development of a practitioner led streamlined and effective recording system. The work completed to date has been focussed on the development of records for the Family Wellbeing Service and from January a workplan is in place for the statutory social work teams.

- Strengthened response to children missing via a weekly multi-agency meeting which maintains active oversight of our children who go missing most frequently and the intervention required. Plans are in place to extend this to include children at risk of or being exploited in January/February 2022.
- Appointment of a Young Director in the service; started in post in January 2022. Their role is to provide challenge to us as professionals in respect of the services we provide and ensure we maintain our focus on the lived experiences of children and young people.
- During 2021 we successfully applied for DfE Covid-19 Recovery Funding to increase and expand our use of the Mockingbird foster care model within the authority from 3 to 5 Hub carers and constellations. As the only LA in the South West who has fully implemented Mockingbird we were successful in our bid. The funding bid was also to work alongside the Fostering Network to support the development and roll-out of the Mockingbird model across 3 other Local Authorities within the Southwest Region: Devon, Dorset and South Gloucestershire. Confirmation was received in October that our bid was successful, and plans are now being worked up to ensure this initial roll-out (phase 1 of the bid) is in place by March 2022.
- At the end of January 2022, 13% of our children in care experienced 3 or more placement moves during the last 12 months. This is indicating a slight increase from 11% at the end of 2020/21 year however, it remains solid performance overall. We are increasingly utilising the skills of the Consult Team to good effect to assist young people, carers and involved practitioners to manage situations at an earlier stage to avoid escalation and unnecessary placement breakdown.
- Similarly, we are performing well in terms of long-term stability of placements. At the end of January 2022, our long-term stability indicator was 75%, which is higher than both our statistical neighbour and the national average and is an improvement over time.
- Our annual North Somerset Bright Spots survey for children in our care 2021 evidences the following areas of good practice:
 - Young people's trust in their carers is a strength.
 - 88% of children and young people reported that they 'always' felt safe in their placements which is higher than the overall population.

Relationships between children and their social worker:

- The level of trust in social workers was high. 100% of the youngest children (4-7yrs), 85% of children aged 8-11yrs; and 91% of young people (11-18yrs) trusted their social worker.
- 91% of young people (11-18yrs) reported that they could easily get in touch with their social worker 'all or most of the time' or 'sometimes'.
- Our Bright Spots survey, Your Life Beyond Care for Care Leavers 2021, evidences the following areas of strength and areas which have improved significantly since our last Your Life Beyond Care survey in 2019:

- Relationships between Care Leavers and their Leaving Care Personal Advisers (LCPA) have been consistently strong. Only 2 (3%) of care leavers 'hardly ever' or 'never' trusted their leaving care worker.
 - In 2021, 92% of Care Leavers reported it was easy to contact their LCPA.
- Involvement in the Regional Recovery Care Leavers Project. This project is focussed on the development of a regional offer for care leavers so they receive consistent support wherever they may live in the region.
 - Following a successful bid to the UK Community Renewal Fund we have secured 6 months funding for a part time Care Leavers Education, Employment and Training (EET) Worker. The post will be based in the Care Leavers Team working with Care Leavers who are not in education, training or employment and those who wish to explore betterment opportunities to enhance their careers. The post will work in partnership with Reboot, the Youth Opportunity Hub and Team North Somerset / Weston Works plus other partners supporting Care Leavers with EET.
 - Our Youth Justice Service (YJS) is an integral part of Children's Services. Since the Probation Inspectorate Inspection in September 2020 the Management Board has been revitalised in terms of membership and ownership following a period of turnover in agencies' representatives and the challenges posed to each agency through the impact of the pandemic. The YJS has a range of services and teams: Court and Community Supervision team, Avon & Somerset Enhanced Case Management Project, Substance Advice Service, Junction 21 Mentoring and Advocacy Service; Youth Inclusion Support Project, and the Education Diversion Project (September 2021 – March 22 pilot). The latter is already evidencing significant traction and engagement with academies. The YJS, since November 2021, has had the benefit of a CCG commissioned service from Sirona Care and Health of a Speech and Language Therapist for two days a week which is in response to the significant needs of many children and young people known to the YJS.

Areas for focus and development

- Continued pro-active recruitment activity to key management, social work and social care practitioner posts. Whilst our workforce is relatively stable, recruitment to these roles is increasingly challenging.
- Partnership refresh of the Early Help Strategy and review of the Effective Support Guidance to ensure that it reflects the partnership vision, the responsibilities of partners and Family Wellbeing Service for early help, and the model of practice.
- Development of a clear Practice Framework. We are committed to a strength and relational based model of practice using the tools and language of signs of safety. However, despite the considerable progress made, a strong and consistent model of practice is not yet well embedded or consistently applied. This model must be coherent with and supported by the forms on LCS (systems governance work

plan), a case audit system focused on better outcomes for children and a substantial learning and development programme, including for team managers.

- Development of a robust Quality Assurance Framework. Audit activity has been undertaken on a regular basis. Quality assurance activity in 2021 told us that development is required in the following practice areas:
 - consistency in the quality of case file auditing
 - active involvement of children in decisions about their lives, ensuring their voice is always central
 - evidencing good quality and impactful direct work with children and young people
 - to ensure chronologies are up to date and include only key significant events
 - ensuring evidence of reflective supervision and robust management oversight

A practice review week focussed on supervision was also undertaken in October 2021.

- Further work is underway to develop quality assurance activities which enable us to learn from what's working well, understand what needs to be done better and differently, including understanding how children and families experience our intervention. Actions will include:
 - development of a variety of quality assurance activity which enables us to understand the child's lived experience and are focussed on impact and outcomes
 - development of arrangements which support seeking consistent feedback from children and parents which is listened to, acted upon and informs practice developments
 - revision of the case audit form so it is aligned with the developing Practice Framework.
 - provision of training for auditors and moderators to enable them to improve the consistency and quality of audits and develop a shared understanding of what good looks like
 - closing the learning loop - sharing collated learning from quality assurance in teams to consider how practice can be improved to strengthen the quality of practice and staff learning and development.
- The Children with Disabilities Service requires further development, in tandem with the SEND improvements. This will include the development of a clear local offer, the development of care support services in the home and short break provision for children with a high-level need and the refresh of the Children with Disabilities Resource Panel. Support has been sought from the Local Government Association to achieve this.
- Strengthened management oversight and provision of high-quality, reflective supervision which is focussed on the child's lived experience and their needs, the impact of interventions and identifying outcome focussed actions and plans.

- Revision of decision-making system which evidences senior management oversight of decision making for children with the most complex needs (children who may need to come into care and children where pre-proceedings or care proceedings may need to be initiated). Plan in place to launch the Care and Resource Panel which will be chaired by the Assistant Director on 19th January.
- Continuing to support and equip social workers to develop strength and relational-based practice in planning and recording - working in partnership with families to develop plans which are focused on the change which needs to happen, how this can be achieved and how we will know when we get there.
- Develop a strategic, coordinated approach to exploitation and responding to risk outside the family across the North Somerset partnership. A needs assessment to enable an understanding of the picture across North Somerset has commenced.
- Continue to work with Education and Further Education colleagues to ensure more of our young people are in Education, Employment & Training (EET) and to narrow the gap in educational attainment for our children in care
- Significant work has been undertaken to strengthen corporate parenting arrangements and to support an improved understanding of the corporate parenting role across the council and the partnership. Learning events were held for elected members in 2021. Further work is ongoing to maintain the progress made and continue to develop the effectiveness of the panel.

4. Consultation

N/A

5. Financial Implications

N/A

Costs

N/A

Funding

N/A

6. Legal Powers and Implications

N/A

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

N/A

8. Risk Management

N/A

9. Equality Implications

N/A

10. Corporate Implications

N/A

11. Options Considered

N/A

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Appendices:

North Somerset Children's Family Support and Safeguarding Strategic Plan

Background Papers:

North Somerset Children's Family Support and Safeguarding Strategic Plan

January 2022

Review January 2023



To make North Somerset a truly great place for children and young people to thrive; where all have the best possible life and opportunities, including those who are vulnerable, disadvantaged and/or have special educational or additional need

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March 2022 - Development of a robust Quality Assurance Framework	
April 2022 - Development and launch of a Practice Framework	

Area 1 – Develop an experienced, skilled, confident, and stable workforce

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
1.1 Visible senior leadership across Children's Services (ILACS March 2020)	Engagement with the workforce via regular staff briefings, attendance at team meetings, QA activity and quality and performance meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback in the annual social work health check and the annual staff survey 	DCS/AD	Mar 2022	<p>Pre and post Ofsted briefings held in Dec 2021</p> <p>Monthly service catchups in place.</p> <p>Quarterly meetings with HoS team and Team Managers</p> <p>Quality of practice and performance meetings held bi-monthly and will be refreshed</p>	Children and their families benefit from a motivated and cohesive workforce
1.2 Developing a skilled and stable workforce	Launch the recruitment and retention policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low levels of agency workers maintained Retain a higher percentage of experienced practitioners and our Assessed & Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) cohort beyond three years Maintenance of realistic and manageable 	HR and PSW	Feb 2022	Final draft of policy due to be presented at CSLT in January 2022	A stable workforce will provide consistency for children and families and allow practitioners to build relationships of trust and confidence and to intervene to achieve positive change together with children and their families
	Deliver the action plan to recruit more permanent frontline staff and managers across the service		HR and PSW	Apr 2022	Recruitment activity is ongoing and the plan for improved recruitment activity via social media platforms and external advertising platforms such as Community Care will be agreed by	

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
		average caseloads across the service			the recruitment task and finish group	A stable management team will support practitioners to provide effective interventions focussed on needs and outcomes and support continuous learning and development
	Further explore growing our own opportunities for non-social work staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient capacity across the service to meet need • Recruitment to all management posts • Increased number of Heads of Service attending South West Leadership training 	HR and PSW	May 2022	To be agreed by the recruitment and retention task and finish group	
	Deliver the 2022/2023 learning and development offer, including supporting Heads of Service to attend the SW Leadership training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual survey of social workers shows increased confidence in practice, job satisfaction and support provided 	PSW	Feb 2022	<p>The Learning and Development Strategy is in final draft form.</p> <p>Two Heads of Service are on the current leadership training course</p>	
	Develop a refreshed programme of Continuous Practice Development sessions for the workforce to support ongoing practice development		PSW	Jun 2022	Programme to be developed to include regular CPD sessions which align with the priority areas for improvement	

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
1.3 Support for Heads of Service	Review workloads of Heads of Service and consider whether any additional capacity/practical day to day support is required		AD	Apr 2022	<p>Plan to transfer the management of the nurseries from Family Wellbeing to the Education Service</p> <p>Identification that additional management capacity is required with the HOS Family Support and Safeguarding to take a lead on CWD and SEND developments</p> <p>Additional external capacity to be available end Jan 2022 to support to take forward quality assurance work and refresh adoption practice guidance and LCS pathways</p> <p>Plan to meet with finance colleagues to review options</p>	
1.4 Development of Team Managers	Training programme for team managers to be developed to		PSW	Apr 2022	Plan to be developed	

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
(Focused Visit 2021)	support their development and confidence in role					
1.5 Policies and Procedures (informed by Focused Visit Dec 2021)	Develop our local area within Tri.x to ensure all strategies, policies and procedures can be found in one place and are up to date to support consistent practice		All HOS	Apr 2022	Rolling plan in place. Operational capacity to support this task needs to be supported and will be addressed via Inspection Readiness meetings	Children and their families will experience a consistent approach and response
1.6 Business support	Work closely with Agilisys to ensure business support needs are met within the service		AD and all HOS	Jun 2022	Review of business support needs has been undertaken by Agilisys and Heads of Service. The outcome of this work needs to be reviewed in CSLT. HoS do not have any business support. This needs resolving.	Children and their families are responded to efficiently and effectively

Area 2 – Improve our quality assurance, performance management and management information systems to strengthen and support high quality practice

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
2.1 Develop a robust and responsive QA framework to support a learning organisation (ILACS March 2020 and Focused Visit Dec 2021)	Develop an annual calendar of QA activity linked to identified practice's issues/themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective QA activity including practice observations/case auditing / themed audits /team diagnostics/ service user and professional feedback/ complaints & compliments enabling evidence of high-quality consistent practice and robust effective management oversight and reflective supervision Bi-annual practice reviews including senior leaders and members Regular case work auditing and themed practice reviews Regular feedback from children and families to inform practice and improvement 	HOS QA	Apr 2022	<p>Draft calendar of activity in place</p> <p>Supervision Practice Review completed in October 2021</p> <p>Themed Child Protection Practice Review running in January 2022 (also trialling web survey to complete and analyse)</p> <p>January service catch-up is focussed on QA and the message that QA is everyone's responsibility</p>	Children and their families receive effective, impactful interventions and support which are focussed on assessed needs and improve outcomes
	Collate and communicate findings of QA activity to drive high quality consistent practice	HOS QA	Jun 2022	<p>Findings from the Supervision Practice Review have led to the draft revision of the Supervision Policy</p> <p>Findings to be shared with TMs in Mar 2022</p>		

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
	Develop regular themed Practice Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closing the learning loop – evidence of learning being taken back into the service 	HOS QA	Feb 2022	Child Protection Practice Review allocated and due to be submitted January 2022	
	Launch a web survey tool to support accurate and timely analysis of QA activity		HOS QA	Jun 2022	Survey tool being trialled for the January 2022 Practice Review (above)	
	Consistently seek feedback from children and families to inform practice development		HOS QA	Apr 2022	<p>Feedback is regularly sought from the Annual Bright Spots Survey and Care Leavers Survey Some feedback is also sought from QA activity</p> <p>January service catch-up to focus on how to improve feedback return rates to inform a plan going forwards</p>	

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
	Participation Officer will work with families to increase participation and carry out regular family surveys		HOS QA	Apr 2022	Participation Officer started in post in December 2021 Prioritising engagement with our Children in Care Council and the development of a Participation Strategy	
	Regularly review feedback from compliments and complaints		HOS QA	Jul 2022	To be actioned for 2022	
	Link the focus of the quality assurance and performance monitoring meetings to QA activity and align with the QA Framework		HOS QA/AD	Apr 2022	To be actioned	
	Agree the ways in which learning is		HOS QA	Feb 2022	Discussion with staff about how this would be most effective in the	

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
	shared and practice is developed - 'Closing the loop'				January service catch-up. Feedback to be incorporated into the QA Framework	
2.2 Case audit activity that is focussed on impact and outcomes and supports an understanding of children's lived experiences and the effectiveness of social work practice (ILACS March 2020 and Focused Visit Dec 2021)	Develop a case audit tool and moderation process which is focussed on children's needs, impact of intervention and outcomes		HOS QA	Feb 2022 pilot – review Mar 2022	Revised tool ready to pilot in Feb 2022	
	Build the revised audit tool in LCS		HOS QA	Jun 2022	To be actioned via the Systems Governance Board following pilot above	
	Collate learning from audits and share with the service and agree actions required to support practice improvements		HOS QA	Mar 2022	Learning from 2021 audits shared in December 2021	

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
2.3 Improve participation of all children, young people and their families across children's services (LJAR May 2021 and Focused Visit Dec 2021)	Ensure children are actively involved in decisions for their future through purposeful and creative direct work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established participation groups are in place and are influencing day to day practice 	HOS QA	Mar 2022	Initial priorities for the Participation Officer are: refresh children in care council, care leavers forum, develop Participation Strategy, support young people to attend other forums and develop consultation forms for children in care	<p>Children and young people experience that their voices are heard and their experiences are understood</p> <p>Children and young people are involved in the co-production of practice developments and this has a positive impact on their lives.</p>
	Recruit to Participation Role		HOS QA	Dec 2021	Participation Officer successfully recruited and started in post in December 2021	
	Appoint a Young Director		HOS QA	Dec 2021	Young Director recruited November 2021 and due to start in post February 2022	
	Explore 'App' to support children's participation		HOS QA	Mar 2022	To be actioned by the Young Director/Children's Participation Officer	
2.4 High Quality Performance Management to	Ensure timely and high-quality performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved interactive 	AD	Feb 2022	Power BI interactive performance dashboards are now in	Children and young people experience

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
inform practice themes/issues (ILACS March 2020 Recommendation 6 point 35 & 36)	management reporting, which is shared with all managers, senior leaders and members	performance reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team Managers regular review performance data with their teams • Performance data informs QA activity and practice deep dives 			place and development work is ongoing	a responsive service
	Extend the use of Power BI to all Heads of Service and managers		BH/Business Intelligence	Apr 2022	Heads of Service and managers have access to Power BI Priorities for next phases of development agreed	

**Area 3 – Identify and intervene effectively and proportionately to support children and families in need of help and/or protection:
Right Help, Right Time, Right Place**

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
3.1 The Front Door (Focused Visit March 2019 & ILACS March 2020 Recommendation 1)	Work with partners to develop and implement an effective Front Door including a Multi - Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) with clear referral pathways to Children's Services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuum of need reflects the partnership vision and the responsibilities and Family Wellbeing service for Early Help and the model of practice with children and families Increase in the number of children and young people supported at the earliest opportunity (early help) Improvement in the rate of contacts accepted as referrals to children's social care (CSC) 	HOS Family Wellbeing and Front door	Feb 2022	Phase 1 of the Front Door changes have been implemented and Phase 2 is in progress (North Tyneside progress report)	<p>Children and young people benefit from timely and robust assessment of their needs and any identified risks. This results in the right intervention/support being provided at the right time and by the right services</p> <p>Children and their families are not subjected to unnecessary assessments and processes</p> <p>Children and their families know where to seek support</p>
	Revise the partnership Effective Support Guidance		NS Safeguarding Children Board	May 2022	To be actioned	
	Launch the Request for Support form		HOS Family wellbeing and Front door	Feb 2022	Workshops arranged for the Feb 2022 to launch the new Request for Support form	
	Review of outwardly facing information and communications		HOS Family wellbeing and Front door	Jun 2022	To be actioned	
	Work with partners to improve the		HOS Family wellbeing	Mar 2022	Multi-agency representation at the	

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
	quality of referrals into the Front Door and understanding of the continuum of need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low re-referral rates to early help and CSC • Improvement in the quality of referrals to the 'Front Door' • Improvement in the quality of children & family assessments across children's services • Stronger evidence of management oversight • Effective and impactful multi-agency oversight of our missing children (from home, care and education) 	and Front door		Front Door has been strengthened (police, domestic abuse, education link, health, family wellbeing). This enables efficient feedback to partners. The Front Door and Family Wellbeing Service are reaching out to partners to provide feedback on referrals	
	Work with the Police to support appropriate referrals		HOS Family wellbeing and Front door	Feb 2022	Meeting scheduled for the end of January with the Lighthouse Safeguarding Unit and Somerset CC to work together to agreed a shared plan to improve in this area and to complete joint audit of referrals and team training. Involvement in the Avon and Somerset Data Acceleration Project	
	Develop a feedback system for partners		HOS Family wellbeing	Mar 2022	Feedback form has been developed and	

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
	and families referring into the Front Door		and Front door		this role will be undertaken by the Referral Co-ordinators	
3.2 Family Wellbeing (Early Help) (ILACS March 2020 Recommendation 5 & points 1 & 41)	Outline and publicise the Family Wellbeing offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthened relationships with partners, the voluntary sector, communities and local businesses on the ground 	HOS Family wellbeing and Front door	Mar 2022	The Family Wellbeing Service Offer is being drafted and workshops arranged for Feb 2022 to launch with partners	
	Develop family hubs to coordinate multi-agency Early Help activity for children and their families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families, partners and communities understand and recognise the Early Help offer. 	HOS Family wellbeing and Front door	Jun 2022	Satellite hub and linked family hubs identified. Bid submitted in December 2021 to the Family Hubs: Local Transformation Fund. This outlines our plan for the development of Family Hubs	
	Continue to develop the Family Wellbeing (Early Help) Service to increase capacity and improve the offer for vulnerable older children and		HOS Family wellbeing and Front door	Sept 2022	Training is ongoing to develop confidence in working with older children Redesigned EHM forms were launched in December to support practice and	

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
	adolescents (0–25 years)				evidence of intervention and impact Staff are being trained in IAPT The service is supporting families under Afghan Resettlement Scheme Plans are being developed to utilise the Children's Centres/Family Hubs to engage vulnerable young people in the area	
	Deliver Family Wellbeing (Early Help) workshops across the partnership		HOS Family wellbeing and Front door	Feb 2022	Partnership workshops scheduled for end Jan 2022	
3.3 Contextual Safeguarding (ILACS March 2020 point 10 and 36)	Strengthen the partnership understanding and response to exploitation via an	A seamless, needs led transition.	HOS Family wellbeing and Front door	Jun 2022	Refreshed Contextual Safeguarding Steering Group in place (July 2021)	Children and young people are supported, the risks to them reduced and they feel safer in their

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
	Exploitation Needs Assessment to inform our Exploitation Strategy				<p>Strong links with Operation Topaz. Police plan to expand this to include criminal exploitation</p> <p>Partnership engagement in the RIP Tackling Exploitation project in 2021</p> <p>Recommendation from the project to undertake a Needs Assessment actioned Jan 2022</p>	communities as a result of proactive disruption activity and the development of trusted relationships to enable positive engagement
	Continue to improve transition planning for children and young people		HOS Family Supporting and Safeguarding	Apr 2022	<p>Transitions Policy reviewed and updated December 2021.</p> <p>Awaiting feedback from the PCF and SENDIAS. Plan to develop a child-friendly version (Area 5 SEND Improvement Plan)</p>	Young people experience seamless transitions and have transition plans in place which clearly identify what needs to happen based on assessed need

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
	Develop missing meetings to include exploitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A shared understanding of the issue • Timely response to children missing 	HOS Family wellbeing and Front door	Apr 2022	Plan to implement from week beginning 17 th Jan 2022	
	Consider how the system responds to children being exploited i.e. where the traditional child protection process is not working for them. Learn from good practice elsewhere (Wiltshire CC)		HOS Family Wellbeing & Front Door	Apr 2022	To be actioned	
3.4 Supporting Children and Young People's Emotional and Mental Health (ILACS March 2020 point 10 and LJAR May 2018)	Develop Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) tier 2 training and clarify our trauma informed approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practitioners systematically use a trauma approach and trauma informed toolkits • Children and young people do not come into our care due to their emotional and mental health needs 	All HOS	Sept 2022	3 family support workers have completed their Improving Access to Psychological Therapies training and will qualify at degree level as IAPT practitioners and 2 managers have almost completed the supervisors IAPT training at post graduate level.	Children and young people's emotional and mental health needs are identified early and they receive the right support to avoid escalation and enable them to remain with their families

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
					6 new family support workers across children services about to begin the IAPT training We have a practitioner becoming certified in Theraplay	
	Strengthen pre-CAMHS services.		All HOS with health colleagues	Sept 2022	Funding provided by NSC for Tier 2 mental health support in June 2021. The service is provided by Barnardos and Off the Record	
3.5 Edge of Care	Review current edge of care services and consider the option of developing a crisis response team		HOS Corporate Parenting	Oct 2022	To be actioned	Children, young people and their families receive intervention quickly in crisis to support them to remain within their family networks

Area 4 - Ensure delivery of high quality, consistent practice through a strengths-based practice model and high quality supervision and support

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
4.1 Practice Framework (informed by Focused Visit Dec 2021)	Develop and embed a clear Practice Framework with the service which incorporates a strength, relational based and trauma informed approach and the Signs of Safety model. Continue to embed Signs of Safety/Wellbeing amongst frontline practitioners and managers across Children's Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The practice framework principles are owned by the service and evidenced in our interventions with children and their families and run as a thread through children's records. 	AD/PSW	Apr 2022	To be actioned. Staff workshop to be arranged for Feb 2022	Children and their families experience a collaborative approach which gives them the confidence to engage with interventions and the motivation to make the changes identified to meet the needs of their children. The lived experiences of children and their wishes and feelings are well understood and inform assessment and planning
4.2 Supervision and management oversight. (ILACS March 2020 recommendation 3 and Focused Visit Dec 2021)	All practitioners to receive high-quality supervision which is focussed on the child's lived experience and their needs, the impact of interventions and identifying outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of high-quality consistent management oversight and reflective supervision Bi-annual practice reviews focussed on supervision 	PSW and all HOS	Apr 2022	Supervision practice review competed in October 2021. Supervision Policy and supervision forms have been reviewed in light of the practice review. Sign off being sought via CSLT in February 2022	Children and young people benefit from timely, inclusive, transparent decision making and achieve improved sustainable outcomes which is supported and enabled by practitioners who

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
	focussed actions and plans	including senior leaders and members			Further practice review of supervision to be built into QA activity in the second half of 2022	receive regular high-quality reflective supervision and management support
	Revise and relaunch the Supervision Policy		PSW/All HOS	Mar 2022	The policy has been reviewed and is awaiting sign off. Plan to launch Feb 2022	
4.3 Children's Plans (ILACS March 2020 point 8 and Focused Visit Dec 2021)	Continue to improve the quality of plans across the service to ensure they address: the child's needs and the identified worries; they are strength based and achievable; outcome focused; reflect the views and wishes of the child; and, contingency plans are in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> QA activity evidences that children's plans are impactful and Specific Measurable Relevant & Timebound (SMART) and ensure the voice of the child is central. Positive feedback from children 	PSW/All HOS	Oct 2022	<p>Work plan in place via the Systems Governance Board starting February 2022 to review all of the forms on LCS to ensure they support best practice and reflect our practice principles</p> <p>Monthly skills workshops introduced in November 2021 for ISROs</p> <p>1st workshop focussed on planning held with ISROs on 11th Jan 2022.</p>	Children and young people benefit from purposeful planning, informed by creative direct work, which supports more children and young people to remain safely within their families, or secures permanence for them in a timely manner where this is not possible (e.g. through special guardianship or adoption)

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
					<p>Audit of ICPC Plans planned for Feb 2022. Observations of all ISRO's took place in Aug/Sept 2021; to be repeated Feb/March 2022</p> <p>Workshops planned with all staff to develop confidence in writing family led safety plans with the family with actions that are achievable and secure the change needed.</p>	
	Ensure all practitioners are confident and skilled with leading Family Network Meetings		PSW/HOS QA	Jul 2022	Review of this practice to be planned	
4.4 Advocacy	Increase capacity to offer advocacy for initial and review CP conferences and for children looked after who go missing		HOS Youth Justice	Apr 2022	Proposal agreed in principle at CSLT in Jan 2022. Funding arrangements to be confirmed	

Area 5 – Ensure delivery of high-quality consistent care and provision for children in our care and for care leavers

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
5.1 Achieving Permanence (ILACS March 2020 recommendation 4)	Achieve permanence for children by ensuring all children in care have a clear plan for permanence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All children have a plan for permanence by week 5 of their care journey Timeliness of pre-proceedings and care proceedings 	HOS Corporate Parenting/HOS Family Support & Safeguarding	Review Jul 2022	Permanence tracking started in Nov 2021 – monitoring and reviewing permanence plans for all children in care	<p>Clear Permanence Plans in place – avoidance of drift and improved, more timely outcomes</p> <p>Increased placement stability</p>
	Permanency tracking meetings to take place monthly		HOS Corporate Parenting/HOS Family Support & Safeguarding	Review Jul 2022	<p>Permanence tracker introduced and implemented.</p> <p>Process in place for all children in care to be monitored and reviewed</p>	
5.2 Preparation for adult hood and independence (ILACS March 2020)	ASDAN to be started with children in care aged 13 and 14 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified elements of the ASDAN programme available for all 13+ years children in care All relevant foster carers and care providers offered ASDAN training 	HOS Corporate Parenting	Dec 2022	<p>Request made to DfE to extend funding of ASDAN worker position post March 2022</p> <p>Develop ASDAN training for foster carers training – course by end of March 2022</p> <p>Roll out training April – July 2022</p>	<p>Improved care leaver preparedness for independence and adulthood</p> <p>Increased numbers of care leavers in EET and improved outcomes</p>

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
	Increased focus on improving EET opportunities for care leavers		HOS Corporate Parenting	Dec 2022	<p>New p/time EET worker post out for advert (6-month post)</p> <p>YP Partnership Board Task & Finish Group on improving EET across North Somerset Plan developed</p> <p>All NEET care leavers will have an individual EET Plan by end of Jan 2022. All plans reviewed by end of Feb 2022</p> <p>Exploration of apprenticeship and employment scheme within NS Council – end of March 2022</p> <p>Planning underway to introduce PAs to care leavers from aged 16.</p>	
5.3 Corporate Parenting	Re-establish Corporate Parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Parenting Board 	HOS Corporate Parenting	Dec 2021	Review of ToRs Mar 2022	Children in care, care leavers and our vulnerable children

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
(ILACS March 2020 recommendation 5 and point 42)	Board and review membership	<p>meets regularly and is well attended</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes children and young people in its membership Board activity ensures that the children's agenda remains as a priority with the Council and its partners 				<p>all benefit from a North Somerset wide focus on 'corporate parenting' to improve their outcomes (e.g. health, education and housing).</p> <p>Children and young people are able to actively contribute to the development of supports, services and improved practice across Children's Service</p>
	Members and colleagues across the Council and partner agencies in their role as 'corporate parents' to offer practical support and identifiable actions that enable sustainable improved outcomes and life chances for children and young people including employment, education, training and volunteering opportunities		HOS Corporate Parenting	Ongoing	EET scrutiny sub-group established Themed Corporate Parenting Panel planned to focus on EET	
	Continue development of Corporate Parenting Service/brand		HOS Corporate Parenting	Sept 2022	Corporate Parenting Cluster meetings established	
	Review the local offer with care leavers including exploration of		HOS Corporate Parenting	June 2022	Care Leaver Forum relaunch due February 2022	

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
	mentoring and apprenticeship scheme					this meets their needs
5.4 Cultural Identity	Cultural identity and awareness training to be sourced and rolled out to all workers in corporate parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All corporate parenting staff have accessed and attended identified training. Confident and culturally aware staff. 	HOS Corporate Parenting	Sept 2022	<p>Leaving Care PAs to attend identity training Feb 2022</p> <p>Links with HR and Uni of Bristol – bespoke training</p>	Improved and more responsive service provided to meet the individual needs of children, young people and their families
5.5 Fostering	Review advertising, assessment process and wrap around support including access to the Consult service. Review allowances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in enquiries leading to assessment Increased number of in-house foster carers Decrease in the % of IFA placements 	HOS Corporate Parenting	May 2022	<p>12-month plan in place.</p> <p>Targeting villages and towns. Bringing fostering to the community</p>	<p>Increased pool of carers to allow for better matching between children and carers</p> <p>More supported lodgings hosts to allow for a step down towards independence for our young people.</p>
	Focused recruitment of mainstream foster and supported lodging carers, and promotion of staying put scheme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a Specialist foster carer scheme Increased number of Family Link scheme carers 2 additional Hub carers and 	HOS Corporate Parenting	Nov 2022	<p>Review current Supported Lodgings scheme – underway</p> <p>Awareness raising about Staying Put planned for March 2022</p>	<p>Increased numbers of Staying Put placements enabling young people to</p>

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
	Specific recruitment and development of specialised foster carer scheme and expansion of family link carers	constellations - Mockingbird <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved placement stability. Improved SGO policy and procedures and clearer support in place 	HOS Corporate Parenting	Nov 2022	Task group meetings in place to develop scheme – met in Dec 2021 Family Link meeting to be arranged – Jan 2022	remain in their foster families Our children have the best support around them Children with additional needs have support from consistent person to support them remaining in the family home. Improved placement stability
	Expansion of Mockingbird scheme with two additional Hubs and co-ordination of a regional support network		HOS Corporate Parenting	Sept 2022	One potential new home Hub carer identified, and ongoing recruitment of another	Improved placement stability
	Review of SGO / Kinship carers support		HOS Corporate Parenting	Apr 2022	Mapping session and review dates booked in diary – Jan/Feb 2022	Increased number of Hubs will mean more support for our carers and children, and improved placement stability Improved service offer – more responsive support provided

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
5.6 Children in Care Council (Ambitious Voice) and Care Leavers Forum (Unite)	Relaunch and develop the Children in Care Council and the Care Leavers Panel (to support the Corporate Parenting Panel)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular meetings in place which are well attended Increased capture of Voice of all Children in Care and care leavers Children in Care and care leavers access support via drop-in. 	HOS Corporate Parenting	Apr 2022	Dates planned for initial Children in Care Council and Care Leaver Forums in Feb 2022	Increased voice and feedback from young people to help shape future service delivery
	Re-open drop in within Town Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner agencies involved in providing support via drop-in 	HOS Corporate Parenting	Mar 2022	Drop in to start Feb 2022	Greater support for care leavers and Children in Care – greater access to PAs and SWs. Drop In Programme to relaunch in Feb 2022 including themed Drop In's on Accommodation, EET and Health
5.7 Placements	Review all out of county placements and post 16 provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All young people in correct placement that meets their needs 	HOS Corporate Parenting	March 2022	Review to start Jan/Feb 2022	Children and young people are cared for/supported in provision which meets their needs

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
	Exploration of housing guarantor scheme for Care Leavers and improved housing offer including development of care leaver trainer flat to assist move to independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased and improved housing offer available for care leavers 	HOS Corporate Parenting	April 2022	<p>Discussions underway with finance, commissioning, and housing providers</p> <p>Joint Housing Protocol and support for care leavers revised</p>	<p>Guarantor Scheme to extend range of housing options for Care Leavers and secure privately rented accommodation where Social Housing Options may be limited</p> <p>Trainer Flats identified by Care Leavers in the YLBC Survey as being liked and should be brought back as a Housing Option for those Children Leaving Care</p>
5.8 UASC/Asylum-Seeking Care Leavers	Development of hub style support model for UASC carers and support services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carers access support via newly established UASC Network/Forum Network/Forum becomes self-sufficient and runs itself. 	HOS Corporate Parenting	Nov 2022	UASC support planning meetings held in Dec 2021 and Jan 2022 – action plan being developed	Greater support for UASC and their carers

Priority	Actions	Success Measures	Lead	By When	Update January 2022	Impact for children and families
5.9 Supporting children's emotional and mental health	Development and roll out of ACEs, resilience mapping and worker profiles for all children in care and care leavers Staff training on emotional health, neglect, and ACEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater understanding of the needs and past traumas / experiences of our Children in Care and care leavers. 	HOS Corporate Parenting	April 2022	ACE's form to be completed end of Feb 2022 Resilience Mapping – awareness sessions Feb 2022 – roll out March 2022	Children in care and care leavers receive timely support to meet their emotional and mental health needs
	Develop emotional and mental health offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment to vacant Psychologist post. Development of Consult team More responsive support service for all Children in Care, care leavers and carers 	HOS Corporate Parenting	Dec 2022	Discussions ongoing with CCG re recruitment to vacant Psychologist post	Improved understanding and awareness of support needs of our Children in Care and care leavers

Area 6 – Ensure there is high quality support in place to support children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), including when transitioning into adulthood

See SEND Improvement Plan [ADD LINK](#)

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Agenda Item 8

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES POLICY AND SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE OF MEETING: 10TH MARCH 2022

SUBJECT OF REPORT: CHILDREN'S IMPROVEMENT FOCUS GROUP – THE FRONT DOOR – FORWARD PLAN

OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING – COUNCILLOR WENDY GRIGGS, CHAIR, CYPS PANEL

FORWARD PLAN FOR DISCUSSION

Tuesday 8th February 2022

Members met the front Door Team and heard in detail about their work (thank you it was very good to meet the team)

April 2022

Receive data/ information from the many partner agencies that use the Front Door. Presentation on a number of cases studies showing the different pathways into the Front Door and beyond

June 2022

Gain the voice of service users eg schools?, children centres?, social workers?, police? Families?

September 2022

Front Door officers to report back on current progress with implementation the new FD, challenges and issues with relevant data.

November 2022

Members will make recommendations on expected outcomes for next year and beyond.

March 2023

Members receive an update on achievements and progress

Wendy Griggs 14/2/2022

Agenda Item 9

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES POLICY AND SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE OF MEETING: 10TH MARCH 2022

SUBJECT OF REPORT: CYPS WORKING GROUP – ACCELERATED PROGRESS PLAN (APP) – TERMS OF REFERENCE AND FORWARD PLAN

OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING – COUNCILLOR WENDY GRIGGS, CHAIR, CYPS PANEL

FOR DISCUSSION

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

REVIEW TOPIC

Scrutinise parents and carers experiences with SEND services in North Somerset and their partners.

WORKING GROUP MEMBERSHIP

Wendy Griggs

Ann Harley

Ruth Jacobs

Representative from the parents Carers forum to be invited as appropriate

Representatives from Partner agencies to be invited as appropriate

Parents/ carers will be invited to contribute

Officers

Pip Hesketh

Michele Chesterman

Other officers who work in the SEND arena to be invited as appropriate

Purpose

The working group will identify and recommend further effective delivery of the Council SEND Improvement plan in relation to the experiences of Parents and Carers.

To achieve this the working group will

- Explore the many avenues that parents/ carers can feedback their experiences of the support and guidance they receive from North Somerset and their partners.
- Meet with parents and carers to gain their views first hand.
- To speak with service users i.e. school SEND Co-ordinators, children centres , nurseries to gauge experiences of accessing services for children who have SEND
- Ask for performance data , success measures, milestones for consideration
- Engage with the parent carer forum

Frequency and location of meetings.

- Meetings to be bi-monthly
- To be held virtually or in person as appropriate

Outcomes

To ensure parents and carers have timely, appropriate and successful experience working with North Somerset and partners. Make recommendations on the use of resources, to expedite the progress on removing barriers for parents and carers, to monitor progress.

2. FORWARD PLAN

March 2022

Review of data on waiting times for ECHP'S, referrals to health specialists, responses from North Somerset and other partners. Results of any available parents / carers surveys. Consideration of how to gain more insight.

May 2022

Discussion on ways of engaging a wide range of parents/ carers who views are not normally gained. Surveying a range of parents? Invite parents voice? involve parents carers forum ?

July 2022

Analysis of responses . consideration of elements of the APP which relate to parents/ carers experiences

September 2022

Data and progress data for further consideration of related elements of the APP

November 2022

Presentation of key performance data and success measures

January 2023

To make recommendations for expected future outcomes for parents and carers

March 2022

A final look at progress data against expected outcomes

North Somerset Council

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

DATE OF MEETING: 10TH MARCH 2022

SUBJECT OF REPORT: PERFORMANCE MONITORING

TOWN OR PARISH: ALL

OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING: BECKY HOPKINS – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S FAMILY SUPPORT & SAFEGUARDING

KEY DECISION: NO

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Panel is asked to note the 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 receive regular performance management 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.

This report presents the following standard items:

- any recent Ofsted inspections of council services
- an analysis of the performance of the relevant Key Corporate Performance Indicators (KCPIs) for Quarter 3 2021/22, that fall under the remit of the Panel.
- an overview of the performance of various Key Service Measures for Support and Safeguarding services within the council.

2. POLICY

The council's Performance Management Framework includes a requirement for quarterly reporting of our performance position so that members and officers can monitor progress against our key plans and objectives and take appropriate action where progress is below target or needs additional focus.

3. DETAILS

INSPECTION AND IMPROVEMENT

7th December 2021 Children Services focussed visit by Ofsted. Letter published on the 31st of January 2022.

For all North Somerset schools (as of December 2021):

Primary schools

- 16% Outstanding (10)
- 73% Good (47)
- 5% Requires Improvement (3)
- 3% Inadequate (2)
- 3% not yet inspected (2)

Secondary schools

- 36% Outstanding (4)
- 18% Good (2)
- 45% Requires Improvement (5)
- 0% Inadequate (0)
- 0% not yet inspected (0)

Special schools and PRUs

- 100% Good (4)

KEY CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Each year the Directorates within North Somerset Council produce an Annual Directorate Statement (ADS). This in effect translates the commitments in the North Somerset Corporate Plan into a series of Directorate level commitments. These commitments are then measured by a combination of Key Projects and Key Corporate Performance Indicators (KCPIs). North Somerset Council Scrutiny Panels are then updated quarterly with all KCPIs related to their area of work (fig 1.1 and table 1.1).

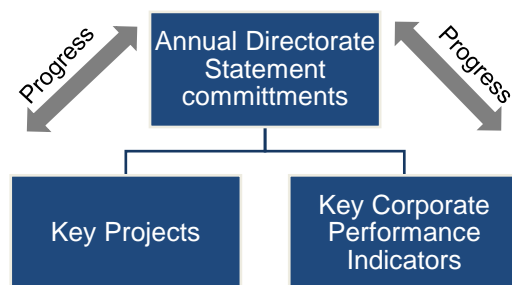


Fig 1.1 measuring corporate performance

Table 1.1 shows the Quarter 3 position of all KCPIs related to the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel.

Table 1.1

	Year-End 2020/21	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Predicted Year-End Status	Comments	National benchmarking
Rate of children / families subject to an Early Help plans per 10,000 at the end of the month	218.9 per 10,000	122.9 per 10,000	106.7 per 10,000	121.0 per 10,000		AMBER		Local measure
The percentage of early help children stepped up to Children's Social Care in quarter	5%	4.0%	3.5%	4.0%		AMBER		Local measure
The percentage of families disengaging with Early Help (families withdrawn consent/engagement)	tbc	7.25%	10.0%	7.0%		GREEN		Local measure
The number of children and young people subject to s20 voluntary accommodation	tbc	48	41	46		target tbc		Local measure
The number of 12 to 17 year-old young people becoming looked after	tbc	5	13	4		target tbc		Local measure
The average duration of care for 12 to 17 year-old young people (at the end of the month)	tbc	1,714 days	1,576 days	1,598 days		target tbc		Local measure
Rate of new referrals to Children's social care per 10,000 in the last month	14.2 per 10,000	16.0 per 10,000	16.0 per 10,000	41.08 per 10,000		not targeted		England, 38.7 per 10,000 South West, 36.2 per 10,000
Percentage of re-referrals to Children's social care within 12 months of the previous referral in the last month	22.6%	11.4%	7.0%	18.0%		AMBER		England, 22.6% South West, 21.0%
Assessment timeliness % completed within 45 working days in the last month	87.2%	88.5%	88.0	74.0%		AMBER		England, 83.8% South West, 82.6%
Assessment Timeliness % completed within 20 working days in the last month	12.8%	13.1%	27.0%	17.0%		AMBER		Local measure

Table 1.1

	Year-End 2020/21	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Predicted Year-End Status	Comments	National benchmarking
Rate of Children in Need per 10,000 at the end of the month (based on the CiN census definition)	193.5 per 10,000	220.5 per 10,000	212.0 per 10,000	211.3 per 10,000		not targeted		England, 323.7 per 10,000 South West, 296.9 per 10,000
Rate of children with Child Protection plans per 10,000 open at the end of the month	21.3 per 10,000	16.7 per 10,000	13.7 per 10,000	18.26 per 10,000		not targeted		England, 42.8 per 10,000 South West, 37.7 per 10,000
Child protection plans for a second or subsequent time as a % of new child protection plans - 12 month rolling	24.8%	25.0%	27.0%	21.0%		not targeted		England, 21.9% South West, 24.4%
The rate of children in care at month end (per 10,000)	48.9 per 10,000	47.6 per 10,000	44.0 per 10,000	43.8 per 10,000		not targeted		England, 67.0 per 10,000 South West, 57.0 per 10,000
Number of Children in In-house Foster Care (Inc. connected carers & Reg 24) at end of the month	100 (46%)	107	106	115		GREEN		England, 36,070 (45%)
Number of young people living in independent accommodation at end of the month	9 (4%)	4	3	25		GREEN		Local measure
Percentage of children in care with 3+ placement moves in the current financial year	11.3%	2.3%	10.80%	13.0%		AMBER		England, 11% South West, 12%

Table 1.1

	Year-End 2020/21	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Predicted Year-End Status	Comments	National benchmarking
Stability of long-term placements	72.6%	68.5%	70.0%	73.0%		GREEN		England, 68% South West, 68%
% of care leavers who are EET (in education, employment or training) (aged 19 to 21 years) (at the end of the month)	39.8%	42.3%	52.0%	59.0%		GREEN		England, 53% South West, 53%
% of care leavers, 19-21 years of age with positive outcomes in housing at end of the month	92.8%	88.0%	91.0%	96.0%		GREEN		England, 85% South West, 85%
The percentage of care leavers who are NEET (not in education, employment or training) who are education/work ready (aged 19 to 21 years) (at the end of the month)	tbc	33.0%	23.0%	20.0%		target tbc		Local measure

2019-2020
 2020-2021
 2021-2022

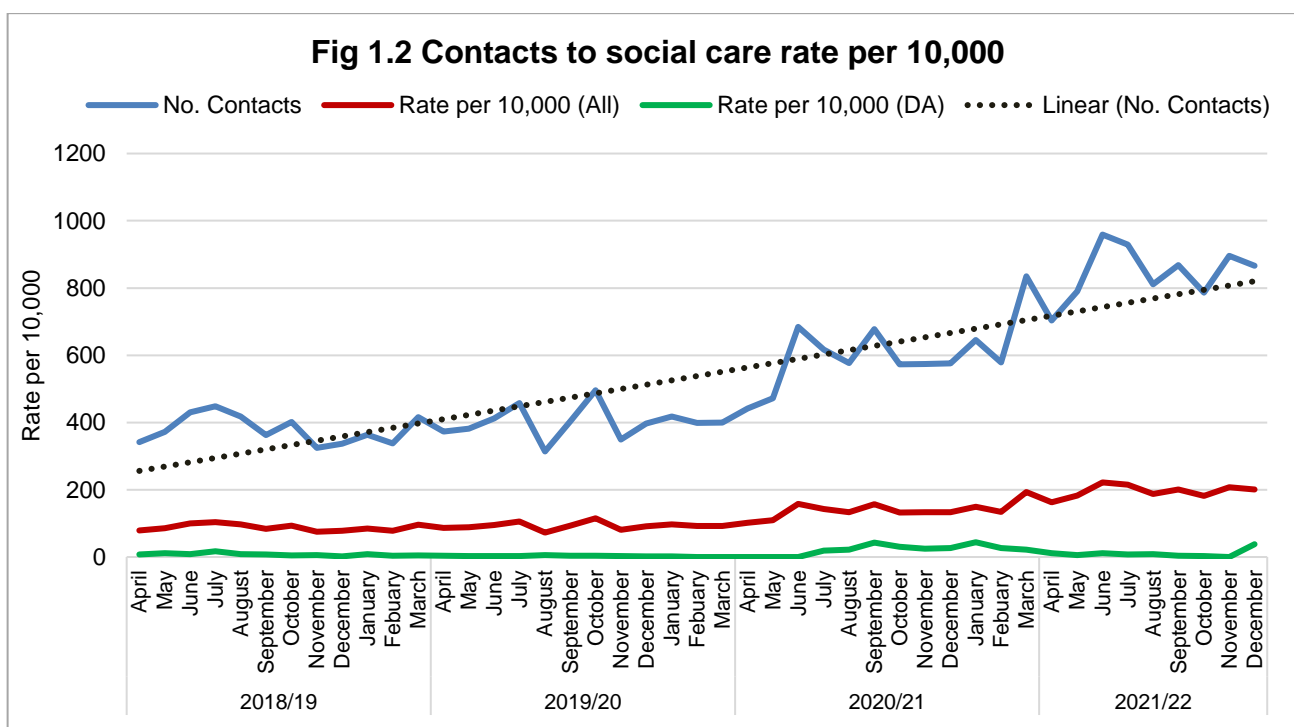
KEY SERVICE MEASURES FOR SUPPORT AND SAFEGUARDING

Contacts

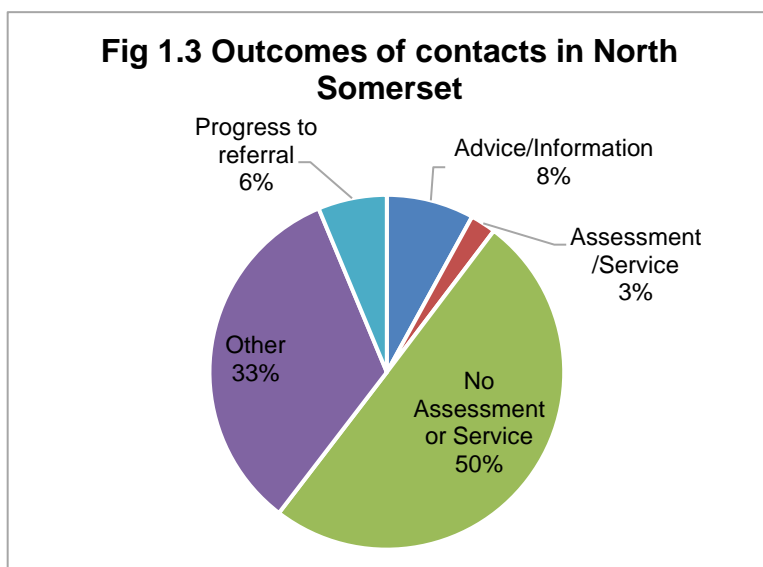
Where there is a need for advice and / or information or support from Children’s Services a contact is made. From February 1st, 2021 we have operated a single ‘Front Door’ for all new contacts ensuring children receive the Right Help, Right Time. For the past three years North Somerset’s has reported a declining trend on contact numbers.

However, since Quarter 1 of 2020/21 there has been an increase in the number of contacts. During Q3 2021/22, the average rate of contacts per 10,000 children was 197 compared to a rate of 133 contacts during the same time last year. This may have a direct link with the COVID-19 pandemic.

After a peak of 445 domestic abuse contacts during Quarter 1 2020/21, we have seen a significant reduction in numbers during Quarter 2 and Quarter3 2021/22 with 86 and 41 DA contacts respectively.



Outcomes for contacts to Family Support and Safeguarding vary (fig 1.3), but as at the end of Quarter 3 the main outcomes were: No Assessment or Service (50%), Other (33%), Progress to referral (6%) and Advice/information (8%) and Assessment/Service (3%).

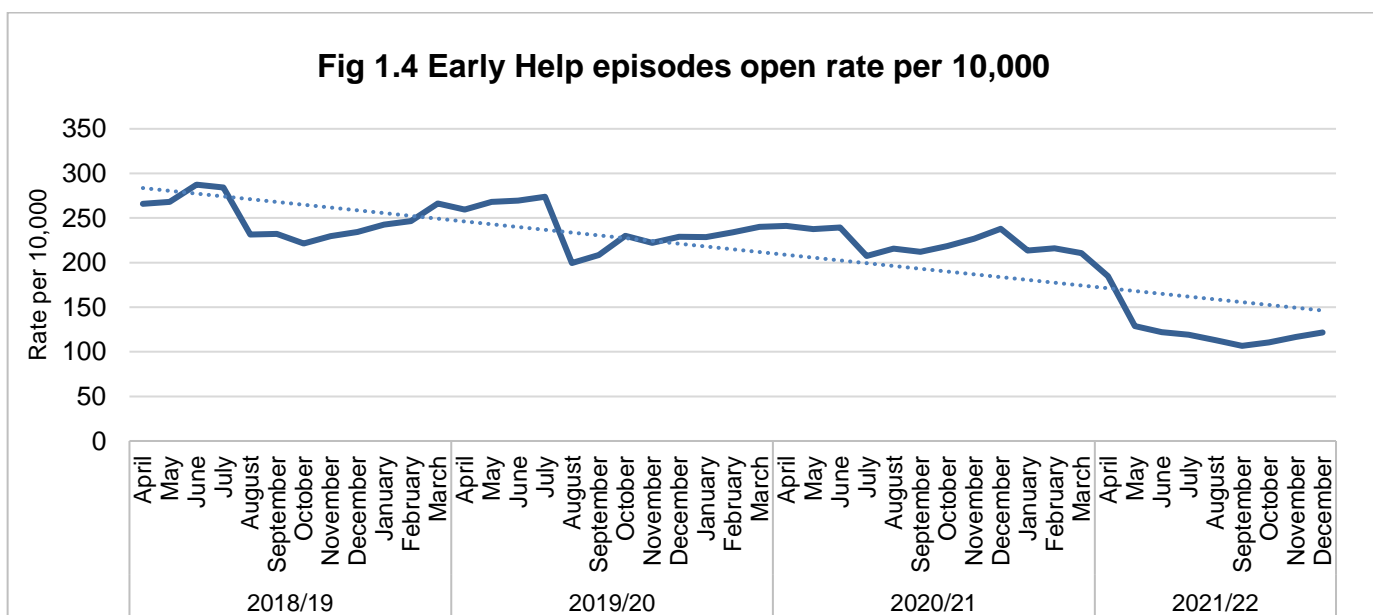


Family Wellbeing (Early Help)

Across the partnership of both statutory and voluntary sectors we work together, share information, and put the child and their family at the centre, providing effective support to help them solve problems and find solutions at an early stage to prevent problems escalating. There may be times when the needs of the family are such that intensive early help or specialist statutory intervention is required. All children and young people will receive Universal Services, such as maternity services at birth; health visiting, school nursing and family support delivered from our Children and Family Hubs; school and youth services for older children. Universal Services seek, together with parents and families, to meet all the needs of children and young people so that they are happy, healthy, and able to learn and develop securely. Universal services are provided as a right to all children, including those with additional and intensive needs.

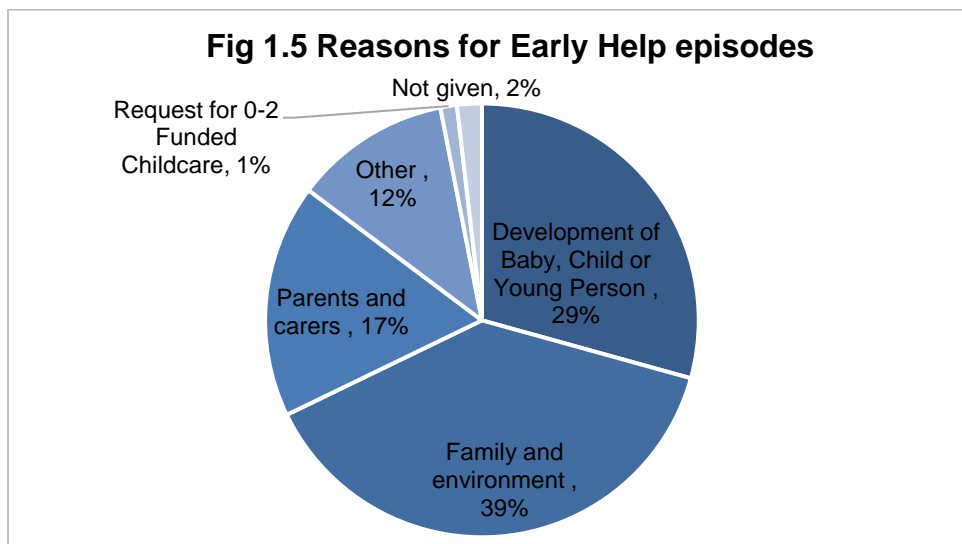
However, some children, either because of their own additional needs or due to their circumstances, will need extra help to be healthy, safe and to achieve their potential. In North Somerset, we want to offer help and support to these children and their families at an early point, in a voluntary way that does not leave them feeling singled out as different.

Early help may occur at any point in a child or young person's life and includes both support and interventions early in life as well as support and interventions early in the development of a problem. We seek to offer support early to help families solve problems or to reduce the impact of problems that have already emerged. To do this we need to work together in an open way with the child and their family to identify strengths and needs, to find practical and achievable solutions, and to provide the right amount of information, advice and support providing Right Help, Right Time, Right Place. We have following realignment of Children's Services renamed North Somerset's Council early help provision to Family Wellbeing and our Family Wellbeing (Early Help) service will support children and their families at an intensive level of need (just below the level of need for statutory intervention) as well as providing supports across both the universal level of need such as children's centres and nurseries.



At the end of Quarter 3 there were 526 Early Help episodes open (rate 121 per 10,000), an increase from Quarter 2 2020/21 where the rate was 106 per 10,000. This decline is due to change in recording not demand or intensity of provision.

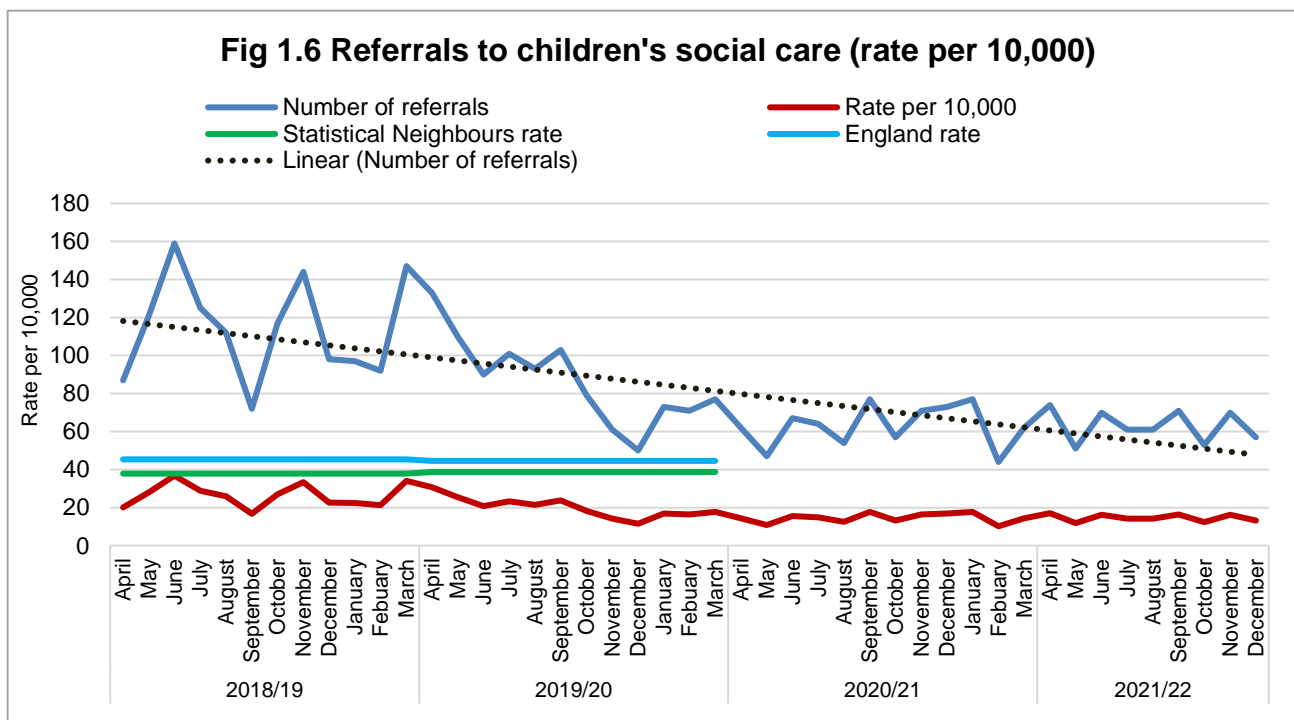
In Quarter 3, 39% of all open episodes were categorised as Family and Environment, 29% were for Development of Baby, Child, or Young Person, 17% were for Parents and Carers, 12% Other, 2% were for 0-2 Funded Childcare and 2% did not have a reason recorded.



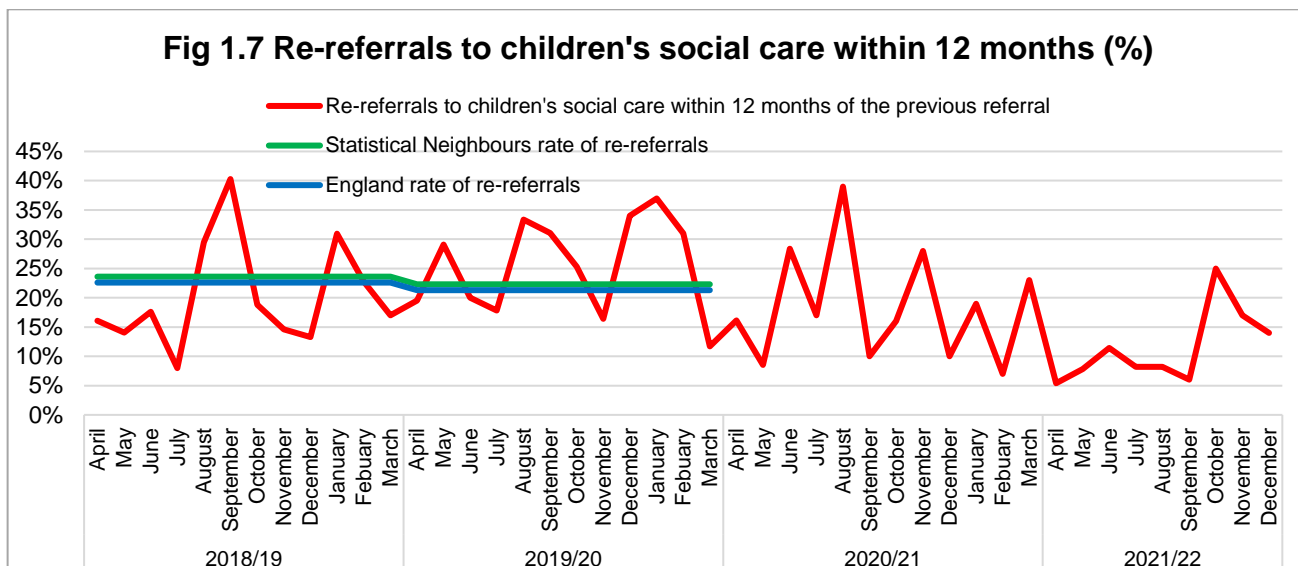
Referrals

If a contact is made which requires further support beyond advice and / or information and requires statutory intervention, then it will progress to a referral to one of our Family Support and Safeguarding teams. The number and rate of referrals varies by month. Whilst the annual averages for 2017/18 and 2018/19 remained similar at 114, the 2019/20 annual average reported 87 referrals (a 24% reduction), and the annual average reported for 2020/21 is a reduction again with an average of 63 referrals. This is shown in the trend line in fig 1.6 which indicated a steady downward direction.

The North Somerset referral rates continue to remain lower than both our statistical neighbours and the national rate (fig 1.6). During Quarter 3 2021/22, the average rate of referrals was 13.9 per 10,000 children which is below the average referral rate of 15.5 during Quarter 3 2020/21. It is our view that this is due to our strong early help offer.



Re-referrals is a measure of where children with a previous referral in the last 12 months are re-referred into Family Support and Safeguarding. During Quarter 3 2021/22, the average rate of re-referrals was 19% which compares to 18% for the same period in 2020/21 (fig 1.7) and is lower than the statistical neighbours and national average. This is a positive story, indicating that intervention is successful.

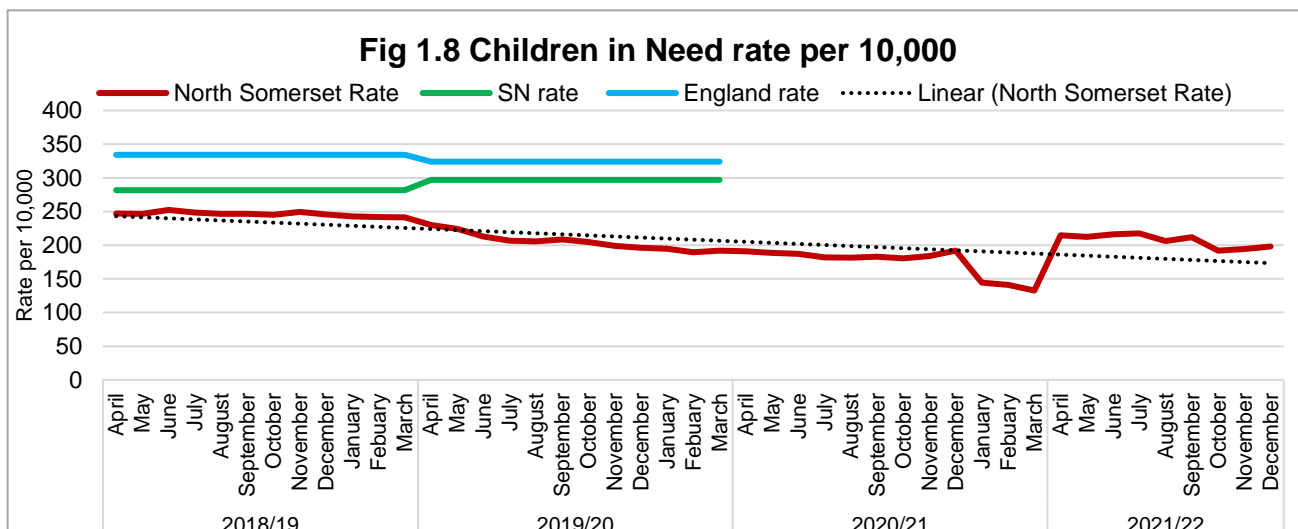


Children in Need

A child can be considered in need if:

- there is a need for statutory services to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development
- there is a need for statutory services to prevent significant or further harm to health or development
- they are registered disabled

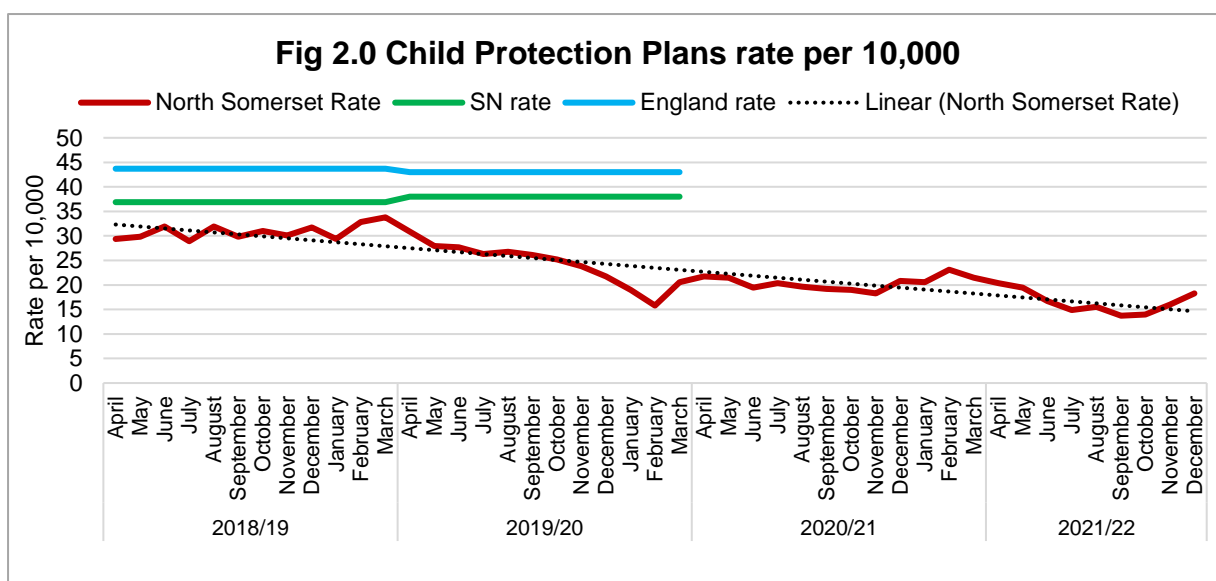
At the end of Quarter 3 2020/21, the rate was 198 Children in Need per 10,000 children. The numbers and rates have fluctuated since Quarter 4 20/21 and has seen an increase in the last 2 quarters. This increase can be attributed to a change in March 2021 where a number of disabled children receiving early support were moved from the EHM system to LCS as part of the Controcc project to facilitate direct payments. However, even with this increase the rate for children on a Child in Need plan in North Somerset is below that of statistical neighbours and England averages (fig 1.8).



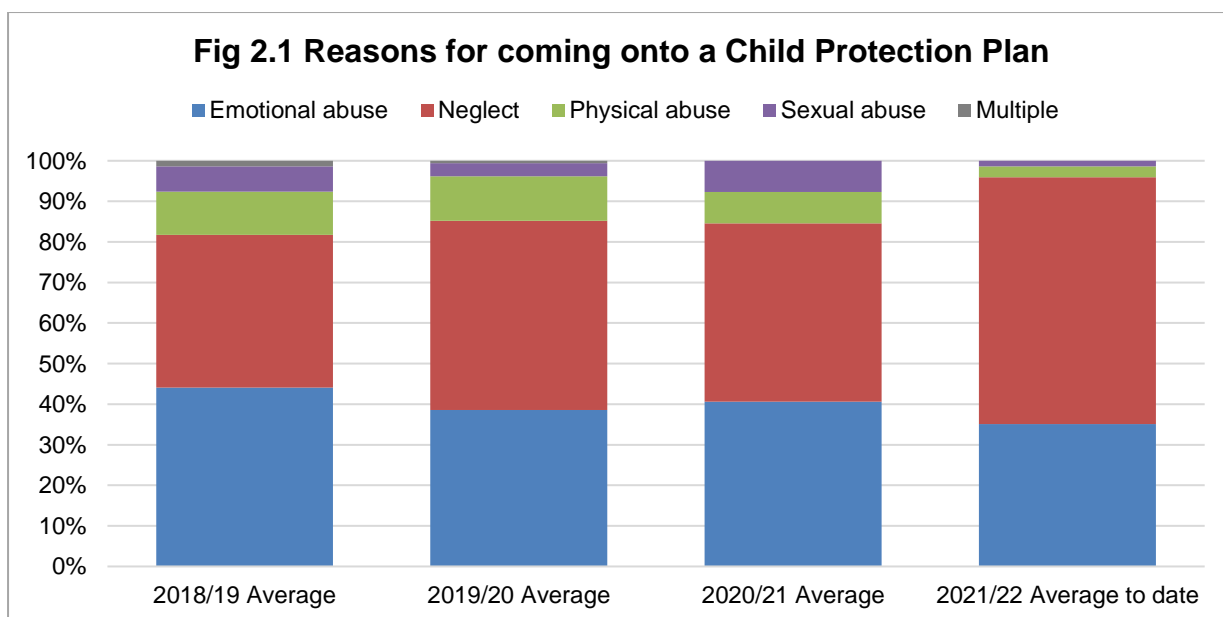
Child Protection Plans

Some children are in need of statutory intervention because they are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm. In these cases 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 and partner agencies working with the child and their family will develop a Child Protection Plan and the child will be subject of this child protection plan. The child protection plan sets out how the child can be kept safe, the strengths, the concerns and what needs to change and in what timescales.

At the end of Quarter 3 2021/22, there were 80 children subject to a Child Protection Plan. Over the past three years there has been a continual, overall downward trend (linear) in the rate of children subject to a Child Protection Plan and the rate is significantly lower than the national rate and the rate of our statistical neighbours, (fig 2.0).



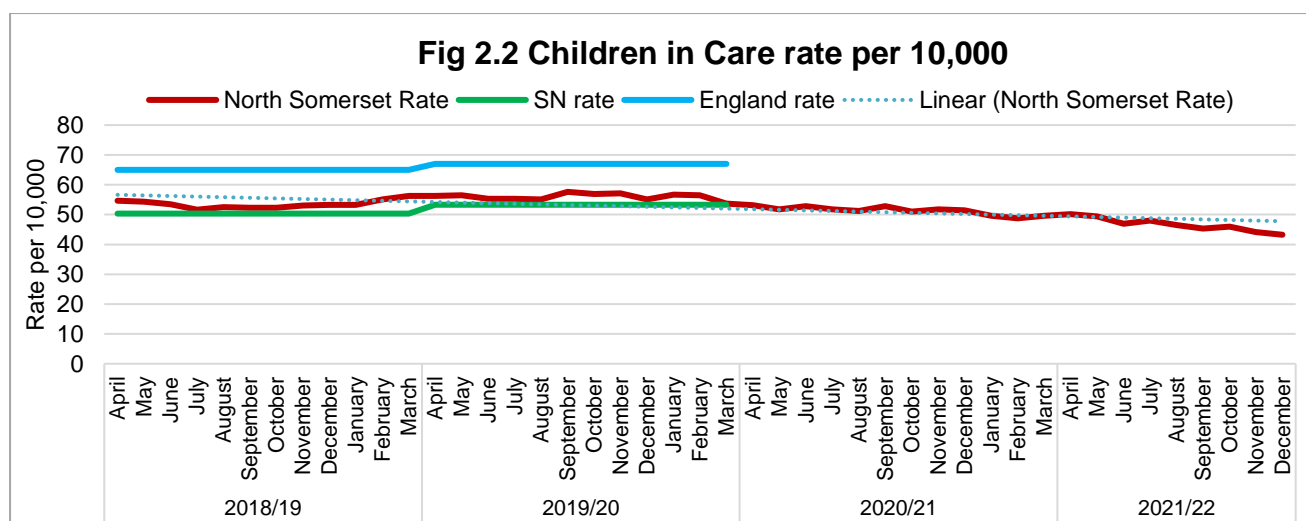
The principal reasons for children being subject of a Child Protection Plans continue to be neglect and emotional abuse, followed by physical abuse and then sexual abuse.



Children in Care

In some cases, it is necessary for some children for their own safety and wellbeing to enter our care. This will be either through a voluntary arrangement with the parents under Section 20 of the Children Act where parental responsibility remains fully with the parent or through a court order, which gives the local authority a share of parental responsibility. In statutory terms these children are referred to as 'looked after' but we prefer to refer to them as children in our care. Young people cease to be looked after on reaching their eighteenth birthday, if they have not ceased previously. Senior managers oversee all requests for a child to become looked after. Every such child's care plan is reviewed to ensure that their care plan meets their needs and wishes, and plans are being progressed and permanency for that child is secured at the earliest opportunity.

At the end of Quarter 3 2021/22, there were 189 children in care. It is noted that of the of the 189 children 16 were unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. This gives a rate of 43.2 per 10,000 children. This rate is lower than both the national rate at 67 and our statistical neighbours' rate at 53. In comparison at the end of Quarter 3 2020/21 there were 225 children in care.



The reasons for a child entering our care has remained fairly steady over the past few year (table 1.2), with 'abuse or neglect' being the main reasons followed by 'family in acute stress', 'family dysfunction' and 'absent parenting (and other)'.

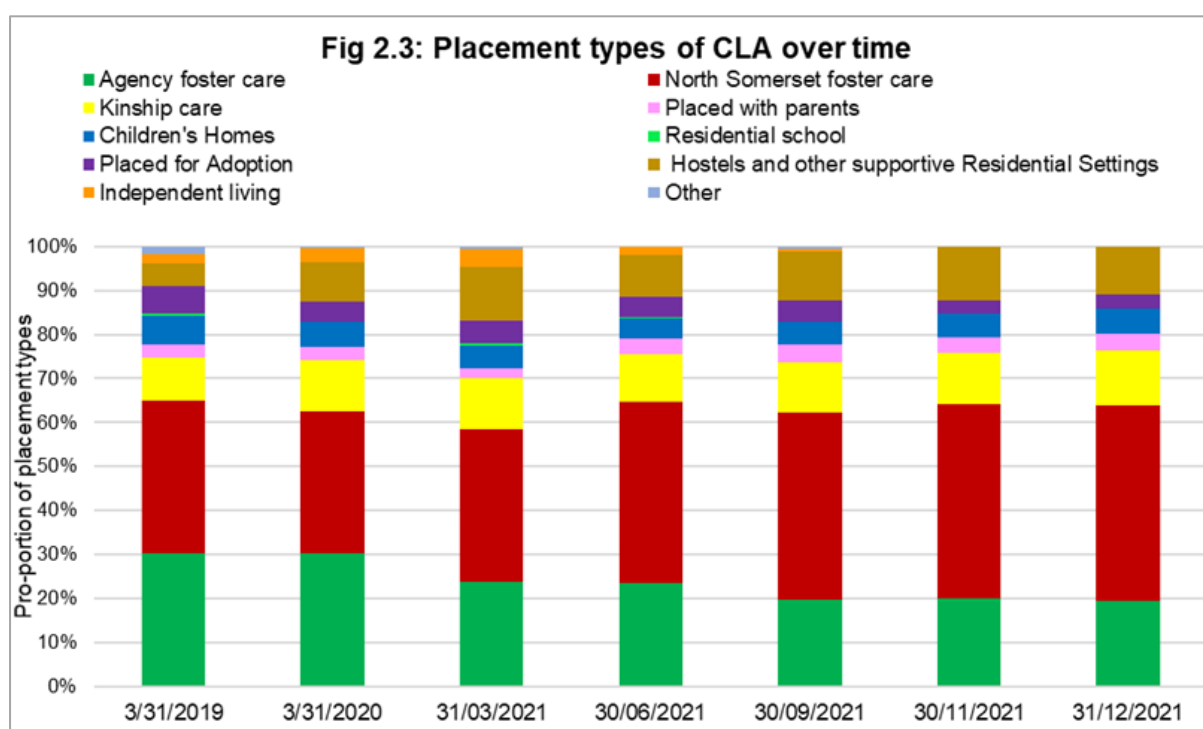
(table 1.2)	Abuse or Neglect	Disability	Parent Illness or Disability	Family in Acute Stress	Family Dysfunction	Absent Parenting and other
2016/17	43.0%	3.8%	2.7%	25.8%	19.1%	5.5%
2017/18	40.8%	3.4%	2.2%	26.9%	20.6%	6.0%
2018/19	40.4%	3.6%	3.1%	29.3%	17.5%	6.0%
2019/20	39.6%	3.5%	3.7%	29.7%	16.3%	7.2%
2020/21	41.0%	3.0%	3.0%	28.0%	17.0%	8.0%
2021/22 to date	43.0%	3.0%	3.0%	25.0%	18.0%	8.0%

Placement types of Children in Care

There are various arrangements for a looked after child's living arrangements known as placements. More than three quarters (77% at the end of Q3 2021/22) of North Somerset's Children in Care live in foster care. This is higher than the latest figure nationally (71%). Other placement types include children's homes, supportive residential placements, independent living and adoptive placements.

Fig 2.3 provides snapshot figures of where our children in care have been placed at the end of Quarter 3 in 2021/22, compared to the previous quarters in 2021/22 and the year-endings for 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21.

At the end of December 2021, out of the 77% Children in Care placed in foster care, 45% were placed within North Somerset foster care, 19% within agency foster care and 13% within kinship care. The percentage of children placed within North Somerset foster care is up 8% when compared to the same time last year.



At the end of Q3 2021/22, 71% of all Children in Care were placed inside North Somerset (up from 65% same time last year) and 26% were placed outside local boundary (down from 32% same time last year). The figures are also better than the England averages of 57% placed inside LA boundary and 40% placed outside. This excludes children placed for adoption.

Foster Carers

North Somerset Council has within its own resource 90 registered foster carers.

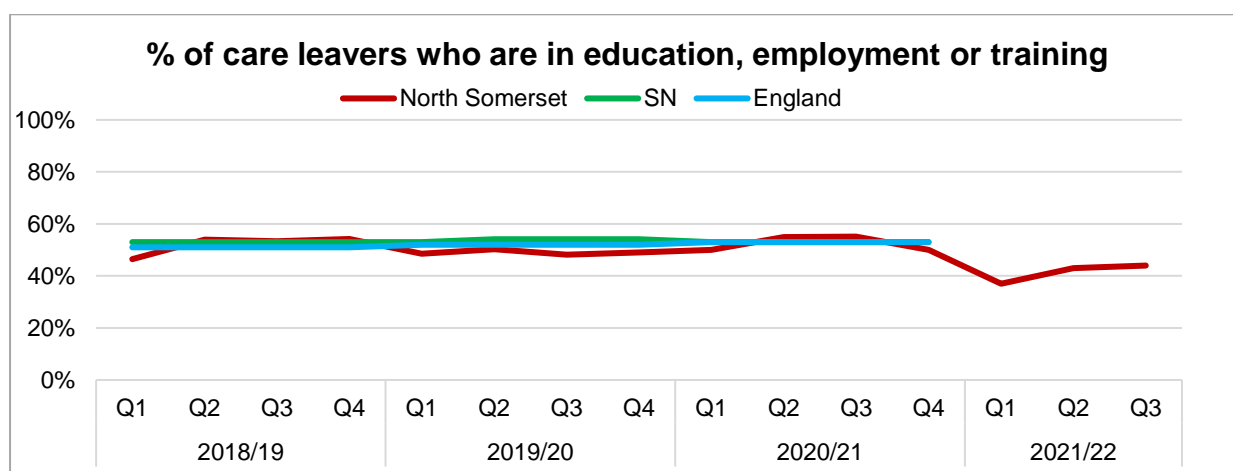
As of the end of Quarter 3 there were:

- 63 registered households that are known as mainstream foster carers that are 'sourced' by the council
- 20 kinship carers that are friends or family of the children in care
- 5 Supported Lodgings households that provide support for a small number of older young people.
- 2 short term respite carers (Family link scheme) providing short term respite care for a number of children in need

Care Leavers

The council has responsibility to continue to help and support a number of young people that that were previously in their care. Key areas of support are in housing and accommodation and employment and education.

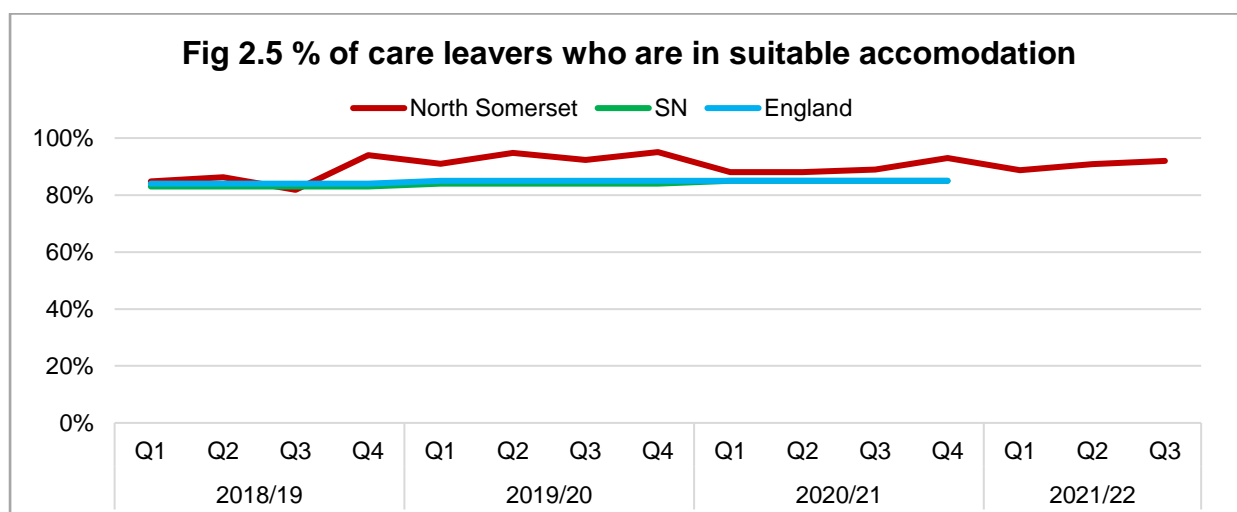
The percentage of 19-21 year-old care leavers who were in education, employment and/or training (EET) in North Somerset at the end of Quarter 3 2021/22 was 61%. This is higher than the same time last year at 44% and higher than that of our statistical neighbours at 53% and England data at 53%.



There are varying reasons for young people being not in education training or employment (NEET) including emotional and mental health needs, young parents caring for children, in custody, previously unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who have not been given leave to remain in the UK post 18.

There is targeted work being undertaken through our children's improvement plan to address this. This includes working across the partnership to consider what further steps we can take to both prepare our young people for employment and support them into education, employment, or training (EET). Additionally, through support services such as of Kickstart and support through the Social Impact Bond (SIB) RREBBOT west as well as targeted work in the leaving care team.

The percentage of 19-21-year-old care leavers who were in suitable accommodation at the end of Quarter 3 2021/22 in North Somerset was 92% which is better than the same time last year at 89%. This compares favourably against the most recent statistical neighbour and national averages of 85% (fig 2.5).



Contextual safeguarding

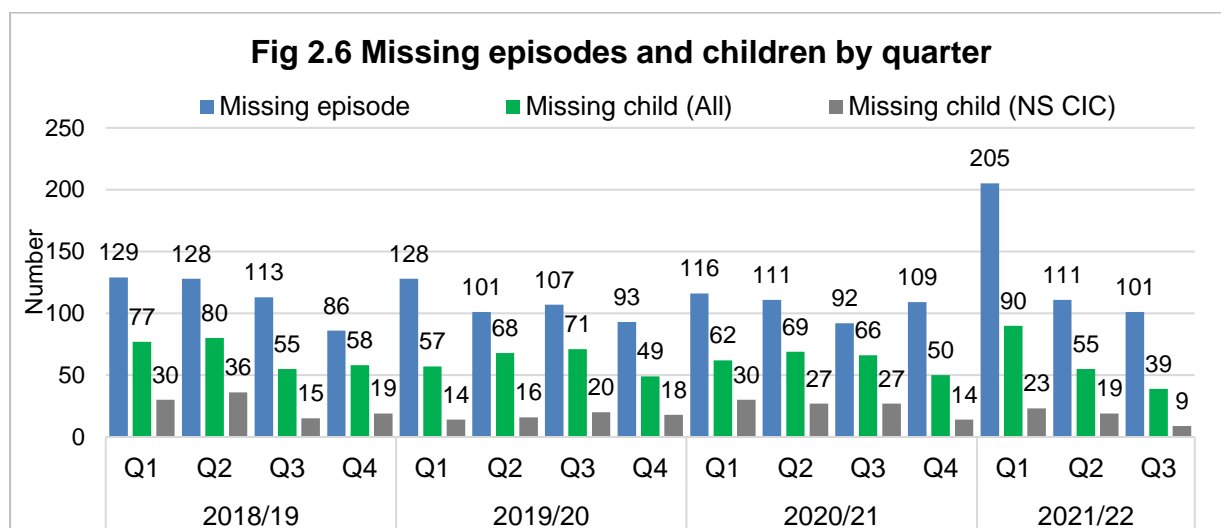
Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people’s experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers can at times have little influence over these contexts, and young people’s experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

Therefore, children’s social care practitioners, child protection systems and wider safeguarding partnerships need to engage with individuals and sectors who do have influence over/within extra-familial contexts, and recognise that assessment of, and intervention with, these spaces are a critical part of safeguarding practices. Contextual Safeguarding, therefore, expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse beyond their front doors. Work on this area is another key area of our children’s improvement plan working across the partnership.

Missing Children

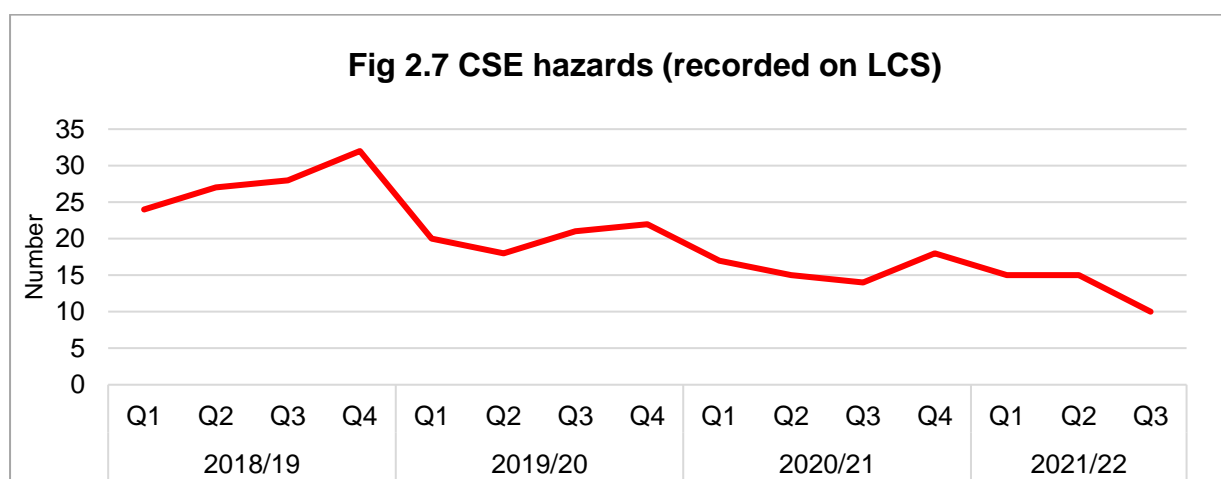
During Quarter 3 2021/22, there were 101 episodes of children going missing which related to 39 individual children who went missing (38% out of all missing episodes). Out of those 39 children, 9 children were children in care, 5% out of the children in care cohort during Q3.

The cumulative percentage of children in care who had a missing episode during 2021/22 is 9% which compares to 11% national average and 12% of our statistical neighbours.



Child Sexual Exploitation

Fig. 2.7 shows the number of open hazards on the children's recording system (LCS) at the end of each quarter. At the end of Quarter 3 2020/21 there were 10 open child sexual exploitation hazards. This compares to 14 open hazards same time last year



To note:

List of statistical neighbours (from LAIT, updated March 2021)

- Worcestershire
- South Gloucestershire
- West Sussex
- Hampshire
- East Sussex
- Gloucestershire
- Essex
- Dorset
- Leicestershire
- Warwickshire

Useful links

- [North Somerset Children's Safeguarding Board](#)
- [North Somerset's threshold guidance](#)
- [Children's Act 1989](#)
- [Census 2011](#)
- [Business Intelligence](#)

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. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

N/A

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

N/A

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Support and Safeguarding Team quarterly reports (2016/17 to 2021/22)
- P&C Annual Directorate Statement
- North Somerset Council Corporate Plan

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CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S SERVICES POLICY AND SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE OF MEETING: 10TH MARCH 2022

SUBJECT OF REPORT: CHILDREN’S IMPROVEMENT FOCUS GOUP – CARE LEAVERS WHO ARE NOT IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING (NEET) – TERMS OF REFERENCE AND FORWARD PLAN

OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING – COUNCILLOR WENDY GRIGGS, CHAIR, CYPS PANEL

FOR DISCUSSION

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Review Topic	
Identify barriers for care leavers in accessing education, employment and training (EET)	
Working Group Membership	Officer input and support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cllr Wendy Griggs (Chair), Caroline Cherry, Ann Harley, Ruth Jacobs ▪ CYPS Panel and other Members invited, as required ▪ Other partner agencies may be invited to account for progress towards outcomes, raise issues requiring decision or resources and to assure CYPS Working Group on matters requiring consideration and scrutiny. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paul Johnson, Head of Service Corporate Parenting ▪ Bethany Swan, North Somerset’s (NS’s) Young Director <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michèle Chesterman, Democratic and Electoral Services Officer
Purpose	
<p>The Working Group will identify and recommend sustainable and effective delivery and creation of opportunities for all care leavers in NSC who are NEET for the next 6-8 months and beyond. The group will provide a relentless focus to make sure these opportunities are developed , achieved and evidenced in improved outcome for care leavers</p> <p>To achieve this the Working Group will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explore and recommend the development and roll-out of EET opportunities (apprenticeships, internships and work experience) and that they are created and embedded across NSC and partners agencies. ▪ Explore and develop a mentoring scheme for care leavers from within NSC’s Elected Members, workforce and partner agencies to provide direct 1-1 support to care leavers to work alongside the young person and reduce incidence of NEET. ▪ Monitor the creation and delivery of EET opportunities via a range or reports, KPIs and progress tracking tools, alongside the voice of care leavers. ▪ Ask for key performance measures, milestones and success measures, (including for partners where appropriate), holding leaders accountable for progress in delivery. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Report progress on the development of EET programme and opportunities to the CYPS Scrutiny Panel, Corporate Parenting Panel, Parent Carer Forum and the carer leaver forum. ▪ Engage with the care leavers service, partner agencies, community services and businesses (as appropriate), and care leavers in developing and creating EET opportunities and to ensure that care leaver's voices are heard and reflected in the EET programme and opportunities created.
Roles and Responsibilities of Working Group Members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that activity progresses at pace, making any necessary recommendations around the use of resources, expedite progress, remove barriers, or otherwise assure actions can be completed. • To ensure that NSC implements an EET programme of opportunities for care leavers and that EET matters in general, remain a high priority across all organisations in the local area.
Frequency and Location of Meetings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meetings will be arranged as required unless otherwise agreed by the Working Group. ▪ Meetings will be held virtually or at the Town Hall, WsM, unless otherwise agreed by the Working Group.

2. FORWARD PLAN

17th March 2022

Data presentation focussed on young people who are NEET. Quantitative data spanning the last 3 years and up to now. Bench marking data from similar authorities and the national picture.

Members to review and analyse data, look at trends, and formulate data objectives for the immediate future and beyond.

28th April 2022

Information on the various opportunities available to our YP. Local and national picture on availabilities and opportunities.. Constraints in offers from education and business. Barriers to organisations assisting in delivering these opportunities.

Best practice examples from other local authorities who are making successful improvements in this area.

Members to consider avenues that can be taken to help further develop these opportunities

9th June 2022

Young person's Voice

Members to receive a few 'case studies' of the experiences of some YP who are now NEET, what led them to this situation, what were the barriers to them.

Could Bethany talk to some and bring this first hand experience back to the panel?

Perhaps even persuade some YP to talk to us? We could have a 'real' meeting?

14th July 2022

After all this fact finding, members to discuss with officers and the Executive member what could be put in place to improve the outcomes for our YP who are NEET and those who are also care leavers. Also, what can we do as members? A mentoring scheme? Other support?

8th September 2022

A summary of the proposed outcomes from previous meeting outlining the action plan to improve NEET outcomes with clear timescales over the coming 12 months, which could then be reviewed at Children's scrutiny in March 2023

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North Somerset Council

Report to the Children & Young People Policy & Scrutiny Panel and Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel (HOSP)

Date of Meeting: Thursday 10 March 2022 (CYPS) Thursday 24 March 2022 (HOSP)

Subject of Report: Overview of Findings from CAMHS Working Group

Town or Parish: N/A

Officer/Member Presenting: Cllr Ciaran Cronnelly, HOSP Chairman and Member of CYPS

Key Decision: No

Reason: To update Scrutiny Panels on Findings from CAMHS Working Group

Recommendations from the Working Group:

- HOSP/CYPS appreciates the collaboration and transparency of all parties involved in the working group discussions about parity of funding for children's and young people's mental health services in North Somerset.
- HOSP/CYPS believes it's clear that North Somerset children and young people do not receive parity of funding – and service – for mental health services when compared with Bristol and South Gloucestershire.
- HOSP/CYPS calls on the council, CCG and system partners to work together to begin to close the estimated £700k funding gap and to specifically improve services for eating disorders, learning disabilities, and primary & infant mental health services
- A progress report be provided to CYPS by no later than October 2022 outlining the steps that have been taken to improve parity from a funding and service delivery model perspective, and where gaps remain, what steps will be taken to improve these

Summary of report

As part of the SEND agenda for CYPS on 11 March 2021 there were discussions about parity of provision for mental health services for children and young people when compared to Bristol and South Gloucestershire. This led to a recommendation that a working group would be set up to further investigate this and report back.

Due to the nature of the issue – children/young people and health – it was agreed that this would be a joint working group made up of HOSP and CYPS councillors and would be co-chaired by the Chair of HOSP (Cllr Cronnelly) and the Chair of CYPS (Cllr Griggs). The working group was supported by officers from North Somerset Council, BNSSG CCG, Sirona, AWP.

This report sets out an overview of those findings and makes a set of recommendations for both HOSP and CYPS to consider at their next meetings.

Policy

N/A

Details

The focus for the working group was to review and understand the parity in provision for North Somerset children and young people's mental health services when compared with other areas within the CCGs footprint.

To understand this issue the working group relied on a gap analysis that was co-ordinated by Avon and Wiltshire Metal Health Partnership (AWP). All parties such as AWP, North Somerset Council and the CCG were able to input into this. The working group are very appreciative of the work that everyone has put into this gap analysis.

This gap analysis looked at a range of children and young people's mental health services across the CCG's footprint and detailed the various service delivery models and funding differences in North Somerset.

At the time of writing this report the gap analysis – and subsequent remedial actions - are going through the internal governance process for the CCG and NSC, however, the working group already has enough information to report back to the panels. The contents of the gap analysis contained confidential information such as the service delivery model, funding and resourcing structures across various organisations and due to this it would be inappropriate for this information to be in the public domain. Therefore the Chairs have decided that the gap analysis report won't be included within this report to scrutiny.

However, a high level summary of what was reviewed, and what was discovered can be found below:

What services were reviewed and what did it show

The assessment reviewed all provision across BNSSG CAMHS services in Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset. In North Somerset specifically the CAMHS service has two teams – Core and Crisis – whilst in Bristol and South Gloucestershire there are additional specialist services. We learnt:

Core service

- North Somerset has a higher caseload figure than Bristol and South Gloucestershire due to a large number of young people on the waiting list
- The number of staff within the North Somerset core CAMHS team was broadly similar to Bristol and South Gloucestershire but they didn't have the same skills or specialist services

Eating Disorders

- The service in North Somerset is smaller, and is not a stand alone service, compared to Bristol and South Gloucestershire

Crisis service

- The North Somerset service does not provide a service at weekends or in the evening like the Bristol and South Gloucestershire services do
- This issue has already been identified and there is currently work underway to provide a 24/7 crisis service across the full BNSSG footprint

Getting advice

- North Somerset has lower administration support than Bristol and South Gloucestershire

Learning Disabilities

- There is support available for children/young people with Learning Disabilities across all of BNSSG's footprint but North Somerset has less support available for those with mild learning disabilities
- North Somerset has no intensive positive behaviour support service unlike in Bristol and South Gloucestershire
- This is a gap that needs to be rectified

Autism Intensive Service

- There is no Autism intensive Service in North Somerset like there is in Bristol or South Gloucestershire
- This is a gap that needs to be rectified and there are plans in place to develop the service in 2022/23 and expand this into North Somerset

Specialist Substance Misuse

- This service is provided across the BNSSG footprint but the slight difference in North Somerset is this is a Tier 2 service whilst Bristol and South Gloucestershire has access to a Tier 3 service.

Youth offending service

- North Somerset provides this service and has a different service model to Bristol and South Gloucestershire

Thinking Allowed Service

- This is a specialist CAMHS service for children in care and the networks around them
- There is no Thinking Allowed service in North Somerset

Primary Mental Health Specialist

- This is a service across Bristol and South Gloucestershire that works to support the mental health, emotional wellbeing and resilience of children, young people and their families. This is provided through a specialist team
- There is no equivalent specialist service in North Somerset

Primary Infant Mental Health Service

- This is a service that aims to promote the mental health and wellbeing of the infant population.
- There is no service in North Somerset and this is only provided in Bristol and South Gloucestershire

Tier 2 services

- Kooth is a service that provides young people with online access to a community of peers and experienced counsellors. North Somerset has an increased offer compared to Bristol and South Gloucestershire and offers this to 11 – 25 year olds

- Off the Record: Provides free wellbeing info and support for young people. This has just launched in North Somerset. This service is already available in Bristol and South Gloucestershire

Summary of findings

The gap analysis showed that North Somerset did not have parity of funding and service with Bristol and South Gloucestershire and for there to be true parity in North Somerset the following service models need to be changed:

- Eating disorder pathway needs to be redesigned to align with Bristol and South Gloucestershire, including developing access to a specialist hub team
- CAMHS needs to develop a number of evidence-based care pathways using the I-Thrive framework. This will include training and development for staff in interventions such as supporting young people with more acute and complex mental health presentations
- Waiting list and service performance need to be improved, which includes redesigning the pathways
- The Bristol and South Gloucestershire Getting Advice Service needs to extend to include North Somerset
- Appropriate resourcing needs to be in place to support the transition of these services

From the perspective of parity of funding the following needs to happen:

- There needs to be increased investment in primary and infant mental health specialists. A focus specifically needs to be on provision for under 11s
- Investment is needed in Learning Disability Services, specifically intensive behaviour support and autism

What is the level of investment needed

It's estimated that the cost of trying to achieve parity in services will be £700k+. Responsibility for the funding and design of these services does not sit alone with either the local authority or the CCG and both will need to work together collaboratively.

However, it should be noted that it's anticipated the bulk of the £700k would need to be found by the local authority if the approach was to be aligned to how services are funded in Bristol and South Gloucestershire.

Has it been established if there's parity of funding and service

From the gap analysis seen by the councillors on the Working Group, and from conversations with officers, it is clear that North Somerset's children and young people do not receive the same parity of service when compared with Bristol and South Gloucestershire.

A lot of working is needed to close this gap and it will take a collaborative approach from everyone in the system to achieve this.

Next steps

The working group has now concluded and everyone has acknowledged that more work is needed across North Somerset to improve the parity with Bristol and South Gloucestershire. Currently the gap analysis is going through the governance process of North Somerset and BNSSG CCG to get internal sign-off and to agree next steps and responsibilities for dealing with the lack of parity.

The working group has made several recommendations based on what we've learnt which we hope that both HOSP and CYPS approve. We'd also recommend that both HOSP and CYPS should turn their focus to the scrutiny of the actions agreed to improve the gap analysis.

Consultation

N/A

Financial Implications

N/A

Legal Powers and Implications

N/A

Climate Change and Environment Implications

N/A

Risk Management

N/A

Equality Implications

N/A

Corporate Implications

N/A

Options Considered

N/A

Author: Councillor Ciaran Cronnelly, Chairman Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel

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North Somerset Council

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

DATE OF MEETING: 10TH MARCH 2022

SUBJECT OF REPORT: MONTH 10 CHILDREN'S SERVICES BUDGET MONITOR

TOWN OR PARISH: ALL

OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING: PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTANT (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)

KEY DECISION: NO

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. That the Panel notes the 2021/22 forecast spend against budget for children's services and the risks and opportunities associated with the medium-term position.

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1. This report summarises and discusses the 2021/22 forecast spend against budget for children's services, highlighting key variances, movements and contextual information as at month 10.
- 1.2. The report also makes reference to the principles and outcomes associated with the setting of the 2022/23 budget.

2. POLICY

- 2.1. The Council's budget monitoring is an integral feature of its overall financial processes, ensuring that resources are planned, aligned and managed effectively to achieve successful delivery of its aims and objectives. Revenue and capital budgets are set within the context of the council's medium term financial planning process, which supports the Corporate Plan.

3. DETAILS

Overall position

- 3.1. The overall position is one of a projected £798k underspend against net budget of £26.5m
- 3.2. The forecast underspend is mainly due to the spend on placements for children looked after being significantly less than the budget. This is representative of the fact that the budget was set when children looked after numbers were significantly higher than they are now, and, in addition, an allowance was made in the expectation that numbers would begin to rise once lockdown measures were eased; this has not yet materialised.
- 3.3. Furthermore, work on reducing costs by “stepping down” young people to more appropriate and cost-effective placements is proving extremely productive. As a result of all these factors, the forecast spend is c. £1.5m less than the budget. The number of children looked after in recent years is shown in Appendix 3.
- 3.4. There are further mitigations from reduced staffing costs through staff turnover and contribution to overheads from a number of grants from central government.
- 3.5. The main offsetting cost pressure is on support to families with disabled children. The growth applied in this area in the 2021/22 budget has not been sufficient to close the gap between the budget and demand in the current year, although this is being addressed as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and budget for 2022/23. Other cost pressures are on section 17 support (placement prevention), community related support for placements, systems improvement and the SEND element of the education support services contract.
- 3.6. The main areas of underspend and overspend are as follows, and the key items are discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs:

Budget Area	Month 10 Variance £000
Placements for Children Looked After	(1,451)
Support Services for Families with Children with Disabilities	663
Systems Improvement	134
Support Services for Education Contract	122
Placements for Children Looked After (community support)	108
Section 17 Support (mainly community support placement prevention)	93
Grants - contribution to overheads	(261)
Staffing	(498)
Other	292
TOTAL	(798)

Placements - £1,451k Favourable Variance to Budget

- 3.7. Children's placements underspent by c. £400k in 2020/21 and the adjustments made to the budget for 2021/22 were as follows:

Item	£000s
Growth to reflect previous demand position	760
Growth to reflect increases in future demand	400
Growth to reflect unit cost inflation	246
Savings plans (residential step down)	(1,165)
Savings plans (increase in-house foster carers)	(100)
Savings plans (income from CCG)	(40)
TOTAL net growth	101

- 3.8. The forecast spend for 2021/22 is a decrease of £1,441k (15.4%) when compared with the previous year and represents an overall underspend against budget of £1,451k (15.5%) as illustrated below.

	2020/21 Spend	2021/22 Budget	2021/22 Spend	2021/22 Numbers	Year on Year Change	Variance from Budget
	£000	£000	£000	FTE	£000	£000
In-house Foster Care	1,204	1,598	1,208	81	4	(389)
Independent Foster Care	2,198	2,489	1,836	42	(362)	(653)
Residential	2,489	2,488	2,523	13	34	36
Supported Living	2,116	466	625	3	(1,491)	160
Housing With Support	0	588	351	14	351	(237)
Contingency	0	0	100	0	100	100
Other	1,348	1,739	1,271	87	(77)	(468)
TOTAL	9,355	9,366	7,915	241	(1,441)	(1,451)
					-15.4%	-15.5%

- 3.9. The biggest reduction in spend is in supported living placements and this reflects the MTFP savings plans in relation to changed commissioning arrangements for children aged 16+ approaching leaving care to commission more cost-effective placements, primarily in housing with support. Cost benefits of c. £960k have been realised to date against a target of £1.2m.
- 3.10. It is worth noting that despite the extremely positive progress made to date, the full year projection now shows a £200k shortfall on the target, when looking at the specific cohort originally targeted for step down, but other factors are ensuring that the forecast spend is significantly less than the budget. More cost benefits are anticipated overall across residential placements which will in effect offset this shortfall. There is also a reduction in independent foster care placements, with offsetting increases in residential and in-house foster care.
- 3.11. The position includes a £100k contingency to mitigate against a future increase, and this will be reviewed and adjusted for in future periods. A more detailed analysis of the activity and unit costs in relation to children's placements is shown at Appendix 2.

3.12. Spending also largely reflects the total number of children looked after, which, as illustrated in Appendix 3, peaked at about 220 to 225 during 2020/21 and is currently averaging 200 in 2021/22. There remains some uncertainty on the numbers and the reductions are unlikely to be sustained.

3.13. Estimates for future years' expenditure in relation to placements for children looked after and families with disabled children (see below) were a key focus of the 2022/23 MTFP and budget setting process.

Placements Support - £108k Adverse

3.14. The main spend relates to additional community related support provided to existing placements, and mainly in foster care. The type of support provided includes therapy and mentoring, enabling activities, transport, clothing and equipment. This additional support ensures placement stability.

Section 17 Support - £93k Adverse

3.15. The main spend relates to community support provided to young people and families, including where there has been a reunification from care. This primarily involves edge of care prevention work, and in other instances the support is also substituting short break and day care provisions for young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The support provided acts as a catalyst in preventing children coming into care and is more appropriate and value for money than a placement.

Disabled Children's Support Packages - £663k Adverse

3.16. A breakdown of the financial position highlighting the key budgets is detailed below:

Budget Area	Budget	Forecast	Variance	2020/21 Outturn	Year on Year Change
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Complex Care Packages	434	919	485	601	317
Direct Payments	543	721	178	829	-108
Respite	226	226	0	138	88
Total	1,202	1,865	663	1,568	297

3.17. The budget over spent by c. £400k in 2020/21 and the adjustments made to the budget for 2021/22 were as follows:

Item	£000s
Growth to reflect previous increases in demand	475
Savings plans (income from the CCG)	(110)
TOTAL net growth	365

- 3.18. The net budget growth has not been sufficient to meet the increased in-year demand and spend has increased by £297k compared to 2020/21. This represents an overall projected overspend against budget of £663k. Worthy of note is that the 2020/21 budget included one-off Covid grant funding of £330k to mitigate additional costs as a direct result of the pandemic.
- 3.19. In addition to the target to increase income from contributions from the CCG noted above, there are further cost reduction opportunities from reviewing and commissioning more cost-effective care agency rates, although this aspect is unlikely to be fully developed and implemented until next financial year.

Systems Improvement - £134k Adverse

- 3.20. One of the priorities in the Children's Improvement Plan is to improve effective use of management information systems to develop and support high quality social care practice. One-off funding was provided during 2020/21 and currently projecting a cost pressure of £134k in 2021/22. Ongoing funding has been provided as part of the 2022/23 MTFP and budget setting process.

Somerset Education Services Contract - £122k Adverse

- 3.21. Part of the projected overspend relates to an unbudgeted increase in the contract value from September 2021. The main change is that the contract will now provide for 28 EHCP assessments per month, an increase of 3 per month from the current 25 to manage the ongoing increase in demand for assessments. During the interim period, April to August, one-off locum resource has been procured to manage demand.
- 3.22. Whilst current projections are locum usage will reduce for the rest of the year, detailed work is under way by the service to fully assess the ongoing gap between the assessments being provided under the contract and demand. The 2022/23 MTFP and budget setting process includes growth of £75k to partly address this underlying pressure.

MITIGATION

Staffing - £498k Favourable

- 3.23. The main areas under spending are Family Wellbeing and Family Support and Safeguarding locality teams due to vacancies. A number of vacancies have been recruited to part way through the year by newly qualified social workers as part of a recruitment initiative. It is also worthy of note that agency spend has reduced overall over the last few years with the estimated spend in 2021/22 representing a 48% reduction when compared with 2017/18 as shown below:

2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
£1,158,238	£846,913	£377,532	£704,287	£596,648

Grants - contribution to staffing and overheads - £261k Favourable

- 3.24. These are contributions from various central government grants received in year, after accounting for direct costs of services.

SAVINGS

- 3.25. Targeted savings in 2021/22 are largely centred around reductions in children's placements (Step Down Programme) and generating additional contributions from the CCG in relation to children with complex needs. As already described above, the new housing with support arrangements to provide more cost effective and local support to children looked after has already provided significant savings to date. Whilst the work on increasing CCG contributions is progressing, further work is required to fully quantify the savings.
- 3.26. Analysis in relation to the Edge of Care Social Impact Bond (SIB) shows a significant reduction in the number of over 10s entering care under section 20. The reduction seen in 2020/21 has so far been sustained, but as explained earlier, it is anticipated that lockdown measures may have suppressed demand and an increase is expected later in the year. The SIB contract has now been extended for two years.

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLANNING

- 3.27. The Council has completed its medium term financial planning for 2022/23. One of the principles that has continued to be followed is to close the gap between the budget and the projected spend, particularly in those areas where demand is most difficult to manage.
- 3.28. Additional growth of £460k has been provided to close the existing gap in relation to supporting families with disabled children. Other new investment of £1.1m is being included within the budget to support the council's improvement plan for social care and children with special educational needs and disabilities. The budget for placements has been reviewed and subsequently reduced by £960k to reflect the current underspend resulting from a reduction in the number of children looked after.

EDUCATION – DEDICATED SCHOOLS GRANT (£12.592m projected deficit)

- 3.29. The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is a ring-fenced grant, which must be used in support of the schools' budget. The majority of the funding is for academies and is paid direct to them by the DfE, using the formula agreed by the Strategic Schools Forum (SSF) for funding all schools in North Somerset, whether they be maintained or not.
- 3.30. The DSG is split into four blocks as follows and local authorities may only transfer limited amounts of funding from the schools' block to other blocks (usually the High Needs Block) with approval from the SSF and the Secretary of State.

	2021/22
	£
Schools Block	141,092,716
High Needs Block	28,552,328
Early Years Block	11,813,242
Central Services Block	1,793,442
TOTAL DSG	183,251,728

- 3.31. At the end of the 2020/21 financial year there was a deficit of £7.150m (£278k was an underspend from the Schools Block which is likely to be spent within that block during 2021/22). During 2021/22 the deficit is projected to increase to £12.592m.
- 3.32. The deficit balance is transferred to an unusable reserve rather than impact on the council's general fund balance. The DfE has made it clear that councils are not expected to use general funding to support the DSG, but there is an expectation that Councils have deficit management plans. The deficit relates to spending on the High Needs Block, which funds education for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and reflects the 108% increase in the number of children with the EHCPs from 2016 to 2021 and a 23% increase in the last year.
- 3.33. The table below shows the forecast deficit balance to carry forward to 2022/23.

Dedicated Schools Grant Balance

Area	£000s	£000s
Brought Forward deficit		7,150
In-year variances:		
- Out of Authority Placements	2,393	
- Top-up Funding	1,340	
- Bespoke Education Packages	989	
- Schools Block Contingencies and Growth Funding	278	
- Delegated Place Funding	332	
- Other	109	
Sum of in-year variances		5,441
Deficit to carry forward		12,591

- 3.34. The main area of overspend is out of area placements arising from an increase in demand for special schools' placements and a lack of local supply. As shown in the table overleaf, spend is forecast to increase by £1,322k (21.55%) this year, compared to last. This is driven by a combination of an increase in the average unit cost from £51,693 to £53,102 and an increase in numbers of 21 FTE. In addition, the 2020/21 overspend was £1,508k but due to other pressures in the High Needs Block and the requirement to set a balanced budget, the 2021/22 budget has only increased by £436k. Overall this has resulted in a £2,393k overspend.

	2020/21	2021/22	Change
FTE	119	141	21
Budget (£)	4,625,234	5,061,649	436,415
Spend (£)	6,133,309	7,454,963	1,321,653
Variance (£)	1,508,075	2,393,314	885,238

3.35. Top-up Funding is forecast to be overspent by £1,340k, mainly in special maintained schools due to an unbudgeted increase in the number of children. It is worth noting that placements in maintained special schools are largely more cost effective than placements in independent non-maintained special schools, so increasing place numbers here mitigates higher increases if placements were made out of area.

3.36. Reducing the increase in spending the high needs block is an issue for local authorities across the country and have been recognised by the Department for Education. In previous years, the overspend was partially mitigated by a significant transfer of funding from the schools' block to the high needs block. However, for 2021/22, this has been reduced to just 0.5% of the DSG (c.£675k).

3.37. Recent modelling, which takes into account forecasts for the increasing number of young people requiring specialist provision, indicates that, in the absence of a further exceptional funding injection from the government, there is little prospect of reducing the overall deficit, although it is possible that the in-year deficit could reduce by 2024/25.

3.38. Officers discussed our DSG Management Plan with officials from the Department for Education at the end of July 2020 and again in September 2021. They raised no concerns about our approach, although they are keen to monitor progress against the five key themes of our plan, which are as follows:

- Identifying SEND earlier
- Supporting increased inclusion in mainstream schools
- Early Help - right support, right time, right place
- Developing local provision
- Evaluating outcomes and improving the value of high-cost placements

3.39. On 17 February, the Council received notification that we are invited to take part in the "safety valve" intervention programme with the DfE in 2022/23. The aim of the programme is to agree a package of reform to the high needs system in order to address the DSG deficit. The programme requires local authorities to develop substantial plans for reforms with support and challenge from the DfE to place the DSG and the high needs system as a whole on a sustainable footing.

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Appendix 1 - Children's Services Year End position

CHILDRENS - CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE	REVISED BUDGET				PROJECTED OUT-TURN				PROJECTED OUT-TURN VARIANCE			
	Expenditure £	Income £	Reserves £	Net £	Expenditure £	Income £	Reserves £	Net £	Expenditure £	Income £	Reserves £	Net £
Coporate Parenting	12,997,485	(573,072)	0	12,424,413	11,979,624	(1,210,017)	11,090	10,780,697	(1,017,861)	(636,945)	11,090	(1,643,716)
Front Door	608,994	(20,800)	0	588,194	583,749	(20,800)	0	562,949	(25,245)	0	0	(25,245)
Family Wellbeing	5,280,419	(2,786,082)	(112,647)	2,381,690	5,665,335	(3,395,098)	42,659	2,312,895	384,916	(609,016)	155,306	(68,795)
Children With Disabilities	1,862,666	(504,680)	0	1,357,986	2,426,882	(422,119)	0	2,004,763	564,216	82,561	0	646,777
Children With Disabilities Occupational Therapy	219,475	0	0	219,475	203,623	0	0	203,623	(15,852)	0	0	(15,852)
Family Support and Safeguarding	3,471,926	(296,110)	170,000	3,345,816	3,435,583	(333,211)	228,000	3,330,372	(36,343)	(37,101)	58,000	(15,444)
Quality Assurance and Safeguarding	424,550	(30,717)	0	393,833	362,660	(38,846)	56,279	380,093	(61,891)	(8,129)	56,279	(13,741)
Adoption	738,950	(27,000)	0	711,950	667,103	(45,000)	0	622,103	(71,847)	(18,000)	0	(89,847)
Social Work Development	281,822	(90,540)	0	191,282	249,022	(95,782)	6,800	160,040	(32,800)	(5,242)	6,800	(31,242)
Contracts and Commissioning	576,523	0	0	576,523	572,892	0	0	572,892	(3,631)	0	0	(3,631)
Youth Justice Service	1,645,311	(1,044,204)	(322,816)	278,291	1,615,812	(1,269,991)	(49,966)	295,855	(29,498)	(225,787)	272,850	17,564
Children's Support and Safeguarding Assistant Director	28,108,121	(5,373,205)	(265,463)	22,469,453	27,762,286	(6,830,865)	294,861	21,226,283	(345,834)	(1,457,660)	560,324	(1,243,170)
Education Inclusion Service and Virtual School	2,086,976	(555,781)	(139,563)	1,391,632	2,305,520	(555,401)	(128,971)	1,621,149	218,544	380	10,592	229,517
Music Service and Education Hub	1,021,311	(1,021,311)	0	0	888,060	(902,408)	14,348	0	(133,252)	118,903	14,348	(0)
Early Years	521,033	(186,594)	0	334,439	461,098	(133,980)	0	327,118	(59,935)	52,614	0	(7,321)
Strategic Planning and Governance	1,809,321	(1,382,850)	3,892	430,363	1,766,023	(1,454,181)	39,804	351,646	(43,298)	(71,331)	35,912	(78,717)
Education Support Services	1,788,834	(568,456)	0	1,220,378	1,804,453	(578,654)	(10,216)	1,215,584	15,619	(10,197)	(10,216)	(4,794)
Education Partnerships Assistant Director	7,227,475	(3,714,992)	(135,671)	3,376,812	7,225,154	(3,624,623)	(85,035)	3,515,496	(2,321)	90,369	50,636	138,684
Children's Services Directorate	879,543	0	(45,811)	833,732	1,121,319	0	(15,811)	1,105,508	241,776	0	30,000	271,776
YPS Support Services	1,573,425	(983,685)	0	589,740	1,569,796	(935,306)	(9,686)	624,804	(3,629)	48,379	(9,686)	35,064
Children's Services Directorate	2,452,968	(983,685)	(45,811)	1,423,472	2,691,115	(935,306)	(25,497)	1,730,312	238,147	48,379	20,314	306,840
CHILDRENS - CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE TOTAL	37,788,564	(10,071,882)	(446,945)	27,269,737	37,678,556	(11,390,794)	184,329	26,472,091	(110,008)	(1,318,912)	631,274	(797,646)

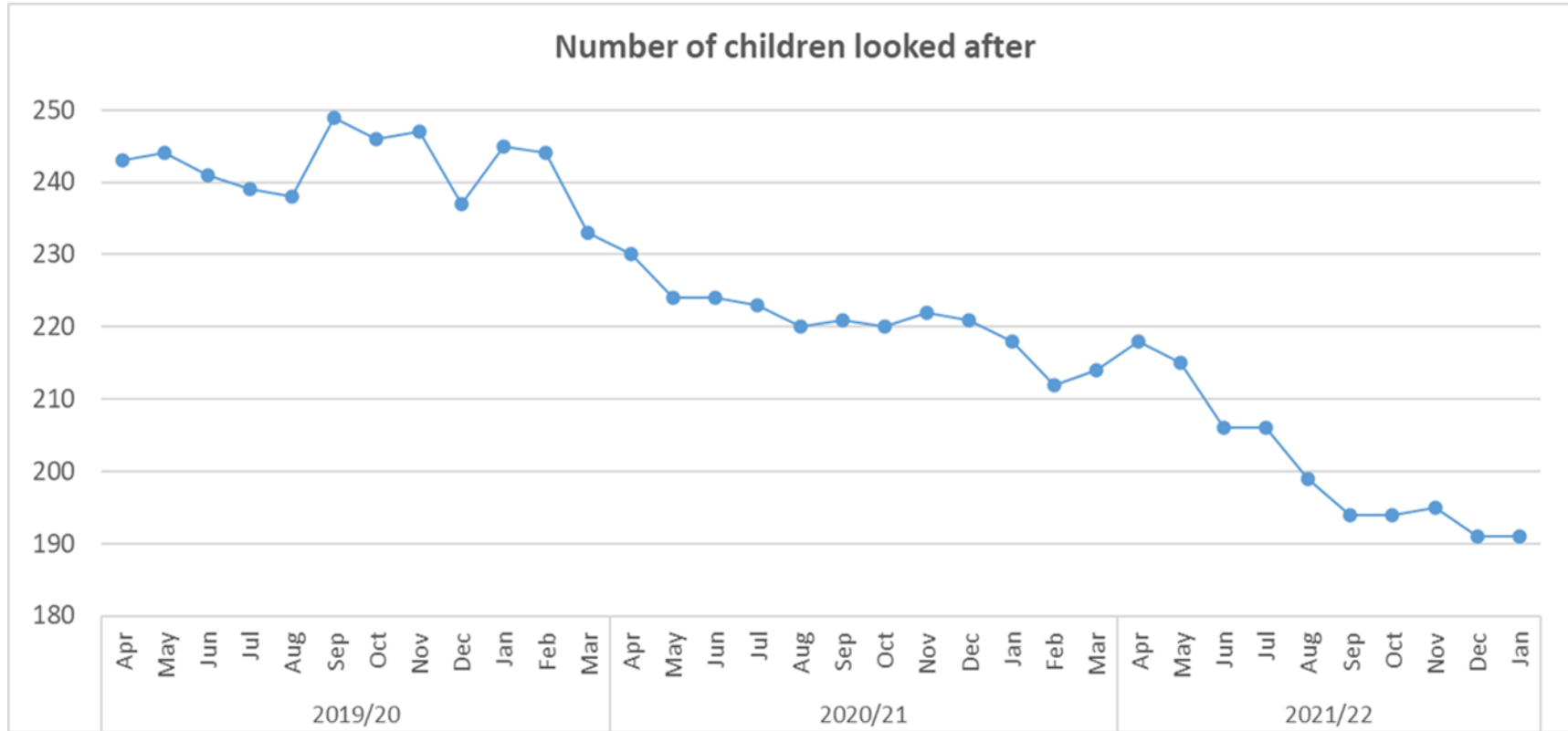
Appendix 2 – Children’s Placements Activity and Unit Cost Data

	2020/21 budget	2020/21 actuals	2020/21 variance from budget	2021/22 budget	budget change 2020/21 to 2021/22	2021/22 forecast this period	Change on 2020/21	Variance to budget
In-house								
- FYEs	83.00	74.16	(8.84)	87.00	4.00	81.37	7.21	(5.63)
- Average Unit Cost	17,859	16,235	(1,623)	18,363	505	14,850	(1,385)	(3,513)
- TOTAL COST	1,482,263	1,204,017	(278,245)	1,597,607	115,344	1,208,378	4,361	(389,229)
IFA								
- FYEs	63.00	51.75	(11.25)	58.00	(5.00)	42.42	(9.33)	(15.58)
- Average Unit Cost	44,340	42,466	(1,874)	42,907	(1,433)	43,278	812	371
- TOTAL COST	2,793,394	2,197,614	(595,780)	2,488,604	(304,790)	1,835,871	(361,743)	(652,733)
Residential								
- FYEs	11.00	11.99	0.99	12.00	1.00	12.92	0.93	0.92
- Average Unit Cost	251,590	207,623	(43,967)	207,309	(44,281)	195,303	(12,319)	(12,005)
- TOTAL COST	2,767,491	2,489,397	(278,094)	2,487,706	(279,785)	2,523,319	33,923	35,613
Supported Living								
- FYEs	5.00	10.32	5.32	2.27	(2.73)	3.12	(7.20)	0.85
- Average Unit Cost	241,932	205,013	(36,918)	205,000	(36,932)	200,367	(4,646)	(4,633)
- TOTAL COST	1,209,659	2,115,739	906,080	465,564	(744,095)	625,146	(1,490,593)	159,582
Housing with Support								
- FYEs	0.00	0.00	0.00	20.49	20.49	13.61	13.61	(6.88)
- Average Unit Cost	0	0	0	28,679	28,679	25,775	25,775	(2,903)
- TOTAL COST	0	0	0	587,600	587,600	350,802	350,802	(236,798)
Other Areas								
- FYEs	109.25	117.54	8.29	115.49	6.24	87.06	(30.48)	(28.43)
- Average Unit Cost	14,051	11,473	(2,579)	15,060	1,008	14,601	3,128	(459)
- TOTAL COST	1,535,099	1,348,488	(186,611)	1,739,174	204,075	1,271,138	(77,350)	(468,036)
Contingency	0	0	0	0	0	100,000	100,000	100,000
TOTAL								
- FYEs	271.25	265.76	(5.49)	295.25	24.00	240.50	(25.26)	(54.75)
- Average Unit Cost	36,084	35,202	(883)	31,724	(4,361)	32,909	(2,293)	1,186
- TOTAL COST	9,787,906	9,355,255	(432,650)	9,366,255	(421,651)	7,914,655	(1,440,600)	(1,451,599)

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NB - The cohort of children that are included in the Cost and Volume data are not exactly the same cohort as those children who are “looked after” (the number of these amounting to 191 at the end of January 2022). The main difference is that we include in the cost and volume analysis those children who are subject to a Special Guardianship Order; these children are not “looked after”, but the guardians are in receipt of an allowance. On average, these children number around 61.

Appendix 3 – Number of Children Looked After



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Children and Young People’s Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel Work Programme October 2021

(to be updated following each Panel meeting)

The Panel will consider issues of significant public concern, areas of poor performance and areas where Members think the Council could provide better value for money. This is a “live” document and is subject to change as priorities or circumstances change.

1(A) ACTIVE PROJECTS (i.e. within the current Municipal Year) – limited ideally to two items at any one time

Topic	Reason for scrutiny	Method of scrutiny and reporting process	Timeline	Progress since Last Panel meeting	Contact
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<p>CYPS Working Group – Careleavers Not in Education, Employment or Training</p>	<p>This group would involve building on the work that Carolann James was leading on with partners around our Care Leavers who are not in education, employment or training – there was also the informative report that went to the CYPS Panel in October 2021 and Full Council in November 2021 (attached).</p>	<p>It is intended that the Working Group focus on understanding the barriers along with the opportunities. The Group to construct an appreciative enquiry sort of approach, bringing in the learning from Carolann James’ group and also other council services as well as partner agencies and maybe the Corporate Parenting Panel</p>	<p>Members – Wendy Griggs, Ann Harley, Caroline Cherry, Ruth Jacobs</p> <p>Officers – Paul Johnson, Wendy Packer, Bethany Swan, Jaida Aldred</p>	<p>3 February 2022 – to discuss draft Terms of Reference of Group</p> <p>Date of Next – 17 March 2022</p> <p>Draft Terms of Reference and Forward Plan presented to CYPS Panel Meeting 10 March 2022</p>	
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<p>CYPS Working Group - Accelerated Progress Plan (APP)</p>	<p>The working group will identify and recommend further effective delivery of the Council SEND Improvement plan in relation to the experiences of Parents and Carers.</p>	<p>Scrutinise parents and carers experiences with SEND services in North Somerset and their partners.</p>	<p>Members: Wendy Griggs, Ann Harley, Caroline Cherry, Ruth Jacobs</p> <p>Representative from the parents Carers forum to be invited as appropriate Representatives from Partner agencies to be invited as appropriate Parents/ carers will be invited to contribute</p> <p>Officers Pip Hesketh Other officers who work in the SEND arena to be invited as appropriate</p>	<p>Draft Terms of Reference and Forward Plan presented to CYPS Panel Meeting 10 March 2022</p>	
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<p>Joint CAMHS (CYPS/ HOSP) Working Group</p>	<p>1. To understand the parity of funding issues for children's mental health services across North Somerset (when compared with South Gloucestershire and Bristol) 2. To understand the CAMHS access issues and to engage with the plan to redesign the referral pathway</p>	<p>Working Group: CYPS Councillors: Ciarán Cronnelly Wendy Griggs, Caroline Cherry, Huw James, Ann Harley, Ruth Jacobs, Steve Hogg, HOSP Councillor: Sandra Hearne NHS representatives North Somerset Parent Carers Working Group Representatives from Head of Youth Justice, Youth Offending and Prevention Services, Service Leader Resource Service, Head of Service, Family Support & Safeguarding, Health Improvement Advanced Specialist, Public Health, Scrutiny Support officers</p>	<p>Varied, depending on work strand</p>	<p>15 April 2021 Parity of funding exploration (scope and remit Access to CAMHS</p> <p>8 July 2021 Terms of reference amended to capture the transition into adulthood 0-25;</p> <p>Cllr Cronnelly to liaise with Anna Norris re timing of meetings with LA to address any gaps.</p> <p>Interim report to Panel 21 October 2021</p> <p>1 December 2021 Progress on the Gap Analysis</p> <p>Progress report to March 22 CYPS Panel meeting</p>	<p>Cllr Ciarán Cronnelly</p>

<p>School Organisation Scrutiny Steering Group</p>	<p>1. In-depth investigations of proposed school changes 2. Pupil Projections – methodology as applied generally and in particular in respect of new builds, including affordable housing 3. Admission Arrangements</p> <p>Note: The School Organisation Group is a standing sub-group of the CYPS Policy and Scrutiny Panel and not a task and finish scrutiny working group.</p>	<p>Steering Group</p> <p>Corporate Aim: Promoting lifelong learning opportunities</p> <p>Key issues for the public</p> <p>New National Code</p> <p>To include Education Transformation (see below)</p>	<p>Varied, depending on work strand</p> <p>Ongoing - to meet as required.</p> <p>Regular reporting to Panel</p>	<p>10 September 2021</p> <p>School Admission policies for consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - co-ordinated schemes (primary and secondary) - community and VC schools - Fair Access Protocol <p>Update Winterstoke Hundred Expansion</p> <p>Haywood Village – need for a 2nd primary school for 630 pupils to open in 2023</p> <p>Update on Baytree Expansion Update: SEMH New School Update: Chestnut Park Primary School</p> <p>15 December 2021 Overview of the SEND improvement plan and outline plans for Nurture Groups/Hubs Baytree Consultation Review</p>	<p>Cllr Wendy Griggs/ Sally Varley</p>
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				<p>Education Commissioning Strategy – update on actions</p> <p>18 January 2022</p> <p>Update on the Winterstoke Hundred Academy and Baytree Expansions Term Date Consultation – 2023/24 School Year School Admission Policies: Draft Community and Voluntary Controlled School Admission Arrangements 2023-24 North Somerset Coordinated Schemes - 2023/24 School Year</p>	
Children's Improvement Focus Group – Front Door	At the Children and Young People Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel (CYPS) on 29 October 2020 a report was presented by the Chairman on Scrutiny of the Children's Improvement Plan. It was agreed that the sub-group	Focus Group members: Councillors Wendy Griggs, Caroline Cherry, Steve Hogg, Lisa Pilgrim, Huw James, Nicola Holland	Varied, depending on work strand	19 April 2021 presentation by officers to members on Children's Improvement Plan – Quality Assurance Development and impact of changes at this early stage	

		Officers: Becky Hopkins, Dawn Newton		<p>of development – April 2021</p> <p>24 June 2021 - Feedback on Members' experiences with individual case audits</p> <p>23 November 2021 - Current progress (including relevant data quantitative and qualitative data showing improvement) Discussion on how to engage with partner agency representatives</p> <p>8 February 2022 Visit of Focus Group Members to Front Door, Children Social Care and Family Wellbeing, Floor 3, Town Hall to meet with staff.</p> <p>Forward Plan presented to CYPS Panel Meeting 10 March 2022</p>	
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	<p>needed to progress from being a Task and Finish group to becoming a longer-term group focused at a strategic level on scrutinising the delivery of the Children’s Improvement Plan and that the group be renamed the Children’s Improvement Focus Group.</p> <p>There was also a recognition that in order to fulfil such a role Members needed some peer support, via the Local Government Association, from colleagues who had been on a similar journey. As such Cllr Ann Hartley, Shropshire Council, agreed to meet with Focus Group members to provide support and share her scrutiny knowledge and experience.</p>	<p>to discuss and scrutinise a number of performance datasets in relation to the Children’s Improvement Plan-</p> <p>Children’s Improvement Performance Summary Key Performance Indicators – How are we Doing? Children’s Improvement Board Dataset – Highlights and Exceptions Report</p>			
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1(B) SCHEDULED PROJECTS (i.e. projects identified in the Strategic Work Plan that: may continue after the completion of the above or may be phased for commencement beyond the current Municipal Year). There is also the potential for these to be re-prioritised and escalated to 1(A) above for immediate action.

Topic	Reason for scrutiny	Method of scrutiny and reporting process	Timeline	Contact
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Draft Childcare Sufficiency Assessment	The Childcare Act 2006 (Sections 6, 8-11 & 13) require local authorities to assess the	Reports to Panel		Jenie Eastman
	local childcare market and to secure sufficient childcare for working parents. Childcare will only be deemed sufficient if it meets the needs of the community in general and in particular those families on lower incomes and those with disabled children. The term childcare includes provision for under 5's and for out of school care for 5 to 11-year olds.			
Adoption West Implemented April 2019	–	Panel receives reports on progress of implementation		Shelley Caldwell
Education Commissioning Strategy	Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 provides Local Authorities (LAs) with a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient schools for primary and secondary education in their areas.	Regular updates to Panel and School Organisation Scrutiny Steering Group		Sally Varley
North Somerset Fostering Strategy		Panel receives updates on progress		

Independent Safeguarding and Reviewing Officers' (ISROS') Annual Report		Panel receives annual reports		
Safeguarding Children Partnership Arrangements		Panel receives updates		

Turning the Tide Edge of Care Service		Panel receives updates on progress		
Children's Services Budget Monitor	Forecast spend against budget for Children's Services highlighting key variances, movement and contextual information making reference to principles and outcomes associated with the setting of the Budget	Regular Reports to Panel		Katherine Sokol

<p>Performance Monitoring</p>	<p>The Children and Young People’s Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel receive regular performance management 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.</p> <p>This report presents the following standard items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any recent Ofsted inspections of council services • an analysis of the performance of the relevant Key Corporate Performance Indicators (KCPIs) for Quarter 1 2020/21, that fall under the remit of the Panel. 	<p>Regular Reports to Panel</p>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an overview of the performance of various Key Service Measures for Support and Safeguarding services within the council. 			

Annual Directorate Statements (ADS)	<p>Each year the Directorates within North Somerset produce an Annual Directorate Statement translating the commitments in North Somerset's Corporate Plan into a series of Directorate level commitments.</p> <p>On an annual basis, the Panel to decide which, if any, of the People and Communities commitments for Children's Services should be subject of further detailed reports at future meetings</p>	Annually		
Home to School Transport				

SECTION TWO – proposed projects (listed in priority order). These must be agreed at Panel and will be referred for discussion at Chairs and Vice Chairs – for inclusion to the Strategic Work Plan:

Topic	Reason for scrutiny	Proposed method of scrutiny and reporting process	Timeline	Contact
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Youth Services and Youth Engagement Working group including the Youth Champions and any other interested CYPS Panel members.	To encourage the engagement of young people in the work of the CYPS Panel.	Working Group	Membership of working group and scope to be confirmed.	Cllr Huw James
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SECTION THREE – planned Briefings and Workshops. Outcomes may, with Chairman’s agreement, generate Panel agenda items (for inclusion in S4 below) or, with Panel agreement, be escalated to S2 above:

Topic	Reason for scrutiny	Date	Outcome	Progress	Contact
Children’s Services Performance Data and Direction of Travel (including RAG rating)	Agreed at Informal Panel Meeting 30 June 2021	Autumn 2021 TBC			Carolann James

SECTION FOUR - agenda reports to the Panel meetings as agreed by the Chairman. This section primarily provides for the forward planning of agendas for the coming year and a useful record of panel meeting activity. When considering reports at meetings, outcomes may include proposing a workstream, escalating it to S2 above for potential inclusion on the STRATEGIC WORK PLAN.

Panel 3 (11 March 2021)

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Outcome (actions)	Progress	Contact
SEND Action Plan Update	To provide Panel Members with an update of progress on the SEND action plan, which was provided at the June 2020 meeting. This paper notes specific actions and risks, and grades each area of work as green, amber or red based on the risk. Finally, the recommendations of the recent LGA Peer Review and feedback from the Department for Education and NHS England are considered in terms of our current plans.	(1) Note the update on the SEND Action Plan and the initial response to the LGA recommendations (2). Consider the highlights and risks identified (3) Identify any responses necessary via the Chair of the Panel, who sits on the SEND Programme Board		Mike Newman
SEND Presentation & Q&A	Presentation by NHS representatives on SEND and an opportunity for Q&A session			
Children's Improvement Focus Group Feedback	Update from Cllr Griggs on progress from Children's Improvement Focus Group	To update Panel members on the progress from the Children's Improvement Focus Group		Cllr Wendy Griggs
Corporate Parenting Report	To inform Panel members of the current issues pertaining to children who are looked after, young people leaving the Authority's care and the fostering service. This will enable the panel to evaluate how	(1) Note the updated information presented in this report (2) To offer comment on both areas for improvement and areas of good performance		Carolann James

	effectively the whole council is discharging the Council's Corporate Parenting Responsibilities and Duties, particularly in determining how effectively 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.	(3) To raise the profile of corporate parenting responsibilities among their colleague elected members		
Executive Member Report – The 2021-2022 Budget – What Does it Mean for our Children?	To update members on the 2021-2022 Budget implications and provide an opportunity to challenge via Q&A	(1) the panel receive and consider the report of the Executive Member		Cllr Catherine Gibbons

Panel 1 (Informal - due to Covid restrictions) (30 June 2021)

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Outcome (actions)	Progress	Contact
Annual Directorate Statement – Children's Services	<p>Each year the Directorates within North Somerset Council produce an Annual Directorate Statement (ADS). This in effect translates the commitments in the North Somerset Corporate Plan into a series of Directorate level commitments.</p> <p>In determining the future workplan of this committee Members may wish to decide which particular commitments should form the basis for future performance reporting to this committee.</p>	<p>(1) the panel receive and consider the report;</p> <p>(2) that the panel decide which, if any, of the Children's Services Directorate's commitments should be the subject of further detailed reports at future meetings;</p> <p>(3) the Panel consider and agree the Work Plan</p>		Sheila Smith

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Multi-agency response to SEND Re-visit	Panel Members to note the process following the recently completed LJAR revisit and consider the report when published.	(1) that the Panel receives details of the process following the LJAR revisit; (2) that the Panel consider the letter published by Ofsted following on from the SEND re-visit.		Sheila Smith/Mike Newman
Winterstoke Hundred Academy Expansion Progress Update	To update panel members on the Winterstoke Hundred Academy Expansion Progress	(1) that the Panel receive and consider the update on the Winterstoke Hundred Expansion.		Sally Varley/Nao mi Addicott

Performance Monitoring Q4	The Panel is asked to note the performance information presented in this report and to give comment on both areas for improvement and areas of good performance.	<p>(1) that the Panel receive the report;</p> <p>(2) that the Panel comment on areas for improvement and areas of good performance;</p> <p>(3) that the Panel receive a briefing in autumn 2021 on children's services performance data.</p>		Carolann James
Month 12 Children's Services Budget Monitor	The Panel is asked to note the 2020/21 final spend against budget for children's services and the risks and opportunities associated with the medium-term position.	(1) that panel members receive the 2020/21 final spend against budget for children's services and the risks and opportunities associated with the medium-term position		Katherine Sokol/Sindy Dube
North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together Annual Report	To update panel members on the work of North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together	<p>(1) that the Panel receive and consider the presentation on the Annual Survey and Report;</p> <p>(2) that the Panel members contact Kenton Mee via email with regards any questions in relation to the presentation and report.</p>		Kenton Mee

Executive Member Report	To update members on key themes in the Executive Member's portfolio and to provide an opportunity to challenge via Q&A.	(1) that the Panel receive and consider the oral report of the Executive member; (2) that the Panel be provided with a report on how the £20k care leaver's fund has been utilised including successes at the next CYPS Panel meeting on 21 October 2021.		Cllr Catherine Gibbons
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**Panel 2 – (Informal - due to Covid Restrictions)
(21 October 2021)**

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Outcome (actions)	Progress	Contact
LJAR – Response to DfE with proposed accelerated progress plan	Following the outcome of our LJAR revisit in May 2021 the response has been provided to the DfE and the proposed Accelerated Progress Plan. A response is awaited from the DfE. See attached.	To receive and consider the report		Carolann James

<p>Children's Improvement Plan: (1) Quality Assurance Update</p> <p>(2) Progress Update in relation to Corporate Parenting Care Leavers Performance for Education, Employment and Training</p>	<p>Children's Improvement Plan progress update in relation to Quality Assurance activity and its impact on social work practice</p> <p>This Corporate Parenting report updates on the challenges in North Somerset in relation to improving the performance for Care Leavers being in Education, Employment and Training and how we are progressing to improve this performance area which is one of our priority areas within our Children's Improvement plan.</p>	<p>To receive and consider the report</p> <p>To receive and consider the report</p>		<p>Carolann James</p> <p>Cllr Catherine Gibbons/Carolann James</p>
<p>Presumption Competition for a new 630 place Primary School In Haywood Village, Weston-super-Mare</p>	<p>The developer of new homes at Haywood Village is required to deliver the school as part of their contributions to local infrastructures needed a result of their development. The cost of the school will be met by the developer.</p>	<p>To support a decision to be taken by the Executive Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning to approve the progression of a Presumption Route competition to deliver a new 630-place primary school on the Haywood Village Development in Weston super Mare to open in September 2023 (subject to planning approvals and developer delivery).</p>		<p>Sheila Smith/Sally Varley</p>
<p>Performance Monitoring</p>	<p>The Children and Young People's Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel receive regular performance management reports to help</p>	<p>To note the performance information presented in this report and to give comment on both areas for</p>		<p>Carolann James</p>

	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.	improvement and areas of good performance.		
Month 5 Children's Services Budget Monitor	<p>This report summarises and discusses the 2021/22 forecast spend against budget for children's services, highlighting key variances, movements and contextual information. It provides further details on the month 5 report which will be presented to the Executive on 20th October 2021.</p> <p>The report also makes reference to the principles and outcomes associated with the setting of the 2022/23 budget.</p>	To note the 2021/22 forecast spend against budget for children's services and the risks and opportunities associated with the medium-term position.		Sindy Dube

Panel Meeting 3 (10 March 2022)

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Outcome (actions)	Progress	Contact
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<p>Family Support and Safeguarding Update</p>	<p>To update panel members on family support and safeguarding.</p>	<p>Members receive an update and evaluation of the current position in the Family Support & Safeguarding Service so they have a full understanding of the strengths and ongoing areas for development.</p>		<p>Becky Hopkins, Assistant Director, Family Support and Safeguarding</p>
<p>Children's Improvement Focus Group – Front Door – Forward Plan</p>	<p>To update panel members and for discussion</p>	<p>Members to receive an update on the Children's Improvement Focus Group – Front Door and for discussion.</p>		<p>Councillor Wendy Griggs, Chair, CYPS Panel</p>

CYPS Working Group – Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) – Terms of Reference and Forward Plan	To update panel members and for discussion	Members to receive an update on the CYPS Working Group – APP terms of reference and forward plan for discussion		Councillor Wendy Griggs, Chair, CYPS Panel
Q3 Performance Monitoring Report	The Children and Young People’s Services Policy and Scrutiny Panel receive regular performance management 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.	To note the performance information presented in this report and to give comment on both areas for improvement and good performance.		Becky Hopkins, Assistant Director, Family Support and Safeguarding

<p>CYPS Working Group – Care leavers NEET – Terms of Reference and Forward Plan</p>	<p>To update panel members and for discussion</p>	<p>Members to receive an update on the CYPS Working Group – Care Leavers NEET – Terms of Reference and Forward Plan for discussion</p>		<p>Councillor Wendy Griggs, Chair, CYPS Panel</p>
<p>Joint CAMHS (CYPS & HOSP) Working Group – Overview of Findings</p>	<p>To update Panel members on the findings from the CAMHS Working Group</p>	<p>HOSP/CYPS appreciates the collaboration and transparency of all parties involved in the working group discussions about parity of funding for children’s and young people’s mental health services in North Somerset.</p> <p>HOSP/CYPS believes it’s clear that North Somerset children and young people do not receive parity of funding – and service – for mental health services when compared with Bristol and South Gloucestershire.</p> <p>HOSP/CYPS calls on the council, CCG and system partners to work together to begin to close the estimated £700k funding gap and to specifically improve services for eating disorders, learning disabilities, and primary & infant mental health services</p>		<p>Councillor Ciaran Cronnelly, Chair, HOSP, Member CYPS</p>

		A progress report be provided to CYPS by no later than October 2022 outlining the steps that have been taken to improve parity from a funding and service delivery model perspective, and where gaps remain, what steps will be taken to improve these		
Month 10 Children's Services Budget Monitor	<p>This report summarises and discusses the 2021/22 forecast spend against budget for children's services, highlighting key variances, movements and contextual information as at month 10.</p> <p>The report also makes reference to the principles and outcomes associated with the setting of the 2022/23 budget.</p>	That the Panel notes the 2021/22 forecast spend against budget for children's services and the risks and opportunities associated with the medium-term position.		

SECTION 5 - Recommendations - Response from Executive Member

Area for investigation/ Recommendations	When were the recommendations to the Executive agreed?	Expect answer by (first panel meeting after recommendations were submitted)

SECTION 6 - Progress and follow-up on implementing Panel recommendations

Panel Recommendation	Date of Response	Actions – implementation progress

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