

Children and Families Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 6th July, 2023
at 5.30 pm

PLEASE NOTE TIME OF MEETING

Conference Room 3 - Civic Centre

This meeting is open to the public

Members

Councillor A Bunday(Chair)
Councillor J Baillie
Councillor Barnes-Andrews
Councillor Chapman
Councillor Lambert
Councillor Mintoff
Councillor Quadir

Appointed Members

Catherine Hobbs, Roman Catholic Church
Francis Otieno, Primary Parent Governor
Vacancy - Secondary Parent Governor
Rob Sanders, Church of England

Contacts

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PUBLIC INFORMATION

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL

Role of this Scrutiny Panel: To undertake the scrutiny of Children and Families Services in the City, including the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Early Help, Specialist & Core Service, looked after children, education and early years and youth offending services, unless they are forward plan items. In such circumstances members of the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel will be invited to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee meeting where they are discussed.

Terms Of Reference:-

Scrutiny of Children and Families Services in the City to include:

- Monitoring the implementation and challenging the progress of the Council's action plan to address the recommendations made by Ofsted following their inspection of Children's Services in Southampton and review of Southampton Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) in July 2014.
- Regular scrutiny of the performance of multi-agency arrangements for the provision of early help and services to children and their families.
- Scrutiny of early years and education including the implementation of the Vision for Learning 2014 – 2024.
- Scrutiny of the development and implementation of the Youth Justice Strategy developed by the Youth Offending Board.
- Referring issues to the Chair of the LSCB and the Corporate Parenting Committee.

Public Representations

At the discretion of the Chair, members of the public may address the meeting on any report included on the agenda in which they have a relevant interest. Any member of the public wishing to address the meeting should advise the Democratic Support Officer (DSO) whose contact details are on the front sheet of the agenda.

Access – access is available for the disabled. Please contact the Democratic Support Officer who will help to make any necessary arrangements.

MOBILE TELEPHONES:- Please switch your mobile telephones or other IT to silent whilst in the meeting.

Business to be Discussed

Only those items listed on the attached agenda may be considered at this meeting.

QUORUM The minimum number of appointed Members required to be in attendance to hold the meeting is 3.

Use of Social Media:- The Council supports the video or audio recording of meetings open to the public, for either live or subsequent broadcast. However, if, in the Chair's opinion, a person filming or recording a meeting or taking photographs is interrupting proceedings or causing a disturbance, under the Council's Standing Orders the person can be ordered to stop their activity, or to leave the meeting.

By entering the meeting room you are consenting to being recorded and to the use of those images and recordings for broadcasting and or/training purposes. The meeting may be recorded by the press or members of the public.

Any person or organisation filming, recording or broadcasting any meeting of the Council is responsible for any claims or other liability resulting from them doing so.

Details of the Council's Guidance on the recording of meetings is available on the Council's website.

Rules of Procedure

The meeting is governed by the Council Procedure Rules and the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules as set out in Part 4 of the Constitution.

Smoking policy – the Council operates a no-smoking policy in all civic buildings.

Fire Procedure – in the event of a fire or other emergency a continuous alarm will sound, and you will be advised by Council officers what action to take

Southampton: Corporate Plan 2022-2030 sets out the four key goals:

- Strong Foundations for Life.- For people to access and maximise opportunities to truly thrive, Southampton will focus on ensuring residents of all ages and backgrounds have strong foundations for life.
- A proud and resilient city - Southampton’s greatest assets are our people. Enriched lives lead to thriving communities, which in turn create places where people want to live, work and study.
- A prosperous city - Southampton will focus on growing our local economy and bringing investment into our city.
- A successful, sustainable organisation - The successful delivery of the outcomes in this plan will be rooted in the culture of our organisation and becoming an effective and efficient council.

Dates of Meetings: Municipal Year

2023	2024
16 June	25 January
20 July	28 March
28 September	
23 November	

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Members are required to disclose, in accordance with the Members’ Code of Conduct, **both** the existence **and** nature of any “Disclosable Pecuniary Interest” or “Other Interest” they may have in relation to matters for consideration on this Agenda.

DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

A Member must regard himself or herself as having a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter that they or their spouse, partner, a person they are living with as husband or wife, or a person with whom they are living as if they were a civil partner in relation to:

- (i) Any employment, office, trade, profession, or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
- (ii) Sponsorship:

Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from Southampton City Council) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expense incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

(iii) Any contract which is made between you / your spouse etc (or a body in which you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interest) and Southampton City Council under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed, and which has not been fully discharged.

(iv) Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of Southampton.

(v) Any license (held alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of Southampton for a month or longer.

(vi) Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) the landlord is Southampton City Council, and the tenant is a body in which you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interests.

(vii) Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of Southampton, and either:

- a) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body, or
- b) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interest that exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

Other Interests

A Member must regard himself or herself as having an 'Other Interest' in any membership of, or occupation of a position of general control or management in:

Any body to which they have been appointed or nominated by Southampton City Council

Any public authority or body exercising functions of a public nature

Any body directed to charitable purposes

Any body whose principal purpose includes the influence of public opinion or policy

Principles of Decision Making

All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles:-

- proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);
- due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers;
- respect for human rights;
- a presumption in favour of openness, accountability, and transparency;
- setting out what options have been considered;
- setting out reasons for the decision; and
- clarity of aims and desired outcomes.

In exercising discretion, the decision maker must:

- understand the law that regulates the decision making power and gives effect to it. The decision-maker must direct itself properly in law;
- take into account all relevant matters (those matters which the law requires the authority as a matter of legal obligation to take into account);
- leave out of account irrelevant considerations;
- act for a proper purpose, exercising its powers for the public good;
- not reach a decision which no authority acting reasonably could reach, (also known as the "rationality" or "taking leave of your senses" principle);
- comply with the rule that local government finance is to be conducted on an annual basis. Save to the extent authorised by Parliament, 'live now, pay later' and forward funding are unlawful; and
- act with procedural propriety in accordance with the rules of fairness.

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES AND CHANGES IN PANEL MEMBERSHIP (IF ANY)

To note any changes in membership of the Panel made in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.3.

2 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

To elect the Vice Chair for the Municipal Year 2023/2024.

3 DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTERESTS

In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, and the Council's Code of Conduct, Members to disclose any personal or pecuniary interests in any matter included on the agenda for this meeting.

4 DECLARATIONS OF SCRUTINY INTEREST

Members are invited to declare any prior participation in any decision taken by a Committee, Sub-Committee, or Panel of the Council on the agenda and being scrutinised at this meeting.

5 DECLARATION OF PARTY POLITICAL WHIP

Members are invited to declare the application of any party political whip on any matter on the agenda and being scrutinised at this meeting.

6 STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIR

7 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING)

(Pages 1 - 2)

To approve and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings held on 30 March 2023 and to deal with any matters arising, attached.

8 CHILDREN AND LEARNING POSITION STATEMENT

(Pages 3 - 22)

Report of the Executive Director for Children and Learning outlining the context in which the service is working with and for children and families in Southampton successes and challenges and the service priorities for the coming year.

9 CHILDREN'S RESOURCE SERVICE AUDIT AND SERVICE RESPONSE

(Pages 23 - 40)

Report of the Executive Director for Children and Learning, recommending that the Panel consider and note the findings of the Children's Resource Service audit and the service response.

10 CHILDREN AND LEARNING - PERFORMANCE

(Pages 41 - 70)

Report of the Scrutiny Manager recommending that the Panel consider and challenge the performance of Children's Services and Learning in Southampton.

11 MONITORING SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

(Pages 71 - 74)

Report of the Scrutiny Manager recommending that the Panel considers the responses to recommendations from previous meetings and provides feedback.

Wednesday, 28 June 2023

Director – Legal, Governance and HR

SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 MARCH 2023

Present: Councillors Winning (Chair), T Bunday, D Galton, Laurent, Vaughan and Denness

Apologies: Councillor W Payne
Appointed Members: Catherine Hobbs, Rob Sanders and Francis Otieno

33. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING)**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record.

34. **YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE UPDATE AND ISSUES AFFECTING YOUNG PEOPLE IN SOUTHAMPTON**

The Panel considered and noted the report of the Head of Young People's Services providing an overview of the work of the service and plans to improve outcomes moving forward.

Councillor Paffey – Cabinet Member for Children and Learning, Robert Henderson - Executive Director Wellbeing (Children & Learning), Tim Nelson – Head of Young People's Services, Anna Harbridge - Service Lead for the Youth Justice Service, Sarah Ball - Service Lead for the Young People's Service, Chief Inspector Marcus Kennedy – Hampshire Constabulary, Nicola Iverson - Deputy Head Teacher Woodlands Community College were in attendance and with the consent of the Chair addressed the meeting.

The Panel explored a number of issues outlined within the report including:

- The local and national context of tackling youth crime;
- The developing children's social care response to serious youth crime;
- The links between youth crime and exploitation and steps being taken to effectively address the issues;
- The number of homeless 16 and 17 year olds and steps being taken to reduce this;
- The support offered and enacted to prevent the admission of children into the care system;
- The new TAS Initiative (Team Around the School Initiative);
- The Panel explored what had been achieved since the amalgamation of 3 separate services: and
- The importance of vulnerable children's access to education.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That a performance dataset would be circulated to the Panel outlining how the Young People's Service is performing against set targets; and
- (2) That the Member induction programme for the 2023/24 intake of elected councillors includes a visit to the Hub, potentially as the setting for the mandatory corporate parenting training session.

35. **SEND AND CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES - STRATEGY AND OFSTED INSPECTION UPDATES**

The Panel considered the report of the Head of SEND presenting the new SEND Strategy and the Ofsted SEND inspection framework.

Councillor Paffey – Cabinet Member for Children and Learning, Robert Henderson Executive Director Wellbeing (Children & Learning), and Tammy Marks –Head of SEND were in attendance and with the consent of the Chair, addressed the meeting.

The Panel discussed a number of points outlined within the report including:

- Local and national trends relating to SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities);
- Performance outcomes for children with SEND;
- The plans for transformation of the SEND service and the need to meet the increasing demand; and
- How the recently published national strategy for children with SEND compares to Southampton’s SEND Strategy, and the impact the proposals within the national strategy will have on services in the city.

RESOLVED that the Panel schedule a discussion on SEND in 2023/24 that includes a focus on the progress of the transformation programme, and preparation for adulthood.

36. **CHILDREN AND LEARNING - PERFORMANCE**

The Panel considered the report of the Scrutiny Manager recommending that the Panel consider and challenge the performance of Children’s Services and Learning in Southampton.

Councillor Paffey – Cabinet Member for Children and Learning, Robert Henderson Executive Director Wellbeing (Children & Learning), and Stuart Webb – Head of Quality Assurance were in attendance and with the consent of the Chair, addressed the meeting.

The Panel discussed a number of points within the report including:

- A number of figures within the appendix indicated a discrepancy in the performance data between the February and December figures; and
- The inconsistent quality of practice.

RESOLVED that an explanation is provided to the Panel of the discrepancies identified between the December 2022 and February 2023 published performance data.

37. **MONITORING SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Panel received and noted the report of the Scrutiny Manager which enabled the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel to monitor and track progress on recommendations made at previous meetings.

Agenda Item 8

DECISION-MAKER:	CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL
SUBJECT:	CHILDREN AND LEARNING POSITION STATEMENT
DATE OF DECISION:	6 JULY 2023
REPORT OF:	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - CHILDREN AND LEARNING

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Executive Director	Title	Executive Director Children and Learning	
	Name	Robert Henderson	Tel: 023 8083 4899
	E-mail	Robert.Henderson@southampton.gov.uk	
Author:	Title	Head of Quality Assurance	
	Name	Stuart Webb	Tel: 023 8083 4102
	E-mail	Stuart.webb@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
Not applicable	
BRIEF SUMMARY	
The Executive Director of Children and Learning will give a presentation to the Scrutiny Panel outlining the context in which the service is working with and for children and families in Southampton; successes and challenges and the service priorities for the coming year.	
RECOMMENDATIONS:	
	(i) That the Panel note and consider the content of the presentation.
	(ii) That the Panel note and consider the content of the attached Ofsted Annual Engagement Meeting letter.
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS	
1.	The Scrutiny Panel has oversight of the service's improvement journey and the Ofsted Annual Engagement Meeting provides context regarding the service's direction of travel.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED	
2.	Not applicable.
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)	
3.	<p>The Executive Director for Children and Learning will provide an overview of the service which will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local context in which the service is working – including information regarding key issues affecting children • An overview of improvement activity to date and the impact • The principal challenges for the service • The service priorities for 2023 – how we will meet these challenges

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key issues in relation to Education and Early Years and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.
4.	The service's annual engagement meeting with Ofsted took place in March 2023. Senior managers in education and children's social care met with inspectors and the Ofsted record of the discussion is attached for the Panel's attention. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) was not discussed and Ofsted have indicated that there will be a meeting later in the year, date to be confirmed.
5.	Annual engagement meeting discussions inform the timescale and focus of inspection activity. Because of the time passed since previous inspections, the service is anticipating a SEND inspection as well as the scheduled Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) in 2023/24.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue</u>	
6.	N/A
<u>Property/Other</u>	
7.	N/A
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
8.	Children Act 1989
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
9.	N/A
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
10.	Oversight of the service improvement activity is provided by our Improvement Board and independent chair.
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
11.	<p>The 2022-2030 Corporate Plan includes, as one of its four goals, strong foundations for life where people are able to access and maximise opportunities to truly thrive, Southampton will focus on ensuring residents of all ages and backgrounds have strong foundations for life.</p> <p>By delivering consistently good outcomes for the city's children and young people, Southampton's Children's Services and Learning Department will contribute to achieving this objective</p>

KEY DECISION?	No
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED	All
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Executive Director's introduction to Children and Learning Services
2.	Ofsted Annual Engagement Meeting Letter

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None	
Equality Impact Assessment		
Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out?		No
Data Protection Impact Assessment		
Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out?		No
Other Background Documents		
Other Background documents available for inspection at:		
Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)	
1.	N/A	

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Children and Learning Service Introduction

June 2023

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Children & Learning
Making a difference



SOUTHAMPTON
CITY COUNCIL

Agenda Item 8
Appendix 1

The context: some of our key issues

Directorate Numbers:
Headcount : 685 (579 FTE)
Budget: £57.3m General Fund

- **Neglect**

In 2020/2021 Southampton ranked 2nd highest among comparators for cruelty to children and young people

- **Domestic Abuse**

In 2020/2021 54.3% of HRDA referrals had children in the household. There were 2,779 children where domestic abuse was identified during an assessment

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- **Poverty**

In 2021/22 22% of children in Southampton were living in relative low-income families

- **Youth crime and knife crime**

In 2019 / 2020 between 40 – 50% of violent crime in Southampton is by children and young people, with a high use of knives



An improving service: Destination 2022

- § **Phase 1** September 20 - March 21: Analysis, strategic direction, values and road map. COVID
- § **Phase 2** April 21 - Feb 22: Preparation and consultation, Deputy Director in post, growth bid and budget reconciliation, senior leadership team recruited, partnership work, launch of workforce academy and practice framework, implementation of Care Director, major recruitment campaign
- § **Phase 3** March - April 22: Launch and implementation of D22 structure (with locality-facing teams), Child Friendly City
- § **Phase 4** September 22 Consolidation and embedding of referral/transfer pathways, contextual safeguarding, fine tuning performance reporting, audit and quality loop, increased capacity SLT



Headline achievements

- § Social Workers 90% permanent. Leadership and Management team 95% permanent. Successful recruitment of NQSWs, managers and senior SWs
- § Safeguarding service strengthened and stabilised, practice improving
- § Ofsted visit 2022 - work to do but significant change in culture 'not the same place'
- § Caseloads falling - Average caseloads around 18. The number of 20+ caseloads are markedly fewer than before we launched D22. Caseloads are still too high for some social workers
- § Demand falling in most areas
- § Performance information and reports are accessible and intelligent. Increased confidence across the service in data accuracy
- § Stronger performance culture, still some variability. Assurance clinics well established with excellent attendance and buy in. Compliance and performance steadily improving
- § Audit framework re-launched, stronger compliance. % of good practice increasing
- § Stronger partnerships, underpinned by Strategic Partnership Board



Our key challenges

- Significantly challenging financial context
- 25% of our social workers have less than two years' experience
- Although in some areas demand is falling (child protection plans, CLA), referrals remain high and overall number of children in the system is not reducing
- Family Safeguarding Model and residential projects have not progressed as quickly as we would have wanted
- Services for looked after children and care leavers are behind safeguarding in our improvement journey
- Serious youth crime
- Consistency of practice needs to improve

Next phase: Children's Social Care

Building for Brilliance: Building For Sustainability 2023

§ Ensure that children get the **right support at the right time**, meeting need early, reducing demand and spend on statutory services

§ Develop **strong, vibrant localities** where families can receive the help they need, and practitioners can share their knowledge and expertise

§ Support children to **remain within, or return to, their birth families**, seeking out and reuniting family members, reducing care costs and freeing up placements for other children

- Promote **permanence and placement stability**, creating strong forever families and reducing increasingly costly alternatives
- Build a **permanent, stable, energised workforce**, increasing consistency for children and reducing agency spend
- Embed our **practice framework and practice standards** across the whole service, doing the basics brilliantly and being ambitious in our practice expectations

Education and Early Years

- The majority of maintained schools in Southampton continue to have Ofsted grades of Good or better. However, results at all Key Stages are below National Averages although the School Improvement Team are working with the lowest performing schools to bring about improvement
- Behaviour, exclusions, mental and emotional welfare are an increasing concern. The Inclusion and Education Psychology team are fully engaged with statutory and purchased work to support schools with these issues
- Overall student numbers are declining across Southampton which is impacting on the Primary phase but will begin to affect Secondary schools in the coming years. This decrease in pupil revenue, along with increased energy costs, unfunded salary increases and other inflationary expenses have put serious financial pressures on schools

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Education and Early Years

- The Education Service continues to bring in additional income through schools purchasing their time. The largest earners are the Music Service, EP's, and EWO's. All other services provided are either statutory or grant funded from central government
- The government continues to push for all maintained schools to become academies. There is clear evidence that government funding is being directed towards academy trusts. The concern is that if the quality of support and provision from the LA declines, currently maintained schools will opt to become academies which could have a serious financial impact on the Council

SEND

- Ofsted SEND Inspection due any day...
- £45m capital programme approved to deliver 278 more special school places
- Specialist SEND Early Years Provision commissioned – Dingley's Promise
- SEND Voluntary Sector engagement and SEND Young People's Participation proposals approved and underway
- Refresh of the Ordinarily Available Provision and Inclusion Charter documents
- £1m Delivering Better Value grant approved to:
 - Roll out the Autism in Schools Programme to all schools
 - Provide specialist SEMH support to schools
 - Provide additional neurodiversity training for families to clear our current backlog
 - Provide an Inclusion Audit function for schools

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19 April 2023

Mr Robert Henderson
Executive Director of Children and Learning
Southampton City Council

Sent by email to: Robert.Henderson@southampton.gov.uk

Dear Rob

Annual engagement meeting about social care and education, 30 March 2023

Thank you for meeting with Peter Cox, Carolyn Adcock, James Broadbridge and myself to discuss social care and education in Southampton.

We talked about financial arrangements. You explained these are under discussion. The budget is £62.7 million in 2023/24, up from £47 million in 2017, however you have seen a significant increase in demand. The savings target for children's services is £7 million this year. You are expecting to make a number of savings including by reducing the number of children in care, saving £1.9 million on agency staff, and a further reduction of residential placements, which was 64 and is now 42. You have £800,000 from the DfE 'staying close' money. You recognised the pressure but hope to be in a steady state in a year's time.

You noted that the council elections take place in May this year and that you work hard to achieve cross-party support and understanding of children's social care services.

Education

We discussed improvements and challenges in the early years sector, starting with staffing shortages. You and your colleagues identified this as the biggest single threat to the sector. In your view there are simply too many other opportunities in the jobs market which pay better, so staff are leaving and are hard to replace. Your analysis shows over half of settings are affected and that staff are leaving for other sectors rather than for other early years opportunities.

On a more positive note your team were very pleased with the sharp rise in the percentage of two-year-olds who are taking advantage of funded places; now up to 88%. This is as a result of better targeted work at families with entitled children, and more effective joined up work with partners such as health visitors. Within those rising numbers of children accessing provision, your staff spoke about the higher percentage of children with special educational needs. In common with the picture nationally, there is much work afoot in the council to

identify whether these are genuine learning difficulties, or delay in key areas such as speech and language caused by the impact of the pandemic. In connection with this it was good to get an update on a new setting, Dingleys, which includes specialist support for children in areas like phonics development.

In relation to schools you made clear the continued impact that the COVID-19 pandemic is having generally, and on vulnerable pupils in particular. As leaders, you noted the importance of keeping regular well-being checks on headteachers leading their communities. You reported that the mental health of school staff is of as much a concern to you as that of pupils. In the city, you reported that several experienced headteachers are leaving the profession due to mental health and workload pressures. You commented that availability of high quality prospective headteachers has diminished. Strategically, you are thinking about executive models of leadership in the future to offset recruitment concerns.

Your team acknowledged that published outcomes at the end of key stage 2, key stage 4 and key stage 5 are not good enough, particularly for the most disadvantaged. You have made this clear to school leaders but also believe there is capacity amongst leaders to share best practice. You have communicated these important messages to school governors so they can better fulfil their core functions of governance, namely holding leaders to account for the quality of education. Curriculum thinking has been a training focus for targeted schools. At primary, this has focused on writing in the English curriculum. You are also exploring with schools the curriculum in foundation subjects, in part to ensure key stage 4 pupils are accessing the EBacc. I was pleased to hear you have also approached the multi-academy trusts in the city to work collaboratively on improving outcomes. Frustratingly, you noted that some MAT leaders were not forthcoming.

Improving pupils' behaviour is a key focus for you. Leaders are reporting to you that since the pandemic pupils are struggling emotionally. This has been evident in inspection outcomes this year, with several schools judged as requires improvement or with the possibility of not remaining good. This has made most impact at secondary level. To get behaviour back on track you said some schools are working with the DfE's behaviour hubs. It would be interesting to discuss the impact of this at next year's meeting.

The complexities of need for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) has worsened since the pandemic. You said the challenges of pupils' needs are at an all-time high, and inclusion in mainstream schools is your strategic priority. Nonetheless, you propose to open three additional specially resourced provision units and have increased the number of spaces at special schools. As in the early years team, your staff said they were working with school leaders to check SEND needs are genuine rather than as a result of missed curriculum content.

Alternative provision (AP) remains a focus. I expressed my gratitude that a member of your staff has been working with our team looking at the safe use of AP. You noted supporting headteachers in understanding their statutory obligations when choosing AP. Commissioning agreements are a priority and you believe stakeholders are clearer on their responsibilities.

You are keeping a close eye on possible unregistered providers and checking that what they offer does not constitute them being an illegal school. Positively, you note some vocational offers such as construction have really helped some students.

Moving on to discuss post-16 matters here too we discussed AP as part of your wider work in this area. You explained that the current offer of part time provision at Southampton City College is of limited quality and is ceasing as of September 2023.

We discussed safeguarding, specifically radicalisation and extremism. You are seeing sustained levels of radicalisation, specifically right-wing extremism. Where referrals are made to the Channel Panel, young people with additional needs such as SEND or mental health continue to be a significant feature of the referrals. You note that all providers engage well with this issue, but particularly picked out Southampton City College.

You provided an update to the proposed merger of Southampton City College, Fareham, and Eastleigh. The expected date of merger is 1 August, with a backup date of 1 October. The combined college group is expected to be called the South Hampshire College Group. You confirmed that the principal and new chair of the trust have been appointed. You are pleased that the new college group principal already appears keen to engage with the local authority. At present, there is little information about the curriculum offer, but you are aware that these discussions will be taking place.

You updated us on initiatives to reduce the number of learners not in education, employment, or training (NEET). The reduction of NEETs is a key strategic priority for post-16 within the local authority. You noted responsibility for NEET youngsters has moved from 'skills' to 'education' within the local authority. You provided latest figures which show NEETs have increased to 7.3% against a national picture of 6.9% and a South East figure of 5.2%. You said the local authority is visiting schools and colleges to check the quality of careers advice and guidance. You have identified a need for more training in guidance skills, which will commence in summer 2023. You explained that there has been a significant increase in NEET referrals, largely from the youth justice hub which is placing pressure on capacity. Despite recruiting additional engagement officers, caseloads are high. This is compounded by similar issues of capacity among support staff in colleges.

We discussed the ongoing concerns about the availability of level 2 and below curriculum offer within the city. This has been compounded by the announcement of the withdrawal of traineeships in September 2023. You expressed concern about the risk of unregistered AP moving into this space. The proximity of provision outside of Southampton is such that learners, particularly those with education, health and care plans, look for study beyond the city border. This again means that it is difficult to assure potential providers about the sustainability of programmes. There is uncertainty about whether the new South Hampshire College will be able to pick up this provision, as the curriculum is yet to be rationalised across the campuses.

Social Care

We noted that the self-evaluation was clear and well presented and provided helpful summaries of current performance, together with areas of focus for the coming year. As we agreed, the voice of children was less well represented.

You noted the wide range of activity since the last annual engagement meeting and the focused visit in 2022. You have taken up your role on a permanent basis and the service is in a period of maturation and consolidation. You explained that the permanent leadership team are actively listening to staff and have created a learning culture. You believe that senior managers are visible and are helping staff to feel safe in their work. You are embedding systemic practice, attracting new practitioners and helping existing staff. You described a focus on kindness and compassion, while creating a child-centred service.

You said that consistency is still an issue, but you noted a cultural shift with expectations of high-quality work. Caseloads have fallen to an average of 16.5 and experienced workers say the service is the best that it has ever been. Demand has reduced in most areas and the service is less reactive. Your team described a focus on early help and high impact, although the ongoing shortage of health visitors is an issue. You said you have carried out work with partners regarding thresholds and referral pathways. It is good that you are looking at the section 47 threshold, as a high number do not go on to initial child protection conferences. You think that a reactive service was at play and that numbers are now coming down. You are also holding reflective team meetings with partners such as the police, who have had a lack of confidence in the response from children's services. You are confident in most of your performance data and now have over 90% compliance with audits. You are focusing on the learning loop, getting partners involved and taking this learning into supervision.

You noted significant improvements in the safeguarding service, where there is now a more consistent workforce but with some areas to tackle. The overall numbers of children in the system are not falling. The multi-agency safeguarding hub is getting multiple contacts and services for children in care and care leavers are not robust. Serious youth crime is an issue. Partnership work is taking place to address this. Southampton is also one of three local authorities chosen to be a contextual safeguarding pilot and this is really showing dividends.

Better targeting is leading to a reduction in the number of disabled children who are also classified as children in need, and increasing the numbers in receipt of early help. You are reviewing short breaks and making sure that help is targeted at those most in need.

You told us about work with partners to increase the frequency of dental checks for children in care and noted this continues to be a challenge. You have restructured the monthly health and social care forum, which also has a focus on this work.

We talked about placement stability, which is closely linked to sufficiency of placements. You are trying to ensure that first placements are stable, and to identify fragile placements early. You are working with the Solent NHS Foundation Trust on the emotional resilience service

and will put more resources into that. Part of the brief will be working with children on the edge of care, and stabilising placements. You now have an in-house psychologist in the fostering service. You also noted that you are anticipating that Westwood House, a new children's home, will hopefully open in April of next year but has yet to go through planning.

We talked about services for care leavers. You said that there was a data accounting issue on CareDirector, leading to some inaccurate performance reporting on care leaver data. You are expecting this to be resolved in the next two months. Carolyn asked whether you had evaluated your service against the criteria for the new stand-alone judgement regarding care leavers. You said that you have an ex-Ofsted inspector currently auditing cases, most of which have been found to be RI. You are also planning to re-visit the policies and procedures regarding unregulated and unregistered services. You said that restructuring the pathway team has helped regarding the care leavers service. You have three 16-year-olds in unregistered care, all in local provision. You said you know the providers of good quality supported accommodation in the city, and you carry out quality assurance visits to all settings where children in your care are placed. You are working with providers to ensure that they are aware of the registration requirements.

Carolyn asked about a theme in recent child safeguarding incident notifications regarding disclosures of sexual abuse by children in care, some of which is historic. You said you have already held a table top review of the cases and are considering the learning. We also noted the recent publication of the 'Ted' safeguarding practice review and the helpful briefing notes.

We talked about unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, noting you are not a port of entry. Your target is 51 children and you now have 38. You are working within the five-day limit on accepting young people from the national transfer scheme. Most of the children are in supported accommodation or foster care. You use one house of multiple occupation, which currently accommodates seven children, and you select the young people for this. One person was in bed and breakfast accommodation last week, while an age assessment was disputed. You have five children under 16 and look for a foster placement as the first option for these children. There is one hotel being used by the Home Office but the possibility of another. You are looking at how to manage the young people coming through the hotel. Eight were not age disputed and came into care immediately. You have completed 21 age assessments. You are looking at providing staff training across the pathways team, the independent reviewing officer service and the virtual school.

With regards to workforce, 95% of managers are permanent, and retention is good. You are proud of your leadership team. Over 90% of social workers are permanent. You are now focusing on retention and developing the high number of newly-qualified staff. In terms of retention, you noted the importance of the practice framework. You have also recreated the senior social worker grade, which has been very successful, and you are looking at offering more support regarding resilience. You are reviewing the market supplement. You noted that you are surrounded by other local authorities who are competing for the same staff. You

described a number of initiatives to develop the 'Southampton family', creating an inclusive and diverse community in which your staff can grow and flourish.

You told us about the young people's hub, which we visited after the meeting. You have developed relationships with schools and are developing a 'team around the school' approach. You have worked with two schools with high levels of deprivation, and you are now working with a third. You are wrapping health, policing, and social care communities around the school, looking to reduce the number of professionals involved to about 10, from about 60. The aim is to improve communication and local knowledge. You are also looking at school attendance and exclusion and you are seeking positive initiatives to divert anti-social behaviour. The team around the school is supported by a comprehensive data pack which gives a rich foundation to build on. So far, the outcomes have been better than expected.

We talked about the next inspection, which is due at any time as the last inspection was in 2019. You would prefer it to be as late as is possible in the inspection programme. The context to this is that you believe Southampton is moving determinedly towards 'good' from a very low base, but that you are not there yet. You believe that another 'requires improvement' judgement would be devastating for the service and for staff who have worked so hard to achieve tangible improvements.

You believe that the trajectory to good has been and will continue to be slower than hoped in a few areas. Reasons cited included the current financial context, the ongoing impact of the pandemic, foster carers resigning, over-reliance on residential care and a need to tackle centralised council services such as HR, finance and data. Carolyn suggested that you clearly identify the progress already achieved from the journey that you have been on as a leadership team, to provide context for the inspectors.

Thank you again for making the time to meet with us.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "S Long".

Stephen Long

Assistant Regional Director, South East

Please note: This letter is not published by Ofsted and the comments made have not been evaluated as part of an inspection.

Agenda Item 9

DECISION-MAKER:	CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL
SUBJECT:	CHILDREN'S RESOURCE SERVICE AUDIT AND SERVICE RESPONSE
DATE OF DECISION:	6 JULY 2023
REPORT OF:	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - CHILDREN AND LEARNING

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Executive Director	Title	Executive Director Children and Learning	
	Name	Robert Henderson	Tel: 023 8083 4899
	E-mail	Robert.Henderson@southampton.gov.uk	
Author:	Title	Head of Quality Assurance	
	Name	Stuart Webb	Tel: 023 8083 4102
	E-mail	Stuart.webb@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

BRIEF SUMMARY

This item covers the findings from an audit undertaken in respect of Southampton's Children's Resource Service (CRS) in February 2023. The audit was requested by the Service's Improvement Board and supported through the (regional) Southeast Sector Lead Improvement Partnership. The audit was commissioned to explore demand and practice issues in this area of the service. Audit findings were reported to the Improvement Board in March 2023 and the service responded in May 2023.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

	(i)	That the Panel consider and note the findings of the audit and the service response.
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REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	The Scrutiny Panel has oversight of the service's improvement journey and the CRS audit provides context regarding the service's direction of travel.
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ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2.	Not applicable.
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DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

3.	As part of the Destination 22 service redesign, local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements were reviewed. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) function now sits within the larger Children's Resource Service to ensure that families get the right support at the right time.
4.	Levels of demand (contacts and corresponding numbers of referrals) have remained high. The Service Improvement Board requested a dip-sample audit of cases, looking at reasons for contacts, referrals and decision making. The

	audit was supported through the Southeast Sector Lead Improvement Partnership, which is made up of regional network of children's services.
5.	<p>The audit team comprised of managers across Southampton and Hampshire children's services. Sixty-six audits were completed, and the following recommendations were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the contact stage for there to be a consideration of the use of the support workers to gather the information needed to aid managers with focusing on decision making. This could improve the quality and consistency of decision making and proportionate use of management expertise. • For staff within CRS to be offered training on the application of the threshold document and the use of the SCC's threshold document. A copy of the threshold document to be made easily and readily available to staff. • Children in the same household to be considered together within MASH and on allocation, to ensure all the children's needs are addressed individually and as part of their family unit. • To encourage strength-based practices that are child focused for consideration to be given on case notes being written to the child. This will reduce the use of language that is potentially victim blaming and jargon within children's files. Training for staff could support this. • Further scrutiny and follow up to be given to re-referrals by considering six monthly audits to be completed within this area by SCC. <p>The audit report was presented to the Improvement Board in March 2023 and the service presented its response at Board in May 2023.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue</u>	
6.	N/A
<u>Property/Other</u>	
7.	N/A
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
8.	Children Act 1989
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
9.	N/A
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
10.	Oversight of the service improvement activity is provided by our Improvement Board and independent chair.
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
11.	The 2022-2030 Corporate Plan includes, as one of its four goals, strong foundations for life where people are able to access and maximise opportunities to truly thrive, Southampton will focus on ensuring residents of all ages and backgrounds have strong foundations for life.

	By delivering consistently good outcomes for the city's children and young people, Southampton's Children's Services and Learning Department will contribute to achieving this objective.
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KEY DECISION?	No
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED	All
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Hampshire Audit Report
2.	Service Response

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out?	No
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Data Protection Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out?	No
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Other Background Documents

Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1. NA	

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SESLIP Regional Improvement SCC contacts and re-referrals audit report

Prepared by:	Chido Mangava – Hampshire County Council Service Development Manager
Prepared for:	Steph Murray – Deputy Director of Children’s Services, Southampton City Council
Date:	3 March 2023
Version:	1.0
Status:	Final

Document Control

Document Information

		Position		
Project ID		Southampton contacts and re-referrals audit report		
Document Owner		Chido Mangava		
Issue Date	Changes	Role	Name	Status
03.03.2023	First Draft	Service Development Manager	Chido Mangava	Draft
04.03.2023	Review	Service Development Lead	Sam Phippard	Draft
07.03.23	Review	Head of Sector Led Improvement	Alison Smailes	Draft
10.03.23	Sign Off	Deputy Director	Stuart Ashley	Final

If you have any queries please contact sectorled@hants.gov.uk and Claire Woodcock (Claire.Woodcock@hants.gov.uk)

Introduction

1. This report is for Southampton County Council (SCC) Children's Services Improvement Board, 20 March 2023. The purpose of this audit report is to provide a summary, analysis, and feedback on 66 case file audits completed on children who were referred to SCC on two or more occasions or where information was passed through a contact to SCC by the Police. The case file audits were completed in February 2023 by Hampshire County Council's (HCC) Sector Led Improvement Team (SLI), an HCC Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) manager and three Southampton Children's Services managers. These managers formed a regional team as this work was carried out under the umbrella of the Southeast Sector Led Improvement Partnership (SESLIP) small packages of improvement work.

Aims and Objectives

2. The aim of this work is to provide SCC with an independent overview and evaluation of aspects of the work completed mainly by MASH and Assessment Teams, as well as long term teams, for contacts and re-referrals. The focus is to broaden understanding of the reasons behind the volume of contacts from the Police and a high number of children's cases re-referred to SCC, through auditing of contacts and re-referrals made to SCC. The areas within scope included:
 - Quality of contacts and referrals made to SCC by Police
 - Quality and timeliness of checks completed within MASH
 - Referral and triage process within MASH and assessment teams
 - Management oversight
 - Threshold decisions made within MASH
 - Quality of practice
 - Re-referrals
3. It was agreed with SCC that the audits completed would be of contacts received and closed, referrals and re-referrals that progressed for decision making to a manager within MASH. SCC provided 100 children's cases (50 contacts and 50 re-referrals) to the regional auditing team and of these, 80 cases were randomly selected to audit. Of the 80 cases, 66 cases were audited. HCC managers were provided with user access by SCC to remotely access the case management system, Care Director. Auditing took place between 6-12 February 2023. On the first two days an SCC manager joined HCC auditors face to face at an HCC building (where HCC MASH is based) to carry out the auditing and to also be present to support with any access issues.

Methodology

4. The list of cases audited had been referred to SCC in the previous six months from January 2023. A contact is made where Children's Services is contacted about a child, who may be a Child in Need, and where there is a request for general advice, information or a service. At any time, a contact may become a referral if it appears that services may be required.

5. The sample of contacts/referrals used were of cases referred by the Police. This is because SCC identified their highest number of contacts/referrals is from the Police and that the figures were higher in comparison to their statistical neighbour and other Local Authorities sharing the same Police Service.
6. The 66 case file audits were undertaken using a Microsoft audit tool. The audit tool was designed to have a narrow focus on specific elements of the MASH through to the assessment process. The audit questions were shared and agreed with SCC prior to auditing taking place. The audit tool used questions attempting to understand and form a view about the overall quality of the referrals and case recording, the information gathered, the quality of risk analysis and management oversight and the overall timeliness of case management. In cases where safeguarding concerns were identified, an escalation process was agreed. Out of the 66 cases audited, an HCC auditor escalated one case to SCC senior management. This was agreed with an SCC manager who was on site at the time of the escalation and took immediate action to contact SCC MASH. SCC has since responded to the formal escalation with clear actions taken.

Findings

Contacts/referrals

7. Of the 66 cases audited 35 (53%) were contacts/referrals. Overall, out of the 66 cases audited 43 (65%) were contacts/referrals from the Police. Of these contacts 39 (90%) out of the 43 contacts/referrals auditors reported that the contacts from the Police were clearly recorded. The primary category of the reason behind the highest number of contacts/referrals was identified as domestic abuse at 20 (30%).
8. Records audited were chosen at random. However, it was noted that there were contacts and referrals concerning the same large families. An example was a family of six children that had moved from another local authority (OLA). Prior to the family moving, the OLA had made the decision to convene an Initial Child Protection Conference. SCC initially screened the family as meeting the threshold for Early Help (EH) support. Multiple contacts and referrals were then received, the case was subsequently assessed and open under Child in Need planning. Given the nature of the concerns which involved physical abuse, and contextual safeguarding concerns, it was perceived by auditors that the threshold for statutory intervention had clearly been met initially. Positively, it was noted by auditors that now the family are open within the Social Work With Families team there is a holistic family assessment, regular supervision and reflective visits considering each child's needs individually and as part of the family.

Re-referrals

9. Re-referrals consisted of 31 (47%) of the cases audited. The primary category of most of the cases re-referred was neglect 10 (32%) followed by domestic abuse and physical abuse which both amounted to 6 (19%) respectively. For a number of families (32%) an assessment had been completed prior to the case being re-referred.

10. When analysing previous episodes of Children's Services involvement, it was seen that when children had received support under child in need or child protection planning, they were less likely to be re-referred. Only four (13%) children out of the 31 re-referrals had previously been subject to Child in Need planning or Child Protection planning. This suggested that children who had longer term support previously were less likely to be re-referred.
11. When children were re-referred, 21 (68%) of the 31 cases had been re-referred within 0-3 months of previous involvement. Auditors reported that in some cases a contributing factor was that it appeared appropriate thresholds had not been applied initially. The application of thresholds was deemed to be clear in response to the contact/referral in 36 (55%) of cases audited. Decisions were made for children to be passed to other teams including Early Help and the Brief Intervention Team, without MASH checks. Auditors questioned if support was being offered with sufficient checks to ensure all information had been gathered, to ensure that the right support was offered at the right time, thus reducing the likelihood of the case being re-referred.
12. The audits also identified that in some sibling groups when there had been contextual safeguarding concerns, only one child had been assessed, with the impact on the other siblings not considered. This appeared where the Young People's Service had been involved. For example, in one family a strategy discussion and section 47 investigation was completed for one child in the family group. Following this several referrals were received from partner agencies regarding other children in the home. In another family while one child was open, the impact of domestic abuse for the siblings was not identified by Early Help who incorrectly interpreted a Police report. Auditors questioned if the assessment of risk, when Police reports are received, should sit with the MASH managers who may be better placed to make this assessment.
13. In 23 (74%) of re-referrals received, the concerns had been the same as the previous referral. In 20 (30%) of children's cases domestic abuse was the primary reason for the cases referred and it was noted all of these families were already known to Children's Services. It is recognised that there are complex families that despite appropriate support offered, further referrals are unavoidable, however for most cases re-referred it was considered that appropriate interventions that support the family holistically, may have reduced the number of re-referrals received for the same reasons.
14. However, it was observed by auditors that many families had complex and long-standing challenges impacted by poverty alongside struggles in accessing resources.

Management Oversight

15. Positively all children's cases had management oversight prior to progressing to MASH, for further work or closing. Forty-three (65%) of these showed analysis and rationale for decisions made. Within the cases that were not identified as showing a clear analysis the reasons highlighted included that the management oversight

had been mostly brief, or lacking rationale and further exploration of the risks including historical information was required.

16. Auditors noted that for some cases it had been challenging to understand how children's history was presented in the management summary. The information was not always in a chronological order and appeared to have been largely copied from case notes. This impacted the ability to easily identify patterns of concern, resulting in a weaker analysis. It is important to recognise that within SCC's Children's Resource Service (CRS), managers gather the information as well as analyse and make decisions on the next steps. This is a time-consuming activity, thus impacting the quality of information gathered particularly in a fast-paced environment like a front door service.

Timescales

17. It is positive to highlight that 65 (98%) of cases audited had been screened within 24 hours of being referred to SCC. In many of these cases it was noted that cases had been screened within a few hours of being received which evidences an urgency within CRS to deal with the cases as they are received.

Thresholds

18. In seven of the 66 cases audited, strategy discussions were held. This was also an area of strength as six (86%) out of the seven strategy discussions were held within timescales with five (71%) clearly having actions recorded following the outcome of the strategy discussions. However, in response to the contact/referral in 30 (45%) out of 66 cases auditors noted that the application of threshold was not clear. In most of these cases it was highlighted that reference had not been made to SCC's threshold pathway document to indicate how threshold decisions had been reached.

Case recording

19. It was noted by auditors that some of the language used within the children's files was not child focused. One auditor highlighted a case of a teenager who had previously had a pregnancy termination being described as placing themselves at risk of harm and placing blame on them. In another case a young person had been refused support by the Young People's Service because their older sibling was already receiving support. It was recorded on their case file that, 'due to the referral not being in line with Destination 22' they would not receive support.
20. The use of acronyms was also seen to be widespread within the contacts, referrals and decision making at the front door. This made navigating the case recording a challenge for HCC auditors and the child's journey through services was not always clear. However, strengths-based language and child focused recording was observed by the longer-term teams. Evidence of writing to the child was observed. Where this was used it was immediately apparent that there were less abbreviations, and the readability of the record was apparent.

Front Door processes

21. Most of the cases 59 (89%) that were referred to SCC did not progress to have MASH checks completed. Of these 10 (15%) were cases where strategy discussions were held. Only seven (11%) of cases had MASH checks completed, suggesting an under-utilisation of completing these checks for informed decisions to be made that will support in assessing the risks/needs as well as identifying if further intervention is required from SCC. Within SCC if a case is perceived by CRS as meeting threshold for a child and family assessment at the point of contact or referral the case can bypass the MASH process and is progressed for an assessment to be completed. Whilst it is acknowledged that this prevents a delay in children and families receiving the support required, if not used appropriately this can impact the consistency and application of thresholds.
22. In one case it was noted that a contact from the Police progressed straight to the Early Help Service who were already supporting the family. The MASH manager did not complete a case summary or checks. It was missed by the Early Help Manager that the children were in the household at the time of a domestic incident (recorded at the top of the Police report). It was considered this was a missed opportunity to complete comprehensive checks and analysis at that stage. The children were subsequently re-referred for similar concerns and had a child and family assessment.

Escalations

23. Within this audit exercise only one case was escalated for safeguarding concerns. This was relating an unborn child's case that had been closed, the mother had been residing in a tent and had a history of having violent relationships. The case had been closed on the basis that the pregnancy had not been confirmed. SCC acknowledged that more efforts should have been made to engage with the mother. There was a reliance on other agencies to re-refer if the pregnancy was confirmed without discussion with other agencies of this outcome. SCC initially responded promptly requesting additional checks were completed with housing.

Conclusions

24. There were clearly areas of strength identified within this audit exercise. This was mainly within the contact stage where 98% of cases were screened within 24 hours of being referred to SCC. This evidenced that SCC's front door service responded promptly to children and young people contacts and referrals in this sample group.
25. When strategy discussions were held, they were held within timescales with clear actions recorded. Most notably, all cases audited had prompt management oversight recorded after being screened. This confirmed that there was a high level of oversight from managers at the initial stage of referrals being received.
26. However, it was noted that there was a lack of consistency in the quality of management oversight recorded. This was identified as sometimes lacking in analysis, exploration of risks and clear rationale of how decisions had been

reached. It was considered that there was a lack of clear process for collation and analysis at the initial stages of contacts to allow MASH managers to make management decisions.

27. For re-referrals, decision making was largely taking place without full MASH checks. For some children this resulted in their records being closed as families were said to not want or refuse assessments, with agencies not aware of the referrals. It is recognised that multi-agency communication supports a clearer understanding of the risks and needs of the children and families from the onset to ensure that the right support is offered at the right time. This can also link to ensuring the appropriate thresholds are applied.
28. The high number of contacts/referrals received from Police was an area identified as an area of concern by SCC. From the sample of cases audited, most of contacts were clearly recorded by the police which would have provided SCC the relevant information needed to make decisions on how the cases would progress. Most families were already known to services, and many families' needs were linked to complex histories and challenges which required preventative work.
29. Re-referrals is an area that requires further scrutiny given that in the sample of cases audited, there were significant numbers of cases that had been re-referred within a short period of previous involvement for the same reasons or linked to another child in the household already open to the young people's service. It was observed by auditors that concerns of children residing within the same household were assessed separately in MASH, especially when there were contextual safeguarding concerns, that were seen to have an impact on family group.

Recommendations

30. The following recommendations are made for SCC to consider helping support practice improvement in this area:
 - At the contact stage for there to be a consideration of the use of the support workers to gather the information needed to aid managers with focusing on decision making. This could improve the quality and consistency of decision making and proportionate use of management expertise.
 - For staff within CRS to be offered training on the application of the threshold document and the use of the SCC's threshold document. A copy of the threshold document to be made easily and readily available to staff.
 - Children in the same household to be considered together within MASH and on allocation, to ensure all the children's needs are addressed individually and as part of their family unit.
 - To encourage strength-based practices that are child focused for consideration to be given on case notes being written to the child. This will reduce the use of language that is potentially victim blaming and jargon within children's files. Training for staff could support this.

- Further scrutiny and follow up to be given to re-referrals by considering six monthly audits to be completed within this area by SCC.

Children's Resource Service Plan from HCC Audit

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Improvement Board – May 2023



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Children
& Learning
Making a difference



SOUTHAMPTON
CITY COUNCIL

Agenda Item 9
Appendix 2

Context

- 2022 year was primary focus of the audit. Since that time, new service lead appointed and current consultation to restructure management arrangements.
- Vacant posts have been recruited into.
- Emphasis within CRS has changed to focus on quality and making the right decision for a family as opposed to adherence to timescales. Once improved practices are established, timeframe compliance will follow.
- Service delivery / improvement plans are based upon areas such as Ofsted feedback, Partnership reviews and audit feedback.

Improvements

- **The journey of the child was not clear**

The journey of the child is now clearly documented in MASH contact tool, as the process now provides more detailed history of the child's journey and manager's rationale for decisions made. This enables a more informed decision-making process.

- **Threshold application was not consistently evidenced**

Pathways Document was not being consistently used to determine the most appropriate intervention for a child and their family. Threshold application is clear in every Management Oversight and therefore every contact leaving CRS.

- **Variable quality in management oversight. Sometimes lacking in analysis, exploration of risks and clear rationale of how decisions had been reached.**

For every Contact processed through CRS there is now a more detailed management Oversight using a proforma which prompts risk factors, strengths and analysis. Quality is checked through Dip Sample audits / peer audits.

Improvements

- **For re-referrals, decision making was largely taking place without full MASH checks.**

This continues to be a focus area for us and 'MASHing' is considered on all re-referrals.

- **MASH was bypassed to the Brief Intervention Team (BIT) which appeared to contribute to inconsistency in management decision making or children closing without assessment or MASH checks where consent was refused.**

We no longer impose a statutory service on a family without consent. We are doing some data analysis and working with our BIT colleagues to understand how this can be resolved.

Improvements

- **Children residing within the same household were assessed separately in MASH, especially when there were contextual safeguarding concerns.**

Now, all siblings are allocated for an assessment.

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- **Some of the language used within the children's files was not child focused and there was a lot of acronyms used.**

The use of acronyms has been followed up with CRS staff and are no longer used. We will carry out a dip sample in August to consider acronyms alongside management oversight.

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DECISION-MAKER:	CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL
SUBJECT:	CHILDREN AND LEARNING - PERFORMANCE
DATE OF DECISION:	6 JULY 2023
REPORT OF:	SCRUTINY MANAGER

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Executive Director	Title	Executive Director – Corporate Services	
	Name:	Mel Creighton	Tel: 023 8083 3528
	E-mail	Mel.creighton@southampton.gov.uk	
Author:	Title	Scrutiny Manager	
	Name:	Mark Pirnie	Tel: 023 8083 3886
	E-mail	Mark.pirnie@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
None	
BRIEF SUMMARY	
Attached as Appendix 1 is a summary of performance for Children’s Services and Learning up to the end of May 2023. At the meeting the Cabinet Member and senior managers from Children’s Services and Learning will be providing the Panel with an overview of performance across the division.	
RECOMMENDATIONS:	
	(i) That the Panel consider and challenge the performance of Children’s Services and Learning in Southampton.
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS	
1.	To enable effective scrutiny of Children’s Services and Learning in Southampton.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED	
2.	None.
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)	
3.	To enable the Panel to undertake their role effectively members will be provided with monthly performance information and an explanation of the measures.
4.	Performance information up to 31 May 2023 is attached as Appendix 1. An explanation of the significant variations in performance has been included.
5.	The Cabinet Member for Children and Learning, and representatives from the Children’s Services and Learning Senior Management Team, have been invited to attend the meeting to provide the performance overview.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue/Property/Other</u>	
6.	None directly as a result of this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
7.	The duty to undertake overview and scrutiny is set out in Part 1A Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2000.
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
8.	None
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
9.	None
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
10.	The 2022-2030 Corporate Plan includes, as one of its four goals, strong foundations for life where people are able to access and maximise opportunities to truly thrive, Southampton will focus on ensuring residents of all ages and backgrounds have strong foundations for life. By delivering consistently good outcomes for the city's children and young people, Southampton's Children's Services and Learning Department will contribute to achieving this objective.

KEY DECISION?	No
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	None
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Summary of performance and commentary – May 2023
2.	Glossary of terms

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out?	No
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Data Protection Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out?	No
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Other Background Documents

Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	None



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Children & Learning Performance Report

May 2023

Agenda Item 10
Appendix 1

A city of opportunity where everyone thrives

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The data referenced in this report is a 'snap shot' at the end of each month. For further information please contact Laura Trevett, Strategic Performance Lead, laura.trevett@southampton.gov.uk.

Performance

Demand Analysis

Indicator	Peak	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	Trend
Number of contacts in the month		1959	1789	1488	1794	1428	1839	1598	2023	1526	↓
Number of referrals in the month		286	314	276	396	298	343	330	433	278	↓
Number of referrals into Early Help		196	187	183	161	179	220	172	183	131	↓
Number of Early Help assessments		99	106	92	155	84	101	113	100	61	↓
Number of C&F assessments		369	380	289	356	326	322	317	400	309	↓
Number of Strategy discussions held		183	198	164	288	191	200	196	217	171	↓
Number of S47 investigations		134	158	114	193	139	103	158	169	119	↓

Analysis:

It is important to understand the context of performance in light of the levels of demand on the service areas.

During April, all areas of demand were reduced across the service. This is likely due to the Easter Holidays, and the pattern of a busy March followed by a less busy April can be tracked annually. Given this pattern, and how it can be reflected in the November to January data due to the Christmas holidays, the service will better plan for these expected times of increased demand so that performance is not impacted as it has been.



Trends across the service areas

Indicator	Peak	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	Target	RAG	Direction of travel	So'ton 21/22	Statistical Neighbours	South East	England
Number of children open to the service (CIN, CP, CLA, Assessment)		2417	2362	2327	2404	2363	2401	2402	2425	2326	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of children open for assessment		c	o	m	i	n	g		s	o	o	n					
Number of children with Child in Need Plan (not CWD)		618	621	621	642	648	584	538	535	518	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of children subject to CP Plan at end of month		389	355	315	301	302	288	301	315	341	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rate of children subject to CP Plans		79	72	64	61	61	58	61	64	69	60	🟡	⬇️	91.7	59.2	43.1	42.1
Number of CLA at the end of the month (ex UASC)		527	521	521	522	508	516	508	499	466	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rate of CLA per 10,000		112	111	112	113	110	112	111	109	102	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of CLA at the end of the month who are UASC		24	27	31	36	35	37	37	40	38	-	-	-	20	23	820	4070
Number of care leavers (inc UASC)		212	221	204	249	252	252	279	282	289	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Analysis:

The number of children in our care excluding UASC has continued to reduce, this is due to children being placed for adoption (24%), returning home to family (24%), or being granted a CAO or SGO (18%).

Children subject to CP planning increased following a significant increase in March of children being presented to ICPC. This can be linked to the increase in demand impacting on the capacity to undertake more intensive work alongside the assessment process.

Children subject to CIN planning (not open to CWD) have been reducing consistently since the end of 2022.



Performance linked to priorities

Indicator	Peak	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	Target	RAG	Direction of travel	So'ton 21/22	Statistical Neighbours	South East	England
Percentage of re-referrals within 12m		28%	30%	27%	26%	30%	27%	25%	28%	27%	23%	●	↑	27%	21%	26%	21%
Number of Early Help assessments		99	106	92	155	84	101	113	100	61	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Percentage of referrals leading to NFA		1%	4%	3%	5%	4%	6%	5%	8%	9%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Percentage of C&F assessments completed within 45 working days		78%	61%	70%	70%	78%	86%	84%	78%	85%	90%	●	↑	86%	87%	89%	88%
Percentage of C&F assessments with NFA		56%	57%	51%	45%	56%	53%	48%	42%	63%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Percentage of S47 (not CP or CLA) ended with NFA		72%	65%	78%	75%	84%	78%	79%	63%	79%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Percentage of ICPCs held in 15 working days or less		67%	97%	60%	63%	52%	83%	34%	70%	77%	95%	●	↑	-	-	-	-
Percentage of children subject to 2nd or more CP plan		28%	30%	31%	32%	32%	33%	32%	32%	33%	24%	●	↓	24%	24%	24%	23%

Analysis:

Our priority of providing the right service at the right time focusses on ensuring families receive support as early as possible to resolve issues and achieve positive changes for children. If we can provide effective services, we should see a reduction in families being re-referred for a statutory service.

The aim is for more families to receive a service from Early Help. The work promoting Family Hubs should result in an increase in referrals and assessments in the coming months.

The number of referrals accepted through CRS that result in no service including assessment being offered has increased to 9%. It would be interesting to look into these to establish if there is any insight or learning here. concluding NFA.

With the reduction in activity in April, there has been an improvement in the timeliness of assessments being completed, but a greater percentage concluding with NFA.



Performance linked to priorities

Indicator	Peak	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	Target	RAG	Direction of travel
Percentage of children with an active Child in Need Plan (not CWD) visited within last 6 weeks (CIN*)		95%	94%	95%	97%	95%	98%	98%	97%	97%	90%	●	➔
Percentage of children with CIN plan allocated to CWD with visits in agreed timescales		84%	88%	89%	86%	85%	89%	92%	86%	84%	90%	●	⬇
Percentage of children subject to Child Protection Plan visited within last 10 working days		82%	94%	87%	91%	94%	95%	93%	87%	90%	95%	●	⬆
Percentage of children subject to Child Protection Plan visited within last 4 weeks		98%	98%	97%	99%	99%	99%	98%	98%	97%	95%	●	⬇

Analysis:

In terms of visiting for children on CIN plans, this is consistently above 90% for those outside of CWD.

Children on CP plans are moving in the right direction in terms of meeting our own expectations (visits every 10 working days), but are exceeding the target for statutory timescales. When performance is consistently good in terms of recording visits, the next step is to look at the quality of the visits and what impact they are having on the implementation of plans and creating safety and improving wellbeing for children.

Management Support for Better Practice

Indicator	Peak	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	Target	RAG	Direction of travel
Percentage of open children who had their supervision and within the timescales		72%	69%	71%	75%	79%	82%	80%	74%	86%	80%	●	↑
Percentage of children with an active Child in Need Plan (not CWD) who had their supervision within timescales		80%	78%	84%	90%	86%	93%	90%	89%	88%	90%	●	↓
Percentage of CPP who had their supervision and within timescales		89%	85%	88%	95%	94%	93%	96%	86%	90%	95%	●	↑
Percentage of CLA who had their supervision and was within the timescale		81%	78%	76%	73%	76%	86%	86%	78%	77%	95%	●	↓
Percentage of Care Leavers who had their supervision and was within the timescale		78%	39%	44%	51%	60%	45%	86%	81%	83%	90%	●	↑

Analysis:

Overall supervision performance improved in April, Supervision within the Pathways service was impacted by staff sickness and leave, and from assurance clinics the service is focused on how children's plans and experiences can have management oversight and supervision recorded whilst staff are off for longer periods of time.

Partnership working for good outcomes

Indicator	Peak	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	Target	RAG	Direction of travel	So'ton 21/22	Statistical Neighbours	South East	England
Percentage of Child In Need meetings held in timeliness		c	o	m	i	n	g		s	o	o	n					
Percentage of children subject to CPP with a recent core group held in timescales		73%	82%	84%	90%	77%	76%	76%	78%	61%	95%	●	↓	-	-	-	-
Percentage of initial health assessments within 20 working days of child became looked after.		9%	23%	25%	74%	28%	26%	5%	31%	0%	90%	●	↓	-	-	-	-
Percentage of children in care for >12 months with health assessment in timescales		78%	80%	81%	85%	85%	87%	86%	80%	76%	95%	●	↓	83%	93%	89%	91%

Analysis:

The data collection around core group activity has changed, and now considers all children subject to CP planning and whether their last core group has been held in timescales. Performance in April is below expectations, but the Easter holidays would make it more difficult for core groups to be held where schools are key partners. Given the additional demand in March, it would have put considerable pressure on teams to hold core groups early.

3 children became looked after in April, and none were able to have their initial health assessments within 20 working days. This is an area of scrutiny with health, as the local authority can only refer for a medical within timescales.

Robust Corporate Parenting

Indicator	Peak	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	Target	RAG	Direction of travel	So ton 21/22	Statistical Neighbour	South East	England
Rate of CLA per 10,000		112	111	112	113	110	112	111	109	102	100	●	↑	96	100	53	67
Percentage of CLA for whom a visit has taken place within timescales		64%	66%	70%	73%	75%	75%	78%	85%	86%	95%	●	↑	-	-	-	-
Percentage of CLA children with an up to date review		99%	100%	99%	99%	98%	99%	98%	98%	97%	95%	●	↓	-	-	-	-
Percentage of CLA in care for 12m+ with the same SW for the last 6m		not measured	not measured	not measured	55%	56%	54%	50%	49%	47%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Percentage of CLA at end of month with 25+ placements during the year		25%	24%	23%	21%	20%	17%	16%	14%	15%	11%	●	↓	14%	10%	11%	9%
Percentage of CLA placed <20 miles		70%	69%	69%	70%	69%	69%	68%	68%	67%	76%	●	↓	-	-	-	-
Percentage of CLA placed in IFA		25%	25%	26%	26%	28%	25%	26%	27%	29%	<36%	●	↓	-	-	-	-

Analysis:

Our rate of looked after children continues to reduce and we are heading towards the target. There is a concerted focus on reunifications for children that may be able to return to family in a planned and safe way.

The visiting for children in our care has improved again, and we remain above target for children having their care plan reviews in timescales.

The service would like to get a sense of how many children have a plan for permanence within 6 months of becoming accommodated, and hopefully we will have the data for June.

Placement stability has improved until April, but consistency in social work will take some time as permanent staff are recruited and come into post. There will therefore be a delay in seeing these figures improve as they measure a 6 month period.



Initial Health Assessment:

14 children needed an IHA in the month of March (19 in February).

8 children (57%) were offered an IHA within timescales (2 (11%) in February).

5 children (36%) had their IHA within timescales (only 2 (11%) in February).

Of the 9 who didn't:

- 1 (7%) was late cancellation by the foster carer;
- 1 (7%) was due to the child being ill and unable to attend the appointment;
- 3 (21%) capacity issues within Health;
- 4 (28%) out of area placements, breach by provider.

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Analysis:

Of note, in March, we completed all referrals for IHAs within timescales meaning none of the IHAs out of timescales are as a result of Children Social Care not completing the referrals in time (this has been a significant issue for us which is reflected in the extremely poor performance in the previous months). In February, we were responsible for 10 IHAs out of timescales due to the referrals not being completed in time (19 children were due an IHA in February).

Overall, last month's performance is much improved compared to the previous month but still not where it needs to be. IHA performance has specific Service Lead oversight who is working with health around the challenges to holding in timescales.

A data issue has been identified where health information does not match the locally held data. This has been reviewed with health, and they are clarifying as 2 additional children were identified as being due health assessments in March that did not show on health data.

Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance - Audit Summary

January 2023

Service Area	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Total Audits
C&FF	0	0	6	0	6
BIT	0	4	2	0	6
SWF	1	4	4	0	9
PTC	0	1	3	0	4
JIGSAW	1	2	1	0	4
ADOPTION	0	1	0	0	1
FOSTERING	0	1	3	0	4
ICAS	0	3	1	0	4
YPS	0	0	1	1	2
TOTAL	2	16	21	1	40

February 2023

Service Area	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Total Audits completed
C&FF	0	1	3	0	4
BIT	0	2	3	0	5
SWF	1	3	4	0	8
PTC	0	1	1	1	3
JIGSAW	0	1	0	0	1
ADOPTION	0	1	0	0	1
FOSTERING	0	3	1	0	4
ICAS	2	1	1	0	4
YPS	0	0	1	1	2
Total	3	13	14	2	32

March 2023

Service Area	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Total Audits
C&FF	0	2	2	1	5
BIT	0	3	1	0	4
SWF	0	2	2	1	5
PTC	0	2	4	0	6
JIGSAW	0	0	0	0	0
ADOPTION	1	0	0	0	1
FOSTERING	0	2	2	0	4
ICAS	0	1	3	0	4
YPS	0	0	0	2	2
Total	1	12	14	4	31

January to March 2023

- 103 Audits completed
- 6% Outstanding
- 40% Good
- 47% Requires improvement
- 7% Inadequate
- Audit compliance 83%

KPI Dashboard updates

CSC KPI Dashboard Updates



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1. Care leavers historical trend data is now available
2. The April dataset has additional KPIs:
 1. % of referrals into Early Help that were stepped down from CSC
 2. Rolling rates – sum of 12 months of rates for contact, referrals, assessments, S.47s, children subject to ICPC.
 3. Children open to assessments supervision percentage
 4. % of CLA ceased in month – with outcomes of adoption, CAO/SGO, and returned home
3. Changes made to:
 1. Core group meeting KPI now looks at all children subject to CP planning and whether they have a current core group in timescale.
 2. Seen alone – now looks at all visits in the last 4 weeks, not just the latest visit.
 3. CWD visiting now applied RAG rating to visits for CIN plans.
 4. CLA visiting pattern now linked to frequency agreed in Care Plan Review
 5. All open children – removed children open to adoption that have an adoption order.
 6. Number of CLA with the same social worker in last 6 months – only measured from November 22 due to issues with migrated data from PARIS
4. Removed:
 1. All open children supervision rates



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES GLOSSARY

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Abuse

Abuse is the act of violation of an individual's human or civil rights. Any or all types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance. Different types of abuse include: Physical abuse, Neglect/acts of omission, Financial/material abuse, Psychological abuse, Sexual abuse, Institutional abuse, Discriminatory abuse, or any combination of these.

Advocacy

Advocacy helps to safeguard children and young people, and protect them from harm and neglect. It is about speaking up for children and young people and ensuring their views and wishes are heard and acted upon by decision-makers. LAs have a duty under The Children Act to ensure that advocacy services are provided for children, young people and care leavers making or intending to make a complaint. It should also cover representations which are not complaints. Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) should also provide a child/young person with information about advocacy services and offer help in obtaining an advocate.

Agency Decision Maker

The Agency Decision Maker (ADM) is the person within a fostering service and an adoption agency who makes decisions on the basis of recommendations made by the Fostering Panel (in relation to a fostering service) and the Adoption Panel (in relation to an adoption agency). The Agency Decision Maker will take account of the Panel's recommendation before proceeding to make a decision. The Agency Decision Maker can choose to make a different decision.

The National Minimum Standards for Fostering 2011 provide that the Agency Decision Maker for a fostering service should be a senior person within the fostering service, who is a social worker with at least 3 years post-qualifying experience in childcare social work and has knowledge of childcare law and practice (Standard 23).

The National Minimum Standards for Adoption 2011 provide that the Agency Decision Maker for an adoption agency should be a senior person within the adoption agency, who is a social worker with at least 3 years post-qualifying experience in childcare social work and has knowledge of permanency planning for children, adoption and childcare law and practice. Where the adoption agency provides an inter country adoption service, the Agency Decision Maker should also have specialist knowledge of this area of law and practice. When determining the disclosure of Protected Information about adults, the Agency Decision Maker should also understand the legislation surrounding access to and disclosure of information and the impact of reunion on all parties (Standard 23).

Assessment

Assessments are undertaken to determine the needs of individual children; what services to provide and action to take. They may be carried out:

- To gather important information about a child and family;
- To analyse their needs and/or the nature and level of any risk and harm being suffered by the child;
- To decide whether the child is a Child in Need (Section 17) and/or is suffering or likely to suffer Significant Harm (Section 47); and
- To provide support to address those needs to improve the child's outcomes to make them safe.

With effect from 15 April 2013, Working Together 2013 removes the requirement for separate **Initial Assessments** and **Core Assessments**. One Assessment – often called Single Assessment - may be undertaken instead.

CAFCASS

Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) is the Government agency responsible for Reporting Officers, Children's Guardians and other Court officers appointed by the Court in Court Proceedings involving children. Also appoints an officer to witness when a parent wishes to consent to a child's placement for adoption.

Care Order

A Care Order can be made in Care Proceedings brought under section 31 of the Children Act if the Threshold Criteria are met. The Order grants Parental Responsibility for the child to the local authority specified in the Order, to be shared with the parents.

A **Care Order** lasts until the child is 18 unless discharged earlier. An **Adoption Order** automatically discharges the Care Order. A **Placement Order** automatically suspends the Care Order, but it will be reinstated if the Placement Order is subsequently revoked.

All children who are the subject of a Care Order come within the definition of Looked After and have to have a Care Plan. When making a Care Order, the Court must be satisfied that the Care Plan is suitable.

Categories of Abuse or Neglect

Where a decision is made that a child requires a Child Protection Plan, the category of abuse or neglect must be specified by the Child Protection Conference Chair.

Child in Need and Child in Need Plan

Under Section 17 (10) of the Children Act 1989, a child is a Child in Need (CiN) if:

- He/she is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him/her of services by a local authority;
- His/her health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for him/her of such services; or
- He/she is disabled.

A **Child in Need Plan** should be drawn up for children who are not Looked After but are identified as Children in Need who requiring services to meet their needs. It should be completed following an Assessment where services are identified as necessary.

Under the Integrated Children's System, if a Child is subject to a Child Protection Plan, it is recorded as part of the Child in Need Plan.

The Child in Need Plan may also be used with children receiving short break care in conjunction with Part One of the Care Plan.

Child Protection

The following definition is taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010, paragraph 1.23.:

Child protection is a part of Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, Significant Harm.

Child Protection Conference

Child Protection Conferences (Initial – **ICPC** and review – **RCPC**) are convened where children are considered to be at risk of Significant Harm.

Children's Centres

The government is establishing a network of children's centres, providing good quality childcare integrated with early learning, family support, health services, and support for parents wanting to return to work or training.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Corporate Parenting

In broad terms, as the corporate parent of looked after children, a local authority has a legal and moral duty to provide the kind of loyal support that any good parent would provide for their own children.

Criteria for Child Protection Plans

Where a decision is made that a child requires a Child Protection Plan, the Conference Chair must ensure that the criteria for the decision are met, i.e. that the child is at continuing risk of Significant Harm.

Director of Children's Services (DCS)

Every top tier local authority in England must appoint a Director of Children's Services under section 18 of the Children Act 2004. Directors are responsible for discharging local authority functions that relate to children in respect of education, social services and children leaving care. They are also responsible for discharging functions delegated to the local authority by any NHS body that relate to children, as well as some new functions conferred on authorities by the Act, such as the duty to safeguard and protect children, the Children and Young People's Plan, and the duty to co-operate to promote well-being.

Designated Teacher

Schools should all appoint a Designated Teacher. This person's role is to co-ordinate policies, procedures and roles in relation to Child Protection and in relation to Looked After Children.

Discretionary Leave to Remain

This is a limited permission granted to an Asylum Seeker, to stay in the UK for 3 years - it can then be extended or permission can then be sought to settle permanently.

Duty of Care

In relation to workers in the social care sector, their duty of care is defined by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) as a legal obligation to:

- Always act in the best interest of individuals and others;

- Not act or fail to act in a way that results in harm;
- Act within your competence and not take on anything you do not believe you can safely do.

Early Help

Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.

Effective early help relies upon local agencies working together to:

- Identify children and families who would benefit from early help;
- Undertake an assessment of the need for early help;
- Provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focuses on activity to significantly improve the outcomes for the child.

Local authorities, under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, have a responsibility to promote inter-agency cooperation to improve the welfare of children.

Every Child Matters

Every Child Matters is the approach to the well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19, which is incorporated into the Children Act 2004. The aim is for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to:

- Be healthy;
- Stay safe;
- Enjoy and achieve;
- Make a positive contribution and;
- Achieve economic well-being.

This means that the organisations involved with providing services to children are teaming up, sharing information and working together, to protect children and young people from harm and help them achieve what they want in life.

Health Assessment

Every Looked After Child (LAC or CLA) must have a Health Assessment soon after becoming Looked After, then at specified intervals, depending on the child's age.

Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR)

When an Asylum Seeker is granted ILR, they have permission to settle in the UK permanently and can access mainstream services and benefits.

Independent Reviewing Officer

If a Local Authority is looking after a child (whether or not the child is in their care), it must appoint an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) for that child's case.

From 1 April 2011, the role of the IRO is extended, and there are two separate aspects: chairing a child's Looked After Review, and monitoring a child's case on an ongoing basis. As part of the monitoring function, the IRO also has a duty to identify any areas of poor practice, including general concerns around service delivery (not just around individual children).

IROs must be qualified social workers and, whilst they can be employees of the local authority, they must not have line management responsibility for the child's case. Independent Reviewing Officers who chair Adoption Reviews must have relevant experience of adoption work.

Independent Domestic Violence Advisor

Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVA) are specialist caseworkers who focus on working predominantly with high risk victims (usually but not exclusively with female victims). They generally are involved from the point of crisis and offer intensive short to medium term support. They work in partnership with statutory and voluntary agencies and mobilise multiple resources on behalf of victims by coordinating the response of a wide range of agencies, including those working with perpetrators or children. There may be differences about how the IDVA service is delivered in local areas.

Initial Child Protection Conference

An Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) is normally convened at the end of a Section 47 Enquiry when the child is assessed as either having suffered Significant Harm or to be at risk of suffering ongoing significant harm.

The Initial Child Protection Conference must be held within 15 working days of the Strategy Discussion, or the last strategy discussion if more than one has been held.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

A designated officer (or sometimes a team of officers), who is involved in the management and oversight of allegations against people that work with children.

Their role is to give advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations; liaise with the Police and other agencies, and monitor the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible consistent with a thorough and fair process. The Police should also identify an officer to fill a similar role.

Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB)

LSCBs have to be established by every local authority as detailed in Section 13 of The Children Act 2004. They are made up of representatives from a range of public agencies with a common interest and with duties and responsibilities to children in their area. LSCBs have a responsibility for ensuring effective inter-agency working together to safeguard and protect children in the area. The Boards have to ensure that clear local procedures are in place to inform and assist anyone interested or as part of their professional role where they have concerns about a child.

The functions of the LSCB are set out in chapter 3 of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

See <https://southamptonscp.org.uk/> for Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Looked After Child

A Looked After Child is a child who is accommodated by the local authority, a child who is the subject to an Interim Care Order, full Care Order or Emergency Protection Order; or a child who is remanded by a court into local authority accommodation or Youth Detention Accommodation.

In addition where a child is placed for Adoption or the local authority is authorised to place a child for adoption - either through the making of a Placement Order or the giving of Parental Consent to Adoptive Placement - the child is a Looked After child.

Looked After Children may be placed with family members, foster carers (including relatives and friends), in Children's Homes, in Secure Accommodation or with prospective adopters.

With effect from 3 December 2012, the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 amended the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 to bring children who are remanded by a court to local authority accommodation or youth detention accommodation into the definition of a Looked After Child for the purposes of the Children Act 1989.

Neglect

Neglect is a form of Significant Harm which involves the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect can occur during pregnancy, or once a child is born.

Parental Consent to Adoptive Placement

Parental consent to a child's placement for adoption under section 19 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 must be given before a child can be placed for adoption by an adoption agency, unless a Placement Order has been made or unless the child is a baby less than 6 weeks old and the parents have signed a written agreement with the local authority. Section 19 requires that the consent must be witnessed by a CAFCASS Officer. Where a baby of less than 6 weeks old is placed on the basis of a written agreement with the parents, steps must be taken to request CAFCASS to witness parental consent as soon as the child is 6 weeks old. At the same time as consent to an adoptive placement is given, a parent may also consent in advance to the child's adoption under section 20 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 either with any approved prospective adopters or with specific adopters identified in the Consent Form.

When giving advanced consent to adoption, the parents can also state that they do not wish to be informed when an adoption application is made in relation to the child.

Parental Responsibility

Parental Responsibility means all the duties, powers, responsibilities and authority which a parent has by law in relation to a child. Parental Responsibility diminishes as the child acquires sufficient understanding to make his or her own decisions.

A child's mother always holds Parental Responsibility, as does the father if married to the mother.

Unmarried fathers who are registered on the child's birth certificate as the child's father on or after 1 December 2003 also automatically acquire Parental Responsibility. Otherwise, they can acquire Parental Responsibility through a formal agreement with the child's mother or through obtaining a Parental Responsibility Order under Section 4 of the Children Act 1989.

Pathway Plan

The Pathway Plan sets out the route to the future for young people leaving the Looked After service and will state how their needs will be met in their path to independence. The plan will continue to be implemented and reviewed after they leave the looked after service at least until they are 21; and up to 25 if in education.

Permanence Plan

Permanence for a Looked After child means achieving, within a timescale which meets the child's needs, a permanent outcome which provides security and stability to the child throughout his or her childhood. It is, therefore, the best preparation for adulthood.

Wherever possible, permanence will be achieved through a return to the parents' care or a placement within the wider family but where this cannot be achieved within a time-scale appropriate to the child's needs, plans may be made for a permanent alternative family placement, which may include Adoption or by way of a Special Guardianship Order.

By the time of the second Looked After Review, the Care Plan for each Looked After Child must contain a plan for achieving permanence for the child within a timescale that is realistic, achievable and meets the child's needs.

Personal Education Plan

All Looked After Children must have a Personal Education Plan (PEP) which summarises the child's developmental and educational needs, short term targets, long term plans and aspirations and which contains or refers to the child's record of achievement. The child's social worker is responsible for coordinating and compiling the PEP, which should be incorporated into the child's Care Plan.

Person Posing a Risk to Children (PPRC)

This term replaced the term of 'Schedule One Offender', previously used to describe a person who had been convicted of an offence against a child listed in Schedule One of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933.

'Person Posing a Risk to Children' takes a wider view. Home Office Circular 16/2005 included a consolidated list of offences which agencies can use to identify those who may present a risk to children. The list includes both current and repealed offences, is for guidance only and is not exhaustive - subsequent legislation will also need to be taken into account when forming an assessment of whether a person poses a risk to children. The list of offences should operate as a trigger to further assessment/review to determine if an offender should be regarded as presenting a continued risk of harm to children. There will also be cases where individuals without a conviction or caution for one of these offences may pose a risk to children.

Placement at a Distance

Placement of a Looked After child outside the area of the responsible authority looking after the child and not within the area of any adjoining local authority.

This term was introduced with effect from 27 January 2014 by the Children's Homes and Looked after Children (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2013.

Principal Social Worker - Children and Families

This role was borne out of Professor Munro's recommendations from the Munro Review of Child Protection (2011) to ensure that a senior manager in each local authority is directly involved in frontline services, advocate higher practice standards and develop organisational learning cultures, and to bridge the divide between management and the front line. It is typically held by a senior manager who also carries caseloads to ensure the authentic voice of practice is heard at decision-making tables.

Private Fostering

A privately fostered child is a child under 16 (or 18 if disabled) who is cared for by an adult who is not a parent or close relative where the child is to be cared for in that home for 28 days or more. Close relative is defined as "a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of the full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or step-parent". A child who is Looked After by a local authority or placed in a children's home, hospital or school is excluded from the definition. In a private

fostering arrangement, the parent still holds Parental Responsibility and agrees the arrangement with the private foster carer.

A child in relation to whom the local authority receives notification from the prospective adopters that they intend to apply to the Court to adopt may have the status of a privately fostered child. The requirement to notify the local authority relates only to children who have not been placed for adoption by an adoption agency. On receiving the notification, the local authority for the area where the prospective adopters live becomes responsible for supervising the child's welfare pending the adoption and providing the Court with a report.

Public Law Outline

The Public Law Outline: Guide to Case Management in Public Law Proceedings came into force on the 6th April 2010. An updated Public Law Outline (PLO) came into effect on 22nd April 2014, alongside the statutory 26-week time-limit for completion of care and supervision proceedings under the Children and Families Act 2014.

The Public Law Outline sets out streamlined case management procedures for dealing with public law children's cases. The aim is to identify and focus on the key issues for the child, with the aim of making the best decisions for the child within the timetable set by the Court, and avoiding the need for unnecessary evidence or hearings.

Referral

The referring of concerns to local authority children's social care services, where the referrer believes or suspects that a child may be a Child in Need, including that he or she may be suffering, or is likely to suffer, Significant Harm. The referral should be made in accordance with the agreed LSCB procedures.

Relevant Young People, Former Relevant, and Eligible

- **Relevant Young People** are those aged 16 or 17 who are no longer Looked After, having previously been in the category of Eligible Young People when Looked After. However, if after leaving the Looked After service, a young person returns home for a period of 6 months or more to be cared for by a parent and the return home has been formally agreed as successful, he or she will no longer be a Relevant Young Person. A young person is also Relevant if, having been looked after for three months or more, he or she is then detained after their 16th birthday either in hospital, remand centre, young offenders' institution or secure training centre. There is a duty to support relevant young people up to the age of 18, wherever they are living.
- **Former Relevant Young People** are aged 18 or above and have left care having been previously either Eligible, Relevant or both. There is a duty to consider the need to support these young people wherever they are living.
- **Eligible Young People** are young people aged 16 or 17 who have been Looked After for a period or periods totaling at least 13 weeks starting after their 14th birthday and ending at least one day after their 16th birthday, and are still Looked After. (This total does not include a series of short-term placements of up to four weeks where the child has returned to the parent.) There is a duty to support these young people up to the age of 18.

Review Child Protection Conference

Child Protection Review Conferences (RCPC) are convened in relation to children who are already subject to a Child Protection Plan. The purpose of the Review Conference is to review the safety, health and development of the child in view of the Child Protection Plan, to ensure that the child continues to

be adequately safeguarded and to consider whether the Child Protection Plan should continue or change or whether it can be discontinued.

Section 20

Under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989, children may be accommodated by the local authority if they have no parent or are lost or abandoned or where their parents are not able to provide them with suitable accommodation and agree to the child being accommodated. A child who is accommodated under Section 20 becomes a Looked After Child.

Section 47 Enquiry

Under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989, if a child is taken into Police Protection, or is the subject of an Emergency Protection Order, or there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer Significant Harm, a Section 47 Enquiry is initiated. This enables the local authority to decide whether they need to take any further action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. This normally occurs after a Strategy Discussion.

Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Emotional Abuse and Neglect are all categories of Significant Harm.

Section 47 Enquiries are usually conducted by a social worker, jointly with the Police, and must be completed within 15 days of a Strategy Discussion. Where concerns are substantiated and the child is judged to be at continued risk of Significant Harm, a Child Protection Conference should be convened.

Separated Children

Separated Children are children and young people aged under 18 who are outside their country of origin and separated from both parents, or their previous legal/customary primary caregiver. Some will be totally alone (**unaccompanied**), while others may be accompanied into the UK e.g. by an escort; or will present as staying with a person who may identify themselves as a stranger, a member of the family or a friend of the family.

Special Guardianship Order

Special Guardianship Order (SGO) is an order set out in the Children Act 1989, available from 30 December 2005. Special Guardianship offers a further option for children needing permanent care outside their birth family. It can offer greater security without absolute severance from the birth family as in adoption.

Special Guardianship will also provide an alternative for achieving permanence in families where adoption, for cultural or religious reasons, is not an option. Special Guardians will have Parental Responsibility for the child. A Special Guardianship Order made in relation to a Looked After Child will replace the Care Order and the Local Authority will no longer have Parental Responsibility.

Strategy Discussion

A Strategy Discussion is normally held following an Assessment which indicates that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer Significant Harm. The purpose of a Strategy Meeting is to determine whether there are grounds for a Section 47 Enquiry.

Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

From 1 September 2014, Statements of Special Educational Needs were replaced by Education, Health and Care Plans. (The legal test of when a child or young person requires an Education, Health and Care Plan remains the same as that for a Statement under the Education Act 1996).

Staying Put

A Staying Put arrangement is where a Former Relevant child, after ceasing to be Looked After, remains in the former foster home where they were placed immediately before they ceased to be Looked After, beyond the age of 18. The young person's first Looked After Review following his or her 16th birthday should consider whether a Staying Put arrangement should be an option.

It is the duty of the local authority to monitor the Staying Put arrangement and provide advice, assistance and support to the Former Relevant child and the former foster parent with a view to maintaining the Staying Put arrangement (this must include financial support), until the child reaches the age of 21 (unless the local authority consider that the Staying Put arrangement is not consistent with the child's welfare).

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker

A child or young person under the age of 18 who has been forced or compelled to leave their home country as a result of major conflict resulting in social breakdown or to escape human rights abuse. They will have no adult in the UK exercising Parental Responsibility.

Virtual School Head

Section 99 of the Children and Families Act 2014 imposes upon local authorities a requirement to appoint an officer to promote the educational achievement of Looked After children - sometimes referred to as a 'Virtual School Head'.

Working Together to Safeguard Children

Working Together to Safeguard Children is a Government publication which sets out detailed guidance about the role, function and composition of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs), the roles and responsibilities of their member agencies in safeguarding children within their areas and the actions that should be taken where there are concerns that children have suffered or are at risk of suffering Significant Harm.

Young Offender Institution (YOI)

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) is responsible for the commissioning and purchasing of all secure accommodation for under 18-year-olds ('juveniles'), whether sentenced or on remand. Young offender institutions (YOIs) are run by the Prison Service (except where contracted out) and cater for 15-20 year-olds, but within YOIs the Youth Justice Board has purchased discrete accommodation for juveniles where the regimes are specially designed to meet their needs. Juvenile units in YOIs are for 15-17 year-old boys and 17-year-old girls.

Youth Offending Service or Team

Youth Offending Service or Team (YOS or YOT) is the service which brings together staff from Children's Social care, the Police, Probation, Education and Health Authorities to work together to keep young people aged 10 to 17 out of custody. They are monitored and co-ordinated nationally by the Youth Justice Board (YJB).

Sources

Tri.x live online glossary: <http://trixresources.proceduresonline.com/> - a free resource, available to all which provides up to date keyword definitions and details about national agencies and organisations.

Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership: <https://southamptonscp.org.uk/>

DECISION-MAKER:	CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL
SUBJECT:	MONITORING SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS
DATE OF DECISION:	6 JULY 2023
REPORT OF:	SCRUTINY MANAGER

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
None	
BRIEF SUMMARY	
This item enables the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel to monitor and track progress on recommendations made at previous meetings.	
RECOMMENDATIONS:	
	(i) That the Panel considers the responses to recommendations from previous meetings and provides feedback.
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS	
1.	To assist the Panel in assessing the impact and consequence of recommendations made at previous meetings.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED	
2.	None.
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)	
3.	Appendix 1 of the report sets out the recommendations made at previous meetings of the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel. It also contains a summary of action taken in response to the recommendations.
4.	The progress status for each recommendation is indicated and if the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel confirms acceptance of the items marked as completed they will be removed from the list. In cases where action on the recommendation is outstanding or the Panel does not accept the matter has been adequately completed, it will be kept on the list and reported back to the next meeting. It will remain on the list until such time as the Panel accepts the recommendation as completed. Rejected recommendations will only be removed from the list after being reported to the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	

<u>Capital/Revenue/Property/Other</u>	
5.	None
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
6.	The duty to undertake overview and scrutiny is set out in Part 1A Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2000.
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
7.	None
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
8.	None
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
9.	None

KEY DECISION?	No
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	None
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Monitoring Scrutiny Recommendations – 6 July 2023

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
Equality Impact Assessment	
Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out?	No
Data Protection Impact Assessment	
Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out?	No
Other Background Documents	
Other Background documents available for inspection at:	
Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	None

Children and Families Scrutiny Panel

Scrutiny Monitoring – 6 July 2023

Date	Title	Action proposed	Action Taken	Progress Status
29/09/22	Post 16 Provision, Participation and NEET	1) That the Panel are kept informed of key developments concerning the proposed city wide solution to Post 16 provision in Southampton.	We have requested a comms release from the DfE (FE Commissioner) on the City-Wide Solution - some of what they have told us in our catch-up meetings will be confidential. When he comes back to the service, we will share the information with the Scrutiny Panel. The relevant Cllrs and CEx are up to speed with this workstream.	Partially complete
26/01/23	Children and Learning - Performance	1) That, if timescales allow, the key findings from the planned audit of re-referrals are summarised within, or appended to, the performance report to be considered at the 30 March 2023 meeting of the Panel.	<p>The audit was completed in February 2023. The findings were outlined by Hampshire colleagues at Improvement Board in March 2023. The service plans to respond to the audit findings by updating its service delivery plan. Actions will include a focus on multi-agency review of cases, application of thresholds, focus on the needs of siblings and supporting consistent management oversight and recording. The improvement board have asked for a re-audit, to involve partners, in six months' time.</p> <p>The audit will be shared with the Panel when a plan has been agreed.</p> <p>Update: Report on agenda for CFSP – 6 July 2023</p>	Completed
30/03/23	Young People's Service	1) That a performance dataset is circulated to the Panel outlining how the Young People's Service is performing against set targets.	Baseline Young People's Service Performance Report circulated to the Panel on 1 st April 2023.	Completed
		2) That the member induction programme for the 2023/24 intake of elected councillors includes a visit to the Hub, potentially as the setting for the mandatory corporate parenting training session.	The service will liaise with Sarah Dale, who is coordinating the induction programme, to set this up.	Partially complete

Date	Title	Action proposed	Action Taken	Progress Status
30/03/23	SEND and Children with Disabilities	1) That the Panel schedule a discussion on SEND in 2023/24 that includes a focus on the progress of the transformation programme, and preparation for adulthood.	Provisionally booked for March 2024	Partially complete
30/03/23	Performance	1) That an explanation is provided to the Panel of the discrepancies identified between the December 2022 and February 2023 published performance data.	<p>There can be some changes to the data due to open forms on Care Director being authorised and closed. For some pieces of work, such as assessments, care plans and reviews, they can start in one month and complete in another, these then show up in the data for previous months.</p> <p>There are regular data cleansing processes underway when staff members leave without closing off all open forms, or when children are ready to close.</p> <p>To provide consistent comparative data, the data provided will be taken as a snapshot at the end of month with only changes to the previous month to reflect the longer processes and recording of forms at the end of the month.</p>	Completed