



Cabinet Member (Children and Young People)

Time and Date

1.00 pm on Monday, 27th July, 2015

Place

Committee Room 2 - Council House

Public Business

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interests**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 6)
 - (a) To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 30 June, 2015
 - (b) Matters Arising
4. **Coventry Fostering Service Annual Report 2014/15** (Pages 7 - 18)
Report of the Executive Director of People
5. **Adoption Financial Support Policy** (Pages 19 - 26)
Report of the Executive Director of People
6. **Update on the Troubled Families Programme** (Pages 27 - 66)
Report of the Executive Director of People
7. **Outstanding Issues Report** (Pages 67 - 70)
Report of the Executive Director of Resources
8. **Any Other Business**
To consider any other items of business which the Cabinet Member decides to take as a matter of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.

Private Business

Nil

Chris West, Executive Director, Resources, Council House Coventry

Friday, 17 July 2015

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Usha Patel, Governance Services Tel: 024 7683 3198

Membership: Councillor: E Ruane (Cabinet Member)

By invitation Councillors H Noonan

Please note: a hearing loop is available in the committee rooms

If you require a British Sign Language interpreter for this meeting
OR if you would like this information in another format or
language please contact us.

Usha Patel

Tel: 024 7683 3198

Email: usha.patel@coventry.gov.uk

Coventry City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Children and Young People held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 30 June 2015

Present:

Cabinet Member: Councillor Ruane

Shadow Cabinet Member: Councillor Noonan

Employees (by Directorate):

People: Y. Corden, L.Gosling, J. Sembi, V. White

Resources: S. Bennett, J. Newman, R. Sugars

Public Business

1. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings held on 7 and 13 April, 2015 were agreed and signed as a true record.

Further to Minute 34/14, the Cabinet Member referred to his request that officers arrange an informal meeting with a Supported Accommodation provider and other relevant parties, at their venue, to consider progress in delivery against the multi-agency action plan and asked that this request be progressed.

Further to Minute 37/14, the Cabinet Member asked to be provided with a written update in relation to his request that officers investigate the possibility of commissioning or using available academic support to undertake research on the local factors contributing to Under 18 conception levels.

Further to Minute 44/14, in response to a question, the Cabinet Member noted that he and the Shadow Cabinet Member would be receiving data relating to Child Sexual Exploitation in the City on a regular basis.

3. Children's Centres and Youth Service e Petition

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of People which indicated that an e petition, bearing 21 signatures, had been received that asked that the "Council keep all Children Centres and Youth Services open to maintain a high quality and fully accountable Public Service, without replacing employed professionals and well trained staff with volunteers" The Petition Organiser had been invited to attend the meeting but was unable to do so.

The report indicated that the petition was in response to the pre-budget and budget reports which set out the City Centre First Savings Strategy (£5 million savings target by 2017/18) and which included Children's Centres and Youth Services.

No decisions have yet been taken regarding the closure of any of the City's Children's Centres or Youth Services and any future proposals to make changes to these services will be subject to public consultation and member decisions.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People notes the petition and that officers be requested to write to the Petition Organiser to inform them of the Council's current position.

4. **Delegation of Authority Policy for Looked After Children**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of People which sought approval to the Delegation of Authority Policy, a copy of which was appended to the report.

The Policy sets out the responsibility for making day to day decisions about a child that has been passed to the foster carer or residential care workers. The Council has a legal duty to have a published Policy and guidance stipulates that the Policy should be signed by the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People:-

- (1) Approves the Delegation of Authority Policy as appended to the report**
- (2) Notes that the Policy will also be considered by the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)**

5. **Adoption Service Annual Report 2014/15**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of People which detailed the activity and key performance data for Coventry Adoption Service during 2014/15. The updated Statement of Purpose for 2015 was appended to the report.

The report indicated that 70 children were adopted and 38 adopters were approved during the year and overall, the City Council paid support allowances for 132 children from 73 adoptive families. The key priorities for the service in 2015/16 were also outlined.

The Cabinet Member questioned officers on aspects of the report, particularly in relation to the contributory factors to the timeliness of decisions and how further improvements could be achieved in relation to this. The improvements already achieved through case progression discipline in court, the pre-allocation of

permanency worker for all children with possible plan of adoption and senior management oversight were welcomed.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People:-

- (1) Accepts the Adoption Service Annual report for 2014/15**
- (2) Approves the updated Statement of Purpose as appended to the report**

6. Role of the Principal Social Worker for Children's Services

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of People which outlined the role of the Principal Social Worker for Social Worker, who was appointed in December 2014 and who has a vital role in developing, co-ordinating and representing the views and experiences of front-line social workers to the Executive Director of People.

The Cabinet Member questioned the Principal Social Worker on aspects of her role, particularly in relation to her interaction with social workers and senior management and performance management issues.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young notes the introduction of the Principal Social Worker role and the key changes that have taken place since the introduction of this role.

7. Outstanding Issues Report

The Cabinet Member noted a report of the Executive Director of Resources that identified those issues on which further reports had been requested and were outstanding, so that progress could be monitored.

8. Coventry Strategic Objectives Plan for Children and Young People Who Are Missing, at Risk of or Experiencing Sexual Exploitation

Further to Minute 44/14, the Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of People which provided an update on the Coventry Strategic Objectives Delivery Plan for children and young people who are missing, at risk of, or experiencing child sexual exploitation (CSE). The CSE Delivery Plan is a multi-agency plan which is monitored by the CSE Steering Group, who also receive regular updates on progress against the delivery plan.

The report also provided an update on the CSE Team that has now been in place for six weeks and which has focused initially on team induction. Some specialised training will be delivered to the team during June and July.

The Cabinet Member questioned the officers on aspects of the report, particularly in relation to the links with the CSE Team and other teams within the Council, for example the Troubled Families Team.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People:-

- (1) Notes the progress against the Delivery Plan as attached to the report, which is subject to on-going revision and which is a “living” document**
- (2) Notes the addition to the Delivery Plan which requires Hackney Carriage Drivers and Private Hire Drivers to have DBS checks and CSE training as part of the conditions of their licence**
- (3) Notes the updates on the development of the CSE Team**
- (4) Agrees that a letter be sent to Head Teachers and Chairs of School Governing Boards regarding completion of the CSE screening tool**
- (5) Notes data relating to CSE within the City**
- (6) Requests that officers provide the Cabinet Member with regular information in relation to CSE in an appropriate manner.**

9. Any Other Public Business

There were no items of urgent public business.

(Meeting closed at 3.30pm)



Public report Cabinet Member

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)

27 July 2015
10 September 2015

Name of Cabinet Member:
Councillor Ed Ruane

Director Approving Submission of the report:
Executive Director of People

Ward(s) affected: None

Title: Coventry Fostering Service Annual Report 2014 / 15

Is this a key decision? No

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to inform the Cabinet Member about the work undertaken by the Fostering Service between April 2014 and March 2015.

The performance of Coventry Fostering Service is critical to delivery of high quality local placements that can meet the diverse needs of Coventry's looked after children.

The report summarises the activity of the service over the past 12 months. It highlights the challenge of adequately recruiting the number and type of carers who can meet children's needs and the critical requirements of on-going support and supervision of these carers to. The report also considers the role of the senior management Fostering Steering Group and the members Task and Finish group in providing additional scrutiny and input.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People is requested to:

1. Accept the Fostering Service Annual Report 2014/15.
2. Approve the updated Statement of Purpose

The Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) is requested to note the content of the report and the updated Statement of Purpose and make any recommendations to Cabinet Member as appropriate.

List of Appendices included:
Appendix 1 Statement of Purpose

Other useful background papers:
None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

Yes in September 2015

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Coventry Fostering Service 2014/15

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 This report considers the activity by the Coventry Fostering Service during the year April 2014 to March 2015. Located within the Family Placement Service, Coventry Fostering Service is responsible for the recruitment, assessment, approval, preparation, training, supervision and support of foster carers.
- 1.2 Coventry City Council is committed to ensuring that, wherever possible, children are supported to live and be brought up within their family and community network. Where this is not possible and children need to become looked after by the authority, this should be in a family setting or in a placement which prepares them for this. As far as is possible, this will be with Coventry City Council approved foster carers.
- 1.3 Foster Care is a highly regulated area of social work practice and there have been a range of regulations and statutory guidance issued by the Department of Education (DfE) The National Minimum Standards also provide the framework within which the service is required to operate. The standards also profile the central importance of the child's relationship with their Foster Carer and the need for Foster Carers to be recognised as core members of the team working with the child. There is a recognition that Foster Carers need to be empowered to take on the day to day tasks of parenting and provide care in the same way as any good parent would do.
- 1.4 The service has been working to an Improvement Plan over the last two years, primarily focused on improving the overall quality of the service, increasing the use of Coventry Foster Carers whilst decreasing reliance on more expensive Independent Fostering Agencies. The service has an additional 27 Foster Carers approved in the last year, but to ensure quality within the service, 17 Foster Carers have either chosen to resign or have been deregistered. The reasons for carers leaving the service are outline in I.15
- 1.5 An Action Plan was implemented along with weekly case tracking meetings which proactively reviewed all activity within the service. All recruitment activities in relation to prospective carers (including initial visits and assessments) were tracked on a weekly basis to ensure that carers were assessed rapidly and to prevent drift. Similar scrutiny was applied to the annual review process for Foster Carers and the management of any allegations against them.
- 1.6 One of the main areas of focus in the Improvement Plan was on the quality of support given by Foster Carers. A comprehensive training programme with a dedicated training officer was implemented. This ensured all carers undertook their Children's Workforce Development Programme qualification which is a regulatory requirement. In turn the standard of care has improved as Foster Carers knowledge, awareness and understanding has increased with improved training.
- 1.7 At the end of March 2015, there were 589 looked after children by the Council. Of these 413 children were placed in Foster Carer of which 134 children were placed with Coventry Foster Carers and 279 children were placed with Foster Carers approved by Independent Fostering Agencies. A further 23 children were placed with family and friends carers and 36 children were placed for adoption.
- 1.8 The Foster carers provide a range of local quality placements for looked after children. The proportion of children looked after by a foster carer approved by Coventry was 22.8% as at of March 31st 2015. This remains largely unchanged from previous 2 years.

- 1.9 Coventry Foster Carers could be from the family or friendship network of the child. There were 17 households where the carers were related historically on March 31st 2015. However in March 2015 the majority of carers' households are not related to the child and are expected to care for children from a wide variety of backgrounds and for different durations.
- 1.10 Of the household providing this type of care as of March 2015 these households offered 236 placements (i.e. 1.6 placements per household). These carers are known as mainstream carers.
- 1.11 Whilst the number of children in placement per household has remained constant at 1.6 the number of foster household approved has increased. Set out below is comparison from previous year which saw a net gain of 10 households

Recruitment, Approval and Resignations of Mainstream Carers

Mainstream carers	2013/14	2014/15
Foster carers at start of year (excluding family and friends)	131	137
New carers recruited	18	27
Carers lost	24	17
Foster carers at year end (excluding family and friends)	137	147 (+ 3 short break households)
Number of Placements	226	236
Recruitment and Assessment of Mainstream Carers	2013/14	2014/15
Number of Initial enquires	224	286
Number of Applications received	64 (5 in progress)	82 (16 in progress)
Number of households approved (excluding family and friends)	18	27
Conversion Rate - Enquiry to Application	26%	23%
Conversion rate Application to Approval	28%	33%

- 1.12 Overall the conversion rate was 10.59% for 2014/15. A 10% or better conversion rate would reflect a well-targeted recruitment campaign that is attracting households that have the capacity and the qualities to become foster carers. It is encouraging that changes to recruitment campaign have fielded an improved conversion rate from application to approval as well as significant increase in the number of households approve.
- 1.13 The Family Placement Service commenced tracking the timeliness of assessments. Although only 48% of assessment met with standards required the later part of the year saw some improvement in the compliance with timescales. This will be a priority for the Service in 2015/16. Timely returns of DBS checks is the key factor contributing to the timeliness of assessments.

1.14 Occupancy Levels – As part of the medium term financial strategy targets have been set and revised for internal fostering (excluding connected persons) over time to increase the number of children placed in-house and to deliver savings. Increasing occupancy levels in utilising foster carer beds remains a key priority. The number of children in placement throughout the 2014/15 financial year was on average 178 children with 145 internal fostering (start year position was 191 – 157 internal fostering). This decrease has meant the service has not met the target increase figures for 2014/15 which have been built into the medium term financial strategy. The table below shows the target and actuals for 2014/15. Numbers are for mainstream fostering placements and based on average bed nights. Forecasts for 2015/16 were based on achievement of the target of 163 by 31 March 2015. This will now have an impact on the 2015/16 position.

Target	By 2014/15
Target set for 2014/15 (set prior 14/15 Financial Year)	180
Revised Target November 2014	163
Actuals (forecast for 2014/15)	145
Shortfall (revised target)	18

1.15 Recruitment activity has led to an increase in foster carer households and places however this has not translated into more children being placed internally for two reasons. These are the matching considerations for older children and placing siblings together.

- The shortfall in house placements that can meet the needs of sibling placements and older children will need to be reflected in recruitment campaigns, the assessment of new carers and the development of support packages.
- Maximise the gains made in the net increase of Fostering Households by reducing the number of carers on hold. At the end of June there were 26 carers which have steadily reduced since March 2015, with a further 7 returning to fostering by the end of August 2015.
- Improvements in the decision making to remove a carer from the vacancy list are urgently required alongside management review.

1.16 Improving in-house occupancy is a critical priority and following recent meetings of the Children’s Operational Management Group and the Fostering Steering group, further work is underway to determine the most realistic increase in numbers for 2015/16 given the current shortfall.

1.17 Part of understanding the occupancy is understanding the type and duration of placements. Below is the outline of the type of placements number of children in each type of in house placement as of 30 March 2015. Encouragingly an additional 23 children are now placed long term with in house carers from 2013/14. However there has been a reduction of 41 children in short term placements.

1.18 An analysis of the children placed in external placements confirmed that this was required to ensure siblings groups stayed together or placements to meet the needs of older

children with complex and challenging behaviours. At the end of March 2015 the children looked after were in the following types of placements.

Types of Placements	2013/14	2014/15
Long term	49	72
Short Term	103	62
Emergency	3	0
Family/ Friends	33	23
Parent and Child	3	0
Short breaks only	8	6

- 1.19 Although there was significant increase in mainstream assessment and subsequent approvals this was affected by 17 resignations, retirements or terminations of approvals. Understanding the reasons for leaving the service, with a managerial review of all decisions is crucial. Below is the analysis in the past 2 years for the reasons.

Reason	2013/14	2014/15
Permanence plan for child	5	1
Connected Persons temporary approval only	0	2
Move to another agency	0	0
Retirement, change of circumstances, health, space	10	9
Safeguarding (Termination)	2	2
Resigned prior to Safeguarding issues	1	1
Other – including death	0	2
Total	18	17

- 1.20 Feedback from both current foster carers and from exit interviews undertaken by the Team Managers has highlighted importance of high quality and consistent support from the both children's social worker and supervising social worker. This is fundamental to improving the retention, as well as maintaining the good will and flexibility of Foster Carers.
- 1.21 In March 2015 at the Annual Fostering Conference departmental managers acknowledged the significant short falls in the current approach to engaging and involving Foster Carers in the core tasks of care planning by the supervising social worker and children's social worker. The conference noted that this had led to foster carers feeling isolated, not valued and with their expertise with and knowledge of the child not being recognised or used. A follow up consultation exercise undertaken to inform what will be a refreshed fostering support strategy for 2015 – 2017 has now been completed.

- 1.22 As a result of these shortfalls a Team around the Child approach has been adopted by the Service. This requires foster carers to be involved in all stages of the care plan development and delivery. With the launch of Delegated Authority in June 2015 foster carers are now able to take more day to day responsibility for the care of the child and subsequently this will mean a great sense of security for the child i.e the person looking after them is also the same person who can make many key decisions.
- 1.23 The KEEP programme intervention has continued to be offered to both foster carers and Guardians. It has now become part of the mandatory training for carers who are approved to take children within the age of 4 to 11. In 2014/15 9 carers completed the course. Results continue to show that carers value the 16 week programme and report improved behaviours for specific children.
- 1.24 The completion of Foundation training in Theraplay by 7 staff in the Family Placement Service has meant the delivery of monthly workshops to Foster carers on effectively using these principles whilst working with children. Feedback from the monthly workshops which involve the child has been that this relationship based intervention is meeting the needs of carers who are working with children who have a number of attachment related behaviours.
- 1.25 **Oversight and Challenge** – In light of the challenge of recruitment and retention of foster carers, a Members’ led Task and Finish group was established in 2014 to provide further scrutiny of the Service plans and the relationship with the foster carers and the Association. A senior manager Steering Group continued to meet to provide problem solving forum to ensure the accelerated improvements required are delivered on time. Both interventions have provided the critical oversight the agency has required and the input to address what had been long standing problems in data management and sustaining a customer service focus.
- 1.26 **Fostering Panel** – Improvements have been made to the Fostering Panel to make sure it worked in an efficient and effective way. Monitoring sheets are completed for each case presented at panel and the panel provides feedback to the Agency Decision Maker. The Panel makes recommendations to the Fostering Service and these recommendations are referred to the Agency Decision Maker for a decision as to whether a Foster Carer should be approved. The Fostering Panel meets on a monthly basis and it feeds back any issues or concerns to the Registered Manager.
- 1.27 Sarah Borthwick continues to act as the independent chair of the Fostering Panel. The Panel met a total of 13 occasions and was quorate on each occasion. The Panel has continued to provide the service detailed feedback on the quality of the work discussed and has noted continued improvements in the assessments and foster carer reviews. Panel has however been concerned with the quality of social work practice as reported from foster carers and asked the Service Manager to consider prioritising improving relations with the children’s social workers. Panel training in allegation management is scheduled for July 2015 and the completion of appraisals for both the Chair and members will be prioritised in 2015.
- 1.28 The appointment of Recruitment and Development officer in November 2014 has sharply focused the recruitment campaigns over the last six months. Coventry now has a strong marketing strategy and brand which includes both fostering and adoption. It utilises current research undertaken by Fostering Network and the Department of Education to incorporate value modes with in the key messages inherent to the campaigns - “Childhood Memories” and “Alfie’s journey”.

1.29 There is on-going activity to strengthen relationships with business partners, faith and community groups. This includes

- Coventry Sports Foundation (securing free use of venue for recruitment, training and events with foster carers.)
- Coventry Railway Station and Virgin Trains (monthly activity on first Friday of each month)
- Herbert Art Gallery (exhibition and event space provided free of charge and desk for enquiries)
- Chamber of Commerce (presentations and networking opportunities)
- Positive Images Festival
- Free Radio and Hillz FM.
- Imagination Café
- Faith and Community groups

1.24 Coventry now has a strong social media presence established with interactions from media and existing carers. Recruitment activity has included extensive use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter. Our online content on the website is regularly updated and feedback about the website has significantly improved. The launch of the 'Alfie's Journey' film has further increased the reach and awareness in the City. The impact of the campaigns and the various activities used to deliver it is currently being fully evaluated with a report due to the Lead Cabinet member by 2nd September 2015. Meanwhile activity and impact may be partly measured by the following.

- 76K impressions on Twitter
- 23K views of 'Alfie's Journey' over different online platforms
- 15K Leaflets delivered (based on Mosaic analysis)
- 1321 Likes on our Facebook Page
- 149 Followers on Twitter
- 14 information sessions held (approx. 50 attendees)
- 4 Interviews on Hillz FM
- 3 festivals attended (Godiva, Positive Images, Hillfields)
- 3 Interviews on BBC CWR (two with foster carers)
- 2 Free Radio Storycorners held
- 2 articles in Citivision
- 1 children's storytime event targeting BME communities
- 1 Exhibition online and at Herbert Art Gallery in June 2015

1.25 The Recruitment and Development officer supports developments in the Service with regard to an effective communication and retention strategy, providing strong challenge. This has resulted in a refreshed FCA committee and clear plan to support engagement with a wider group of carers. This includes;

- Monthly Foster Carers Newsletter established providing up to date and relevant information.
- Facilitated capacity building with the Coventry Foster Carers Association
- Online Survey for the FCA foster carers needs from a foster carers organisation
- Led on the consultation for the fees and allowances (online, facilitated events and phone surgeries) completed and implemented
- Support to foster carers looking to set up localised support groups and activities
- Engaged foster carers in recruitment (advertorials on Free Radio, interviews, website and social media content and attendance at information events)
- Media Liaison Officer recruited from FCA – soon to run a media session for interested carers and staff

1.26 The priorities for recruitment going forward are to secure foster carers for sibling groups and older children including teenagers with a distinct campaign being launched from September 2015. This is going to be driven by engaging:

- Face to face engagement with faith groups
- Family friendly events engaging communities
- Continue to have a strong presence on digital and audio media
- Engaging business partners with Fostering Champion

2 Options considered and recommended proposal

That the Fostering Report is noted and the updated Statement of Purpose accepted.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

3.1 Not applicable

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

4.1 Not applicable

5. Comments from Executive Director, Resources

5.1 Financial implications

5.1.1 In-House Fostering fees – Outturn 2014/15

The actual spend for mainstream and connected persons for 2014/15 was £3,308k against a budget of £3,801k, giving an overall underspend of £493k. As highlighted in section 1.12 above, the actual placement numbers for in-house fostering of 145 (based on average bed nights) were much lower than the original target of 180, which was used for budget setting.

It should be noted that the reduced numbers contributed to the overall placements overspend of £1.9m where as a direct consequence more expensive external fostering numbers were much higher than target.

Numbers have continued to fall in 2015/16 and the Head of Service has been tasked with providing a realistic target for this year onwards.

5.1.2 The KEEP programme gross expenditure for 2014/15 was £44k, largely supported by grant. Although the grant was withdrawn at the end of 2014/15, this service will continue to be funded through core budget.

5.2 Legal implications

No legal implications.

6. Other implications

Any other specific implications

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?

The Family Placement Service contributes to the wellbeing of children through arranging for a fostering, adoption and other permanent placement for a child whose own family is unable to provide care. It supports a key element of Corporate Parenting – that of securing appropriate family placements for 'Looked After Children' (LAC), as an effective means of giving them the best life chances possible.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

This risk is being managed through the Fostering Steering Group and Children's Operational Management Group and both groups provide robust challenge to the delivery against the targets set for the service, in examining the increase in foster carer households and occupancy of approved beds.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

Increasing the numbers of internal foster carers and children placed internally will reduce the need for more costly external placements..

6.4 Equalities / EIA

An Equality Impact Needs Assessment was undertaken as part of the Fundamental Service Review in 2012.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

None

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None

Report author(s):

Name and job title

Liz Gosling
Interim Service Manager

Directorate: People

Tel and email contact: 024 7683 1873 and liz.gosling@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

Contributor/approver name	Title	Directorate or organisation	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Jivan Sembi	Interim Service Manager Family Placements	People	10.07.15	16.07.15
Rachel Sugars	Finance	Resources	10.07.15	16.07.15
Usha Patel	Governance Services Officer	Resources	16.07.2015	16.07.2015
Names of approvers: (officers and members)				
Brian Walsh	Executive Director	People		
Yolanda Corden	Assistant Director	People	10.07.15	16.07.15
Rachael Sugars	Finance Manager	Resources	15.07.16	16.07.15
Julie Newman	Legal Services	Resources	15.07.16	16.07.15
Neelesh Sutaria	Human Resources	Resources	15.07.16	16.07.15
Councillor Ruane	Cabinet Member		13.07.16	

This report is published on the council's website:
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Appendices

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OF COVENTRY CITY FOSTERING SERVICE

(Revised July 2015)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 It is a requirement of the Fostering Services England Regulations 2011 and National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services that each fostering agency produces a Statement of Purpose, including its aims and objectives, a description of the service it provides and the facilities that are provided. This Statement of Purpose gives an outline of those requirements, how the service is managed and its fitness to provide fostering services. It shows the policy and performance framework that underpins our work and shows how the welfare of children will be met and good outcomes achieved for all children in its care. It also demonstrates the systems which we have set in place to recruit, train, supervise and support foster carers.
- 1.2 The Statement of Purpose also links with the Children's Guide which is provided to all children, subject to the child's age and understanding at the point of placement. This statement is available to all members of staff, foster carers, children and birth parents and is publicly available on our fostering website. A copy of this statement is also lodged with Ofsted. The statement is updated and amended annually.

2. National Legislative and Policy framework

Coventry Fostering Service is run in accordance statutory requirements outlined in the:

- Children Act 1989
- Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011
- Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2013 (Amendments to the Children Act 1989)
- Fostering Services: National Minimum Standards (2011)
- Children Act Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services (2011)
- Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010
- The Disability and Equality Act 2010
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Children (Leaving care) Act 2000
- The Children's Workforce Development Council - Training, Support and Development Standards for Foster Care (2007)

3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 Coventry Fostering Service believes that every child Looked After should be able to enjoy the same quality of life and opportunities as all children.
- 3.2 Coventry Fostering Service recognises that a child's needs are best met by a nurturing family and is committed to placing children who are not able to remain in their own family in an appropriate alternative family placement wherever possible.
- 3.2 The first priority will be for children to be placed with family or friends (known as connected person's carers) and supported under regulation 24 of the Care Planning Regulations where this placement is deemed suitable and the child is looked after. Other placements may include a child and parent/s being placed together in a foster home.
- 3.3 Coventry is committed to placing children and young people with our approved foster carers and has developed and invested in a dedicated and comprehensive Fostering Service that actively works to meet the quality standards required and the diverse needs of the children who become looked after by Coventry and their families. We are also committed to placing children and young people with Coventry based foster carers in order for them to maintain contact with families and friends, to continue at the same school and thrive within their community wherever possible.
- 3.4 Each child/young person will have access to service that recognises and addresses their needs in terms of gender, religion, ethnic origin, language, culture, disability and sexuality. Individuality, difference and diversity are valued and celebrated and children's health, well-being and educational needs are given high priority to ensure that they reach their full potential
- 3.5 Children's safety and welfare are actively promoted in all fostering placement together with protection from abuse and other forms of significant harm.

4. Aims

- 4.1 The main aim of Coventry Fostering Service is to provide safe, high quality foster care placements for children and young people that value, support and encourage them to grow and develop as individuals. As well as promoting their health and general well-being, the service is committed to:
 - ensuring that foster carers are encouraged to help children and young people to reach their maximum educational ability.
 - ensuring foster carers provide good parenting for all children who are looked after and that children will be consulted and encouraged to actively participate in their care and family life.
 - ensuring that the service offered is based on statutory requirements, sound principles and good practice and works within the principles of value for money for the council

- multi- agency working and developing partnerships and protocols with organisations which can progress the needs of our looked after children
 - working at all levels in partnership with Education and Health to promote the well - being of children in public care in Coventry.
 - respecting the rights and responsibilities of Looked After children and their carers and involve them in all aspects of service delivery.
- 4.2 The fostering service also aims to provide a high quality responsive child-centred service in relation to its core functions and to recruit new foster carers from within our diverse community and from the connected persons networks of looked after children wherever this best meets their needs.
- 4.3 We prepare applicants through training to be able to deal with the range of issues that foster carers face when looking after children. The service assesses each applicant comprehensively to ensure that they are suitable and able to carry out their role and to supervise and support carers in order they promote and achieve the highest standards of welfare, safeguarding and outcomes for looked after children.
- 4.4 The Service is involved in assessing potential carers for their suitability to be granted Special Guardianship in court proceedings, together with arrangements around support to those granted such orders.

5. Objectives

- 5.1 To ensure that there is a choice of high quality foster care placements available to meet the complex and diverse needs of individual children and young people.
- Each foster carer will have a qualified social worker (supervising social worker) for supervision and support and to assist with identifying and reviewing carer training and development needs as part of a Personal Development Plan
 - To promote a safe, stable and enabling environment ensuring that children and young people are listened to and protected from abuse and neglect.
 - To promote the child's physical, social, emotional and intellectual development by providing each child with the opportunity of developing their full potential, through health care, education and leisure activities that will enhance their life chances.
 - To have a positive regard to for the child or young person's racial, religious and cultural needs. All children should have equal access to local family based care

- The individual child's needs/ wishes and feelings are paramount and are taken into consideration in relation to their placements
- Siblings will be accommodated together wherever possible and appropriate.
- To promote contact for the child or young person and his/her birth family throughout their placement, and to encourage and facilitate this as appropriate
- To ensure foster carers make children and young people aware of their rights and the complaints, compliments and advocacy process by providing the relevant information.
- To ensure that approved foster carers are clear about their role and that they are supported in their tasks, duties and responsibilities by having adequate support mechanisms in place and as outlined in their terms and conditions and the foster carer agreement
- The Skills Fee scheme ensures quality by providing a competency and skills framework with clear expectations for foster carers, together with a training and personal development programme.
- Ensure that all practice promotes equal opportunities for all and value diversity of both foster children and carers regardless of gender, sexual orientation, ethnic background, age, religious beliefs, disability or marital status
- To ensure that any decisions are transparent and fair and that any concerns are addressed and information about the complaints procedure is made available to all.
- Ensure that service performance is monitored, assessed with outcomes measured via a Quality Assurance Framework.
- To promote team and personal development and training for both staff and foster carers
- Consult regularly and learn from those that are in receipt of services through comments, compliments or complaints and have regular meetings and consultation with foster carers, senior managers and elected members.
- Consult regularly with children who are fostered, using a variety of methods to ensure their voice is heard.
- A commitment to continuous improvement through the provision of wider placement choices for children by pioneering more innovative approaches to foster care that are needs led, delivering flexible packages of support to children in public care

6. Confidentiality and Conflicts of interest

- 6.1 Foster carers are provided with full information about the children placed with them and are expected to observe high standards of confidentiality. As an agency we maintain records on carers and looked after children who are subject to National Standards and Data protection legislation. Staff and foster carers are expected to declare any potential conflicts of interest.

7. Principles and Standards of Care

- 7.1 Coventry Fostering Service is committed to achieving and maintaining the highest standards and offering quality provision. It has been developed and is managed in accordance with the Fostering Service (England) Regulations 2011 and the principles outlined in the National Minimum Standards 2011. These standards apply equally to our connected persons carers.

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- Children who are looked after are consulted regarding their wishes and feelings in regard to all aspects of their care. They will be provided with a Children's Guide to Fostering
- Every child who is looked after will have a safe care plan, health plan and a personal education plan
- Every child looked after will be encouraged to participate appropriately in religious and cultural beliefs in accordance with their wishes and feelings and developmental understanding
- Every child looked after will be cared for in an environment free from oppression, discrimination and prejudice, encouraging them to develop a positive sense of their own identity
- The fostering service will support the identified aims and objectives of the child or young person's care plan and work alongside other professionals in the implementation of this
- The fostering service will work in partnership with other professionals to promote contact between looked after children and their family and other significant persons
- Foster carers have a handbook (fact file) which guides their practice and clarifies expectations, responsibilities and standards

8. Children's Guide

- 8.1 Subject to the child's age and understanding, the fostering service ensures the child receives the Children's Guide at the point of placement and that the foster carer explains the contents of the Children's Guide in a way that is

accessible. The Children's Guide includes a summary of what the fostering service sets out to do for children, how they can find out their rights, how a child can contact their Independent Reviewing Officer, the Children's Rights Director and Ofsted if they wish to raise a concern.

9. Services Provided

9.1 The fostering service approves foster carers to look after children aged 0-18 years. Many of the children placed have experienced difficulties including abuse or neglect before being fostered. Some children and young people present with very challenging behaviour, special needs or complex health conditions. It does this by assessing, registering, supervising, supporting and training a wide range of carers.

9.2 Coventry operates a Skills Fee scheme which incorporates the majority of approved foster carers. All Foster Carers are financially supported via weekly allowance payments (child age related). Weekly allowances are paid at Fostering Network recommended rates. The Skills Level fees operate at four levels which sets out practice requirements, training and development expectations and support group attendance requirements.

9.3 Level 4 Carers have the highest level of skills and competencies and have a more demanding range of tasks that they must undertake. In return they are paid the highest level of fee. Within the levels there are differing areas of specialism depending on carer's skills, abilities and interests.

9.3 The differing types of foster carer approval are:

Short Term:

Time limited placements across all skills levels.

Long Term:

Planned, permanent placements across all skills levels.

Respite:

Planned, child needs led support for placements and agreed support for carers across all levels.

Support Care:

Part of a package of support (including day care and child minding) where carers provide planned time limited support to maintain children with their families and prevent children coming into care.

Connected persons Carer:

Providing placements for children and young people known to the carer.

Respite Care:

Short breaks provision, sitting scheme and long term placements for disabled children.

10. Management Structure as at July 2015

Executive Director

Brian Walsh

Interim Assistant Director

Yolanda Corden

Principle Social Worker

Vicky White

Head Of Service

Jivan Sembi

Service Manager & Registered Manager of the Fostering Agency

Elizabeth Gosling
(since 6th October 2014)

Family Placement Service Teams & Managers:

Assessment Team: Mike Tomkinson and Bonnie Moulton
Support Team: Stuart Lance-Penchon and Sharon Benedict
Permanency Team: Pat Branson, Kath Evans and Ruth Homer
Panels Manager: Marian Eagleson (starts in September 2015)
Recruitment and Development Officer – Rachel Brown

10.1 There are 3 teams in the Family Placement Service and these are bases on functions within the service.

- The Recruitment and Assessment Team is responsible for fostering, adoption, step parent and special guardianship assessments.
- The Support Team provides on going support to mainstream foster carers and adopters, Connected persons Carers, and Special Guardians.
- The Permanency team works with the Neighbourhood teams to identify the needs and profiles of the child/ren requiring permanency, whether via adoption or fostering, at an early stage to begin to inform the assessment team of the types of placements that are likely to be required and track possible matches of children with carers as they make their way through the system.
- A Panels Manager to oversee both Fostering and Adoption Panels.

- 10.2 All Team Managers are responsible to the Service Manager and the management group share responsibility for developing policy and procedure in line with national regulations and standards to ensure a safe and stimulating environment for Looked after children.
- 10.3 The City council appoints elected members to corporately oversee the work of the Children's Social Care Service and delegates certain responsibilities to the Assistant Director who is the responsible individual for financial management, management systems and the safe care of children. The Head of Service is the Agency Decision Maker for fostering.
- 10.4 There are currently xx full time equivalent qualified social workers across the service (including Managers) with differing responsibilities for and within the service. All workers hold a social work qualification apart from three child and family workers based in each of the teams who support life story work, carer recruitment enquiries and carer retention tasks.

11. Protecting children from harm

- 11.1 Coventry Service operates a safe recruitment process for all staff employed by the agency. In addition, there is a rigorous vetting and assessment process undertaken with all potential carers. Enhanced Disclosure and Barring (DBS) checks are repeated every 3 years for all carers and staff.
- 11.2 Our processes and procedures will ensure that any concern is addressed and monitored by the management team and will inform service development and best practice, for example: poor quality of care/breach of foster care agreement; child protection procedures which deal with allegations of abuse against foster carers and through the complaints procedures.
- 11.3 Children are made aware about these procedures through their social worker, fostering supervising social worker and the Children's Guide. They also have access to a Children's Rights Advocacy service independent of the service.

12. Provision of Therapeutic Services.

- 12.1 The Service has a referral route to the Journeys and Coventry Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), who provide therapeutic input to children and young people in foster placement, some consultation to carers and other professionals. CAMHS comprises of clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, and child and adolescent mental health practitioners with expertise in children's mental health. This is accessed the single front door. .

13. Provision of Health Promotion Support Services

- 13.1 The Designated Nurse for Looked after Children in conjunction with other nurses within the team, oversee Children's Annual Health Assessments and have input into the health promotion of Young People. Dedicated paediatricians advise the fostering panels on medical issues for applications to foster. The Service Fostering Service works with others in children's services to ensure looked after

children's needs are addressed. The Fostering Service is committed to ensuring the health outcomes for young people looked after continually improve.

14. Provision of Educational Support Services

- 14.1 There is a virtual head teacher for Looked After Children to look at improving the attainment attendance and exclusion issues and to improve partnerships with schools in Coventry. There is a qualified teacher based in the service providing training, support and advice to foster carers regarding their looked after children's educational needs.
- 14.2 Coventry fostering service recognises the need to improve Looked After Children attendance at school. The Fostering Service works closely with the carers in addressing this issue and this has resulted in a significant improvement in attendance of children in foster care in recent years.
- 14.3 Within Children's Services we have an expectation that holidays will not be taken in term time and that children are not routinely taken out of school. We work together with our colleagues to ensure that this only occurs in exceptional circumstances and not as a rule.
- 14.4 The Fostering Service works alongside and supports educational initiatives for looked after children by promoting children's educational needs to our Foster Carers. Carers are expected to attend Personal Education Planning Meetings with children and young people and, where appropriate, the supervising social worker will also attend. Within the educational setting, young people in year 10 and 11 can access 1:1 tuition.

15. Provision of Leisure, Sport, Cultural and Religious Activity

- 15.1 Foster carer training and supervision promotes the importance of leisure provision for looked after children and young people with the expectation that carers will seek out and support new experiences and activities to enhance children's self-worth, social development and independence.
- 15.2 Foster carers and their families are able to access the Passport to Leisure. This gives free access to certain leisure facilities. The council as a whole provides a 'Corporate Offer' to foster carers, their families and looked after children improving free access to a range of council services, including sports and leisure opportunities such as free swimming lessons and free gym use.
- 15.3 We aim to support all young people in their religious and cultural beliefs and customs. We ensure that information is available to provide understanding of different cultures and religions. We will provide resources that may be needed to ensure young people are able to practice their beliefs and customs. We are committed to directly challenging racism and ensure that all young people who access our services are aware of our policies in relation to anti-oppressive practice and anti-racism.
- 15.4 We will ensure that all people are treated equally, regardless of age, sex, sexuality, ethnicity, disability or religion. Fostering supervising social workers

assist and advise carers with issues such as appropriate placement matching and with trans racial placements.

16. Care leavers provision

16.2 The Route21 Looked After Children's social work teams work closely with the Fostering Service and other professionals to provide a holistic approach to meeting young people's needs. Coventry is committed to supporting young people to remain in their foster placement beyond 18 years of age in order to experience normal family life and preparation for independence if this supports them more effectively. The 'Staying Put' policy provides financial and other support for former foster carers making commitments to young people age 18 - 21years.

17. Recruitment of Foster Carers

17.1 The Fostering Service has a recruitment strategy which utilises up-to-date data regarding the gaps in current resource provision. Currently, more places are needed for teenagers; sibling groups; children and young people with disabilities or additional needs.

17.2 There is an ongoing recruitment strategy and the adoption and fostering pages within the Coventry City Council website are updated regularly and include details of information sessions which are held approximately every 4 weeks across the City. The Fostering Service uses a variety of media, including digital and audio to recruit new carers. The strategy is informed by national research and local evaluation and analytics to ensure that methods utilised are most likely to achieve the desired results. A distinctive brand has been established and maintained and our 'reach' within our target communities has been extended. We work closely with the corporate communications team on our marketing and media strategy.

17.3 We are engaging with our foster carers and young people who have experiences of foster care to help recruit carers and have implemented a 'Foster Friendly Employers' strategy is in place for Coventry City Council, which will enable the service to develop closer relationships with local businesses. The examples from the other Local Authorities area are being incorporated into our strategy and we are offering a range of benefits, offers and events for Foster families and their looked after children.

18. Approval and Assessment Process

18.1 Persons over the age of 21 may apply to become a Foster Carer (but between the ages of 21 and 25 yrs we will need to have evidence of relevant transferable skills and / or related experience). Initial responses and advice to enquirers from the recruitment team are welcoming and within set timescales, normally the same working day.

18.2 There is immediate exclusion of any applicant who has been convicted of any serious offence against a child or adult. Interest is welcomed from all members of

the community, regardless of relationship status, employment situation, class, gender, sexuality, culture, ethnicity or religion.

- 18.3 The majority of initial enquiries and registrations of interest about fostering with Coventry are received through a range of sources including information events, the dedicated recruitment phone line and via email.
- 18.4 The website is regularly reviewed to ensure information is up to date, accessible and user friendly. When a person contacts the Service to express an interest in fostering they will be able to have a discussion with a social worker who will explain the process, take some initial information and offer an initial home visit if appropriate.
- 18.5 At the home visit we will discuss fostering with the enquirers and members of the family, check the home conditions are safe, warm and clean and that there is space for a foster child to sleep, do homework and play and participate as a full family member.
- 18.6 If all parties agree that fostering could be suitable for the family, a formal application is made and statutory checks are completed. Whilst checks are in progress applicants are invited to attend training and preparation groups ('Skills to Foster') is then made. The preparation training undertaken utilises the Fostering Network 'Skills to Foster' course which includes subject areas on Child Development; Separation and Loss; Working Together; Safe Care; Moving On.
- 18.7 The service runs 6- 8 Skills to Foster courses a year, normally at evenings and weekends and as demand dictates. The training is run by qualified fostering supervising social workers, experienced foster carers with contributions from care experienced young people and colleagues from health and education .
- 18.8 When preparation training is completed, the applicants begin an assessment that includes the requirements laid down in Schedule 3 of the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 and the National Minimum Standards in Foster Care (2011), Assessment and approval of Foster Carers 2013 (amendments to Children Act 1989) and Schedule 4 of the Care Planning Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010 (where children are fostered by relatives and friends).
- 18.9 All carers are subject to a number of statutory checks and references:
 - Disclosure and Barring Checks on all members of the household over the age of 18
 - Child Protection Checks
 - Local Authority Checks
 - Three personal references
 - In addition, interviews are conducted with grown up children and children
 - living in the household

Foster carers are additionally asked to undertake:

- A full medical examination with their GP. (Applicants for short breaks are asked to complete a medical questionnaire which is sent to their

- G.P. for verification / comments)
 - A work reference from present or previous employer
 - To agree to the department making contact with any schools which their children attend to ascertain the school's view on their involvement / suitability
 - To agree to the department making contact with ex partners regarding their application to foster.
 - If the family have lived outside the UK, checks from the country of origin or previous residence are also requested.
- 18.10 The majority of foster carers are subject to a competency based assessment. The depth of this assessment will depend on the role for which the carer is being assessed, with appropriateness and proportionality being the measure of this. All potential carers are invited to be fully involved in the assessment and to use self completion sheets as a tool to look at their competencies. The fostering service uses the British Association of Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) Form C foster carer assessment format for the completion of its assessments.
- 18.11 Connected persons foster carers are subject to an alternative assessment taking into account the nature of the task and the requirements of Schedule 4 (Care Planning Regulations 2010). Connected persons foster carers are not normally required to produce a portfolio or evidence of experience and skills. They are encouraged to do so and can also access the 16 week KEEP programme..
- 18.12 The assessment of a foster carer would take place in the applicant's home over a period of six to eight visits, plus reference interviews and interviewing other relevant parties. The assessing social worker would ensure that timelines, analysis of significant relationships, the family dynamics and characteristics of the foster carers underpin and inform the assessment. The assessment focuses on the individual or individuals applying to become foster carers and their family. We make a detailed assessment and analysis of their past and present experiences, the skills and competencies which they would bring to their new role and help them to think about their reasons for a applying to become foster carers. The assessor will also use the process to assess the applicant's suitability to foster children with differing needs including disabled children and this is made transparent.
- 18.13 The assessments, together with a portfolio of evidence of experience and skills compiled by the foster carer are presented to a fostering panel. Applicants are encouraged to attend with the assessing social worker. All information gathered (except references) is shared with the applicant/s. The social worker's assessment is shared with them prior to the panel.
- 18.14 The fostering panel meets monthly and is independently chaired and comprise of people from a variety of backgrounds. They consider and recommend the approval, or not, of all foster carers. The recommendation then goes before the Agency Decision Maker who makes a final decision. Any appeals can be made within 28 days and may either make further representation to the fostering panel or have their assessment considered by the Independent Review Mechanism who in turn will make a recommendation back to the

agency.

- 18.15 All foster carers are subjected to an annual review of their status as foster carers. This is a formal review of the work that they have undertaken during the year and includes an opportunity to reflect on achievements and learning. Annual reviews are undertaken by SSW and draw on contributions from the Foster Carer and family, Supervising Social worker, Child's Social Worker, Looked After Child / Young Person and other professionals involved with the placement. A report is presented to the fostering panel in the case of all first reviews, significant changes to the carer's registration or cases of concern.

19. Support, Supervision and Training of Foster Carers

- 19.1 All foster carers are linked with a qualified social worker (fostering supervising social worker) who provides supervision and support. The supervising social worker undertakes a minimum of four supervisory visits per year to approved carer(s) and additional regular visits as required (monthly). They also make at least one unannounced visit per year. All visits and contacts with the foster carer are recorded.
- 19.2 The completion of Foundation training in Theraplay by 7 staff in the Family Placement Service has meant the delivery of monthly workshops to Foster carers on effectively using these principles whilst working with children. Feedback from the monthly workshops which involve the child has been that this relationship based intervention is meeting the needs of carers who are working with children who have a number of attachment related behaviours
- 19.3 The service believes that it is important that foster carers are able to access support and at the time that they need it. During office hours if a foster carer is unable to contact their own supervising social worker they can contact a Duty supervising social worker for advice and support. The supervising social worker will usually be the first point of contact for the foster carer and be able to offer support, advice, guidance and supervision regarding most matters relating to fostering and the care of the child.
- 19.4 Additionally, every looked after child has an allocated social worker. This person will usually be the first point of contact for the foster carer for any information and advice on issues that relate to the child. If this worker is not available during office hours, a duty worker is always available to deal with any urgent problems or issues.
- 19.5 If additional support is required outside of these times, foster carers can contact the Emergency Duty team or access a carer support line outside of core hours.
- 19.6 Coventry fostering service provides an Independent Support Service to foster carers (currently commissioned through Fostering Network) where this is required for mediation purposes or to provide advocacy support for the carer during allegations. The fostering service believes that carers should be fully reimbursed for the costs of looking after a child, and provides weekly allowances at Fostering Network recommended rates. In addition, travel and

other additional payments are made available to carers together with essential equipment for the task. Payments in the form of a weekly fee are available to carers who meet specific requirements on the Skills Level fees .

- 19.7 At times, all children can have accidents that cause damage. When such damage occurs, carers are initially asked to claim on their own household insurance. Any excess payments or increase in premiums that results from this can be reclaimed from the department. In the event of the carer's insurance not covering the loss or damage, a claim can be submitted for consideration by the Fostering Service.
- 19.8 The Fostering Service provides a range of foster carer support groups, assisted by supervising social workers. The groups generally involve carers across all skill levels and take place in the daytime at a variety of venues across the city.
- 19.9 Foster Carers Handbook and Diary. All Foster Carers are provided with a electronic link to the handbook and diary which gives factual information which they need to know about the service and to perform their role. This includes key information and guidance on safe care; allegations; education; medication; recording and record keeping; the role of social workers and key policies and procedures. Policies and procedures are also available to carers online via the Departments children's procedures manual.

20. Training

- 20.1 The Fostering Service believes that a comprehensive training programme for both staff and foster carers is key to their personal and professional development. Training provides people with the required skills and knowledge, necessary in providing a high quality service. It is also key to safeguarding children, foster carers and their families by informing them of how to care for children safely.
- 20.2 Training is an opportunity for all foster carers to acquire new skills, assist with personal and professional development and explore new ideas via peer support and group discussion.
- 20.3 The KEEP programme intervention has continued to be offered to both foster carers and special guardians. It has now become part of the mandatory training for carers who are approved to take children within the age of 4 to 11. Results continue to show that carers value the 16 week programme and report improved behaviours for specific children.
- 20.4 The Fostering Service has a clear training strategy, covering pre-approval training to potential applicants, induction training for newly approved carers and post approval training which incorporates the Children's Workforce Development Council / Training and Development Standards certification A comprehensive rolling programme of training is available and reviewed regularly, meeting the on-going professional development of foster carers throughout their fostering career. Connected persons foster carers are also provided with targeted training opportunities more suited to the fostering task of caring for family members or friends' children.

21. Complaints Procedure

- 21.1 The City Council Children's Social Work Service operates a complaints service which is independent of the Fostering Service. Foster Carers are given a Complaints and Compliments leaflet, detailing the process if they wish to make a complaint when they sign the Foster Carer Agreement.
- 21.2 Birth Parents are given a copy of the Complaints and Compliments Leaflet in the Information Pack for Parents which is provided by social workers of children in placements.
- 21.3 It is the role of the child's social worker to give them the complaints leaflet for looked after children and to inform them of the Role of the Children's Rights Service. The child can also make their views known through the review system and they are sent a consultation form about the placement prior to the foster carer review. Details of how to complain and how to contact Ofsted are available in the Children's Guide to Fostering.

22. Allegations

- 22.1 All allegations in relation to foster carers are investigated and actioned through Coventry Safeguarding Children Service, reporting to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on behalf of the Coventry Safeguarding Children's Board under the procedures for Investigating Allegations against Adults Caring for Children. The Coventry Safeguarding Children Board policies and procedures are followed. Foster carers are offered independent support during this process which can be accessed via their supervising social worker.

23. Monitoring performance

- 23.1 The performance of the Service will be monitored at a number of levels and in a number of ways:
- Ofsted will inspect regularly to ensure that the Service complies with legislation and standards
 - Report annually to the council's Executive Board.
 - Report quarterly and annually to Corporate level (Elected Members)
 - Report monthly on service performance to Head of Service and Fostering Steering Group
 - Activity will be monitored at a strategic level against the objectives, performance indicators and tasks as contained in the Improvement Plan.
 - In addition to the above, a Quality Assurance and Performance framework monitors the Fostering Service key requirements.
- 23.2 The following Key Performance Indicators will be used to monitor the Fostering Service:

Performance Indicators:

- No and percentage of children looked after in foster care and adoption.
- National PSA target – Placement Stability (% of children under 16 years looked after for 2.5 years or more in the same placement for at least 2 years)
- The Fostering service will recruit new foster carers and increase the number of carers for children (targets as agreed).
- All assessments will be completed within 6 months.
- All newly approved carers will carry out agreed induction training within first year of approval
- Continuous auditing of carer case files to ensure statutory compliance and good practice standards

24. Contact details

The Service is currently based within the Children’s Social Work Service at:

Family Placement Service
 Civic Centre 1,
 2nd Floor
 Little Park Street,
 Coventry
 CV1 5RS
 Telephone: 024 7683 1873

OFSTED Contact Details

Ofsted
 NBU, 3rd Floor, Royal Exchange Buildings
 St Ann’s Square, Manchester M2 7LA
 Telephone: 08456 404040
 Fax: 08456 404049
 email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
 website: www.ofsted.gov.uk



Public Report Cabinet Member Report

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

27 July 2015

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People - Councillor E. Ruane

Director Approving Submission of the report

Executive Director of People

Ward(s) affected:

None

Title: Adoption Financial Support Policy

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

This report seeks approval of the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People to the proposed changes for financial support provided to adopters.

The Council will provide financial support to an adoptive parent or prospective adoptive parent, for the purpose of supporting the placement of the adoptive child or the continuation of adoption arrangements after an adoption order is made.

The Adoption Support Services Regulations 2005 specify the conditions for providing adoption support services including the provision of financial support.

Eligibility for financial support will be based on an overall assessment of the child and adoptive family's support needs. Coventry will undertake an assessment of support needs and this includes the undertaking of an assessment at the request of an adoptive parent, after the granting of an Adoption Order, if the adoptive parent feels there have been significant changes to a child's needs and circumstances or their own financial circumstances.

The adoption financial support policy was reviewed in 2009 and this review seeks to update the policy in line with the review of other allowances. The policy review seeks update the policy.

The key elements of the revised policy are:

1. The Policy applies to children subject to adoption orders in line with statutory guidance (see 1.2 below) and under the criteria set out in 1.4 below.

2. An assessment for support services must be carried out where the child is a looked after child. A financial assessment is always carried out where the Local Authority considers that financial support may be required for a child who is currently or previously looked after.
3. A means test will
 - Take into account 80% of the disposable income
 - Deducted both child benefit and the child tax credit.
 - Disability Living Allowance will not be deducted
 - Child Benefit will not be deducted where income support is the only source of income.
 - Mileage will be paid 0.45p per mile
4. Payments for children will cease at the child's 18th birthday unless remains in full-time education or training, when it may continue until the end of the course or training he is then undertaking. Any other exceptions to this will be reviewed on an individual basis
5. Conditions of payments are written into the plan and the authority may attach special conditions to any payment it deems relevant, and that carer/s' sign to give their acceptance to these conditions.
6. Any overpayment is subject to full recovery in accordance with the conditions laid out
7. The policy requires that all support including financial support is subject to an annual review or a review where there is a change of circumstances.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People is requested to:-

- Approve the revised policy as detailed in the report for awarding adoption allowances with immediate effect for new cases and from the allowance review date for existing allowances.

List of Appendices included:

Other useful background papers

No

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Adoption Financial Support Policy

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 Coventry's permanence policy is committed to achieving permanence for looked after children, and this can be achieved through the granting of an Adoption Order, a Special Guardianship Order or Child Arrangement Orders. An Adoption Order makes an adoption legal and gives the adopter/s parental rights and responsibilities for the child.
- 1.2 The Council will provide financial support to an adoptive parent or prospective adoptive parent/s, for the purpose of supporting the placement of the adoptive child/ren or the continuation of adoption arrangements after adoption orders are made.
- 1.3 The Adoption Support Services Regulations 2005 provide the legal framework within which allowance should be paid and these regulations specify the conditions for providing adoption support services including the provision of financial support. In summary the regulations stipulate the following financial provisions:
 - outlines the circumstances in which financial support can be paid (Regulation 8)
 - enables the Local Authority for providing remuneration to foster care placements when transitioning to adoptive placements; and for a period of two years. (Regulation 9)
 - specifies the circumstances where an adoption allowance may be paid; and in all other cases by a single lump sum payment. (Regulation 10)
 - specifies when financial support arrangements should cease (Regulation 11)
 - specifies the conditions for which the adoptive parent must agree before an adoption allowance is paid. (Regulation 12)
 - specifies the information that must be taken into the account when undertaking an assessment of a persons need for financial support. In particular it stipulates the circumstances where means testing must be undertaken and when it is within the discretion of the Council to decide if means testing is appropriate. (Regulation 15)
 - specifies the arrangements for reviewing an adoption allowance (Regulation 20)
- 1.4 Financial support is payable to an adoptive parent for the purpose of supporting the placement of the adoptive child or the continuation of adoption arrangements after an adoption order is made. Eligibility for financial support will be based on an overall assessment of the child and adoptive family's support needs.
- 1.5 The Council will undertake an assessment of support needs as part of the matching process prior to the placement of the child with their prospective adopter/s. An assessment can also be undertaken at the request of an adoptive parent, after the granting of an Adoption Order, if the adoptive parent feels there have been significant changes to a child's needs and circumstances or their own financial circumstances.
- 1.6 Financial support may be paid as an allowance, if it is provided to meet a need which is likely to give rise to recurring expenditure, or, it may be paid as a single lump sum following agreement between the Council and the adoptive parent/s.
- 1.7 Financial support is paid.
 - Where it is necessary to ensure that the adoptive parent can look after the child.
 - To meet the child special care needs which requires greater expenditure of resources because of illness, disability, emotional or behaviour difficulties or the continuing consequences of past abuse or neglect. Payment under this category is intended where the child's condition is serious and long term

- To enable siblings to be placed together whether half or full blood
 - To facilitate the placement of 'harder to place' children because of their age or ethnic origin of the child, or where support is needed to meet recurring costs in relation to contact.
 - Expenditure on legal costs, including fees payable to a court in relation to an adoption
 - Expenditure necessary for the purpose of introducing an adoptive child to his adoptive parents, accommodating and maintaining the child, including mileage costs, reasonable amount as a settling in grant to enable the purchase of essential items of equipment which the family could not necessarily be expected to have or afford to purchase, alterations to and adaptations of the home, provision of means of transport and provision of clothing, toys and other items necessary for the purpose of looking after the child.
- 1.8 Where the Adoption Support Assessment identifies a support need that requires on-going financial expenditure, consideration will be given to paying the adoptive parent an adoption allowance. In determining the level of financial support to be paid, the Council must take account of any other grant, benefit, allowance or resource which is available to the person. It is therefore important to ensure that adopters are aware of and taking advantage of all benefits and tax credits available to them.
- 1.9 Statutory guidance stipulates that financial support payable under the Adoption Support Regulations 2005 cannot duplicate any other payment available to the carer/s. The exception being where the child is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or the adoptive parents are dependent on state benefits. In determining the amount of financial support the Council must take account of any other grant, benefits (such as child benefit and child tax credits), and the exception being Disability Living Allowance
- 1.10 The regulations set out a number of considerations that local authorities must have regard to when undertaking an assessment for support, including financial support that forms the considerations of the means test. Where financial support is to be paid on-going, it is not payable until the carer/s or potential carer/s agrees to a detailed set of conditions as laid out in the legislation.
- 1.11 The regulations also provide that the local authority may attach special conditions to any payment they consider appropriate, including the timescale within which and purposes for which any payment of financial support should be utilised. Such conditions are written into the plan and that carer/s' sign to give their acceptance to these conditions. These also require the carer/s to contact the authority with any changes in their circumstances that would affect the amount payable.
- 1.12 Any overpayment is subject to full recovery. Any debt write-off would be highly exceptional and subject to authorisation in accordance with the Authority's debt write-off policy.
- 1.13 In some cases the proposed revised policy will result in an increased payment and in other cases a reduction in payment to the adoptive parent(s) would be required. The Council will seek to ensure that variations to the current policy will not adversely affect existing adoptive placements, or prospective adopters, where an adoption allowance has already been agreed and arrangements to protect adopters for a period of three years would be considered.
- 1.14 Each case is determined on its individual circumstances; the final decision on the transitional timing and transitional rate(s) will be at the discretion of a joint decision between the Head of Service and the Financial Manager.

1.15 The Adoption Support Services Regulations 2005 state that finance support ceases to be payable to the carer/s if:

- The child ceases to have a home with the adoptive parent,
- The child ceases full-time education and commences employment,
- The child qualifies for income support or jobseeker's allowance in his own right, or
- The child reaches the age of 18, unless he remains in full-time education or training, when it may continue until the end of the course or training he is then undertaking.

In addition the Council will cease allowances where the review determines that the allowance should be terminated.

1.16 The proposed starting rates adoption rates before any financial assessment criteria are:

Child's age	Adoption Child Rate £
0 – 4	114.30
5 – 10	130.26
11-15	162.06
16 +	197.12

1.17 The policy requires that all support including financial support is subject to an annual review or a review where there is a change of circumstances. The financial assessment calculates the financial circumstances of the adopter by calculating household income and deducting household expenditure to arrive at the disposable income figure. The starting rate (as shown in 1.16) is then adjusted to reflect this contribution. The main changes that we are proposing in relation to the financial assessment are to deduct child benefit where appropriate, and alter the percentage applied to disposable income to 80%.

2 Options considered and recommended proposal

2.1 This recommendation ensures compliance with the statutory guidance, and takes into account practice and approach in other Local Authorities.

3 Results of consultation undertaken

3.1 The policy is compliant with statutory regulations.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

4.1 Subject to approval, it is proposed that the revised policy and practice will be implemented with immediate effect for new cases. For current cases it is proposed that the revised financial assessment including the means test is phased in for on-going cases as part of their annual review. All adopters receiving an allowance will be advised that child benefit will be deducted. Financial assessment review dates may potentially be brought forward to enable all cases to be reviewed together during the transitional assessment phase.

5. Comments from Executive Director of Resources

5.1 Financial implications

5.1.1 Adoption Support Budget – financial support for adopters
For 2014/15, there was a total spend of £969,000 against a budget of £721,000 giving an overspend of £248,000. The overspend predicted for 2015/16 at quarter 1 is £313,000. The

continuing overspend is due to an increase in activity and unit costs in recent years, as identified in the table below.

Adoption Allowances - unit costs	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
	£	£	£	£
				Qtr 1 forecast
Cost	723,000	729,000	969,000	1,034,000
No children	125	132	137	137
Unit cost - per year	5,784	5,523	7,073	7,547
Average per week	111	106	136	145

Note: For 2015/16, there are 76 households

- 5.1.2 The revised financial assessment will reduce costs by £74,000 per annum, once the new assessment is applied for existing carers. This still leaves a predicted overspend of £239,000 per annum not taking into account starters and leavers.

There is further review work to do in this area, and we will report back to Cabinet Member on this

5.2 Legal implications

The statutory framework sets out certain conditions, which will trigger the need for financial support, but the overall intention is to ensure that the adoption of a child or the continuation of adoption arrangements should not be prevented because of lack of financial support. The Adoption Support Regulations 2005 sets out the circumstances in which financial support may be paid to an adoptive parent.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2005/691/regulation/3/made>

6. Other implications.

- 6.1 **How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)**

The numbers of children in care are high and securing permanence for children within their family network or with their foster carers is a key strand in reducing the number of children in the care. As a Corporate Parent, securing appropriate family placements is an important means of giving them the best life chances possible

- 6.2 **How is risk being managed?**

The amendments proposed bring policies for Children's Services up to date and ensure that practices are efficient and fully fit for purpose. There is an impact on the children's budget and this will be monitored carefully.

- 6.3 **What is the impact on the organisation?**

As Corporate Parents of children who were looked after prior to their adoption and the Council has a duty to ensure that all these children have a financial assessment carried out on their behalf.

The changes will mean that some families will gain and some families will lose financially. For families where there is a predicated loss this will be carefully reviewed and each case will merit transitional arrangements, particularly those in a situation where their allowance payment will significantly reduce or cease. The financial needs of those families can be fully supported by either benefits for which they are eligible and/or the revised policy for Carer/s.

6.4 Equalities / EIA .

The review of the policy and assessment process will ensure that all families are treated equitably and have access to the required resources to look after the children in their care.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

None

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None

Report author(s):

Jivan Sembi
Head of Service
People Directorate
Jivan.sembi@coventry.gov.uk
02476 832895

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

Contributor/approver name	Title	Directorate or organisation	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Liz Gosling	Interim Service Manager Family Placements	People	06.07.15	09.07.15
Robert Orton	Finance	Resources	06.07.15	10.07.15
Names of approvers: (officers and members)				
Brian Walsh	Executive Director	People	06.07.15	
Yolanda Corden	Assistant Director	People	06.07.15	09.07.15
Rachael Sugars	Finance Manager	Resources	06.07.15	10.07.15
Julie Newman	Legal Services	Resources	06.07.15	07.07.15
Neelesh Sutaria	Human Resources	Resources	09.07.15	09.07.15
Councillor Ruane	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People		13.07.15	

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Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

27 July 2015

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People – Councillor E Ruane

Director Approving Submission of the report

Executive Director of People

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Update on the Troubled Families Programme

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

Phase 1 of the Troubled Families Programme was completed in May 2015 with Coventry achieving 100% success in turning around 905 complex families. Coventry was invited by the Department of Communities and Local Government to be an 'Early Starter' in Phase 2 of the expanded programme. This report provides an update of progress and performance to date and challenges in going forward with Phase 2 of this Government Programme through to 2020

Recommendations:

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People is requested to:

- 1) Note the progress achieved to date on the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Troubled Families Programme within Coventry and acknowledge the challenges faced for phase 2 as outlined in section 4 of this report.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1: Troubled Families Delivery Model
Appendix 2: Phase 2 Expanded Troubled Family Programme
Appendix 3: Case Study 1
Appendix 4: Case Study 2 'Our Story'

Background papers:

None

Other Useful Documents

Financial framework for the expanded Troubled Families programme, Department of Communities and Local Government, March 2015, available from:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/financial-framework-for-the-expanded-troubled-families-programme>

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Update on the Troubled Families Programme

1. Background

- 1.1 In April 2012 the Government Launched the Troubled Families programme as a result of the 2011 civil disturbances. The £448 million scheme aimed to incentivise Local Authorities and their partners to turn around the lives of 120,000 troubled families by May 2015. The national criteria for the programme was families where children were not attending school, young people who were committing crime and involved in anti-social behaviour and finally families with intergenerational worklessness. The programme uses a Payment by Results process, where the Local Authority receives an attachment fee, and claims the remainder of money through working with families to achieve positive outcomes.
- 1.2 Phase 1 of the programme started in Coventry in November 2012. The over-arching objective for this programme was to embed a '**whole family**' approach to working with troubled and problematic families, through the assertive keyworker model and intensive intervention.
- 1.3 In Coventry the programme was positioned within the Local Authorities Early Intervention Services, predominantly managed within Children and Families First. The expectation under phase 1 of the programme was to work with 905 families meeting at least 2 of the 3 national criteria. Coventry's delivery model within Early Intervention and Prevention aligned seamlessly with the Department of Communities and Local Governments proposed 3 tier model of intervention: 'Intensive', 'Light' and 'Super Light' (Appendix1).
- 1.4 The Programme has so far successfully supported 905 Coventry families to turn their lives around, helped them to secure a better future for their children and in the long term improve their communities by lifting them out of poverty and empowering them to take control of their future.
- 1.5 **Impact on Families Phase 1:**
- 1.6 The impact of Phase 1 of the programme on families is as follows:

632 families have children with improved attendance and behaviour at school, 334 families have committed at least 60% less anti-social behaviour, and youth offending has decreased by at least 33% in 76 families. Additionally, 31 families have seen at least 1 adult move off out of work benefits and into continuous employment, while another 37 achieved the 'progress to work' outcome by voluntarily accessing the work programme or European Social Fund Support for Families project.
- 1.7 The Programme was supported by a grant of £3.2m. We have not only successfully claimed sufficient payment by result to cover all of our expenditure for the three years but have also funded interventions/contracts within the early help arena.
- 1.8 In real terms, the impact of the programme goes far beyond the collection of data; early intervention services have worked with families to resolve a range of issues including poor parenting, neglect, poor housing conditions, debt and benefit issues, substance misuse, poor mental health, and domestic abuse in order to achieve the outcomes.
- 1.9 The Troubled Families agenda cuts across strategic pathways and service delivery areas including Health, Children's Social Care, Adult services, Mental Health, Probation Youth Offending, Community Safety, Policing and Social Housing provision and Education.

1.10 Additionally the third sector organisations play a crucial role in working with families in ways that they can feel safe to engage. During the last three years the partnership working arrangements have strengthened through:-

1. The integration of a seconded post from the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) into the troubled families keyworker team
2. Co-location of the TF/ CAF coordinator post into the YOS with Police and Probation representatives.
3. The European Social Fund funded Support for Family project, CSV Volunteer programme, Coventry Law Centre for debt and financial advice for families.
4. Community Safety Partnership also contributed towards the funding of the Systemic Family Therapist working with the families and their keyworkers.
5. The co-location of a Primary Mental Health worker into the keyworker team and integrated work within the Intensive Family Support Case Panel meetings.
6. The development of the Acting Early Programme (0-5) combines Health Visitors, Midwives and Children's Centres, Children & Family First Teams and the Social Care Referral and assessment Team. This integrated model compliments phase 2 of the Troubled Families programme

1.11 The programme has been a catalyst for the transformation of services, it has supported greater collaboration, integration and co-location and has made joined up working a reality. For families, it provides a 'One Stop Shop' approach where services can be easily accessed. All of this is not only good news for Coventry, but has provided the promised platform to continue the full transformation of services highlighted through Phase 2 of the programme which will include the full alignment of partner agencies to provide a holistic way of working in delivering services to families. This approach challenges traditional service delivery and allows families to be met at their point of need without requiring escalation to crisis point or referrals into statutory services in order to manage risk and need.

2. Phase 2 - Expanded Troubled Families Programme

2.1. In June 2013, the Government announced plans to expand the Troubled Families Programme for a further five years to reach an additional 400,000 families across England (Coventry – 3,130 families). £200m has already been committed by Whitehall to fund the first year (2015-2016) of this five year programme. Due to the significantly greater scope and scale of the programme, the Government expects the expanded programme to stimulate the transformation of local public services in order to deliver the programme and reduce the costs in the long term.

2.2. The expanded programme retains the current programme's focus on families with multiple high cost problems and continues to include families affected by poor school attendance, youth crime, anti-social behaviour, and unemployment. However, the programme will also reach out to families with a broader range of problems, including those affected by domestic violence and abuse, with younger children who need help, where crime and anti-social behaviour problems may become intergenerational and with a range of physical and mental health problems. Under Phase 2 the Government has committed to pay £1,800 per family (45% of phase one funding). To be eligible for the expanded programme, each family must have at least two of the following six problems:

1. Parents and children involved in crime or anti-social behaviour
2. Children who have not been attending school regularly
3. Children who need help: children of all ages, who need help, are identified as in need or are subject to a Child Protection Plan

4. Adults out of work or at risk of financial exclusions or young people at risk of worklessness
5. Families affected by domestic violence and abuse
6. Parents and children with a range of Physical and mental health problems.

2.3 The expanded Troubled Families Programme has ambitious service transformation goals and therefore differs from Phase 1 in how it will measure, and pay for success. Rather than focusing on a small number of relatively tightly defined national results to be achieved with each family, it asks local authorities and its partners to measure success in three main ways for which funding is available:

1. Demonstrating either **‘significant and sustained’ progress or continuous employment**. Each family’s achievement of ‘significant and sustained’ progress will be assessed against a locally defined Troubled Families Outcome Plan, which can be updated to reflect changing local priorities over the life time of the programme.

Funding is available for each family who achieves success and will be paid in two parts: an upfront attachment fee of £1000 per family and a results-based payment of £800 per family.

2. Capturing a richer understanding of the progress achieved with a representative of families across a broader range of outcomes (Family Progress Data) sample and National Impact Study.
3. Developing a much better understanding of financial benefits achieved through the programme and by stimulating on-going service transformation through transparent local accountability for these benefits. This will be done through the use of the online troubled families **cost savings calculator**

2.4 The Expanded Troubled Families Programme extends the current programme both in terms of scale and reach, and has ambitious service transformation goals. The scope of the extended programme means that the troubled families approach will encapsulate the whole of the Early Intervention and Prevention agenda, as well as extending into Social Care (Level 4). The ‘Troubled Families’ approach of supporting the whole family, understanding what interventions have the greatest impact, needs to shape future workforce development, in order that this change can be felt for families before they reach this level of complexity, which aligns with the Early Help Strategic Framework in Coventry. This brings new and more complex challenges, and will require services to transform the way they work with service users. To support this work there is also a new Financial Framework which outlines the need for an Outcomes plan for the City which is currently under development: this will enable us to:

- a) Lay out what Coventry City Council aims to achieve with each family with regard to the six problems the programme aims to tackle; and how this supports our wider service transformation objectives.
- b) Provide a basis against which Coventry City Council can determine when significant and sustained progress has been achieved and, therefore, a results claim may be made for the family.
- c) Provide a framework against which our internal auditors (and DCLG spot checks) may establish whether a result is valid.

2.5 The Expanded Troubled Families Programme needs to be viewed very differently from Phase one. Whilst it is still about 400,000 families with complex needs and with problems that we all want to address to improve their lives and thereby reduce demand on local services, the Government are clear that the expanded Programme has an additional expectation, to mainstream the Troubled Families (Family Intervention) approach throughout the local authority and public sector, This includes all other Public Sector services changing the way they work (Whole family approach) not just the Local Authority; every agency needs to be responsible and accountable for the work that they do with families. We need to be clear about why we and other local services are spending money on a family and what we/they are seeking to achieve with that family in understanding which services are effective and which less so in achieving our agreed outcomes. All of this supports the transformation of our services and begins to join up departments internal and external to the Council.

3. Governance

3.1 The Coventry Troubled Families Programme has dedicated governance functions via the Troubled Families Strategic Board. Governance will be strengthened by making the existing Troubled Families Board accountable to the Joint Commissioning Board, which will have responsibility for the overall achievement of the aims of the programme and the delivery of key outcomes. In addition, we're exploring links with the Early Help Strategic Group.

4. Challenges facing the Programme:

- 4.1 The main challenges facing the Expanded Troubled Families programme and the ability to claim payment by result (PBR) are:
- a) The recruitment and retention of staff for the programme has been particularly difficult given the specialist skill sets needed and the temporary nature of the keyworker posts. This will be even more pronounced in the Expanded programme given that 3,130 families will need to be identified and worked with over the next 5 years.
 - b) The likely number of families to be turned around is highly challenging and the resources available from Central Government to support delivery are less per family than available during phase one.
 - c) Once the final details of the expanded programme are fully available from government, there is a clear need for the City Council and its partners to develop an adequate delivery and financial model to support the programme
 - d) Collecting baseline data from partners in a timely manner to support PBR process
 - e) The Troubled Families Strategic Board to continue to build upon the good sign up of partners, and drive the service transformation expected through phase 2.

5. Timetable

- 5.1 Department of Communities and Local Government announced plans for the Expanded Troubled Families Programme in June 2013. The programme was in place and rolled out nationally in April 2015, with delivery expected to start as soon as possible thereafter (with the exception of early starters). For Coventry, this started on 1st January 2015, four months ahead of the national roll out. In reality this meant that from January to May 2015 we were running both phase 1 and phase 2 parallel to each other with the remaining 30% (274) of families from phase 1 and 5% (156 families) of our families from phase 2 (as requested by The Department of Communities and Local Government). Additionally we will have to work with a further 532 families to bring us up to our target of 688 families claimed for by March 2016.
- 5.2 Coventry's structure for Early Help is robust and viewed by the Department of Communities and Local Government as a good model with many strengths, because of this we are now in a very strong position starting phase 2 of the programme given that we currently have

490 families open to Children and Families First teams at level 3 CAF who meet the phase 2 criteria, we also have a cushion of 318 closed cases from January 2015 which also fit the criteria. This places us in a really strong position to work with our partners at level 2 e.g. Acting Early- children's Centres, Health, Education, Youth Offending Service and others to capture these families for phase 2 of the programme.

To support Phase 2 of the programme Coventry is currently finalising the Early Help Strategy which identifies the Troubled Families Outcomes Plan as key to aligning and supporting how services need to work in the future in order to achieve the greatest impact for families across the city. The Troubled Families Board has been involved in developing the draft-outcomes plan. The timetable for the Outcomes Plan is to submit a first draft to the Department of Communities and Local Government by 31st July 2015 and a final draft by 31st August. There will be opportunities for partners and internal Audit to continue to the various sections of the plan prior to final submission. The Outcomes plan will not be written in stone-the Department of Communities and Local Government expect outcomes to evolve as our programme develops and local circumstances and priorities change. Moving forward, in September this 2015 we are planning to deliver a road show of support structures and pathways for partners who will be part of this new way of whole family working.

- 5.3 Moving forward, in September this 2015 we are planning to deliver a road show of support structures and pathways for partners who will be part of this new way of whole family working.
- 5.4 This is part of the government's radical reform agenda that was set out in the 2013 Spending Round, the £200 million funding for 2015 to 2016 includes new incentives for local services such as the Police, Health and Social Care to work more closely together in order to reduce costs and improve outcomes for families.

6. Comments from Executive Director of Resources

6.1 Financial implications

6.2 Grant Conditions:

- 6.2.1 The Department of Communities and Local Government grant has been made available for the purposes of achieving the Expanded Troubled Families programme outcomes. The offer of future grant will be subject to agreement between the Troubled Families team and the Chief Executive of each local authority on an annual basis. It is expected that the local authority takes full advantage of all other initiatives, working closely with partners to ensure that the remainder of families are supported.
- 6.2.2 The Payment by Results will be based on self-declarations of results by Coventry City Council verified by the Councils Internal Audit Team against the Local Outcomes Plan. The following table includes the forecast income and expenditure for the Troubled Families Programme Phase 2 – this is based on information provided by the Department of Communities and Local Government, and an assumed Payment by Result rate of 70%. This has been updated from the last report provided on 10th February to include the final carry forward figure from phase 1 plus an increase in the Service Transformation grant.
- 6.2.3 It is expected that Coventry works with 3,130 families during phase 2. The target number of families for 2015/16 has been defined by Department of Communities and Local Government and the remaining balance profiled over time in line with expectations.

Phase 2 Forecast	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Totals
<u>Coventry's Target</u>	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	
Families per year	688	626	626	626	564	3,130
<u>Income</u>	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	
Carry Forward Phase 1	-769					
Attachment fee	-688	-626	-626	-626	-564	
Service Transformation Grant	-225	-200	-200	-200	-200	
Up-front income	-1,682	-826	-826	-826	-764	
(based on 70% phase 2)	-385	-353	-353	-353	-316	
Total income	-2,067	-1,179	-1,179	-1,179	-1,080	-6,684
<u>Expenditure -</u>						
Staff Costs	976	1,012	1,049	1,086	1,123	
Other costs	283	285	287	289	294	
Total Expenditure	1,259	1,297	1,336	1,375	1,417	6,684

6.2.4 This includes some additional posts in relation to data management, programme support and social worker support. This will need to be reviewed throughout the delivery of the programme in light of levels of Payment by Result delivery, any changes to the national programme and levels of funding, and any changes in expenditure levels.

6.3 Legal implications

None

7. Other implications

None

7.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?

7.1.1 The Expanded Troubled Families Programme contributes towards the Council's key objectives through the Troubled Families Outcomes Plan which is closely linked to the Council's corporate priorities of developing a more equal city with cohesive communities and neighbourhoods, reducing the number of NEETs and Looked after children by tackling school absenteeism and exclusion thereby reducing antisocial behaviour and offending. Working with families and empowering parents to make a positive contribution to the City through the Jobs Strategy, the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Enterprise partnerships priorities around skills and employment.

7.2 How is risk being managed?

7.2.1 Risks associated with the Expanded Troubled Families programme relates to under achievement of the contract in terms of number of families participating and achieving the outcomes. This will mean that part or all of the attachment fees can be withheld and Troubled Families Co-ordinator fees will not be paid. The Troubled Families fund a large number of staff within the Troubled Families Team and Children and Families First Service on fixed term and permanent contracts and this will need to be managed, particularly if there are challenges in terms of fulfilling the requirements of the contract. These risks will be managed through the Troubled Families Strategic Board.

7.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

7.3.1 A large number of staff in the Troubled Families Team and Children and Families First Service is employed through Troubled Families funding on a mixture of fixed-term and permanent contracts.

7.3.2 Failure to successfully deliver the Expanded Troubled Families programme under Phase Two will also have an impact on the reputation of the Coventry City Council.

7.4 Equalities / EIA

7.4.1 Equality impact assessments have been undertaken regularly across the Council's work. These show that the Council's work reaches all sections of the community and helps address problems of inequality and disadvantage. The Troubled Families initiative is specifically aimed at supporting the most vulnerable families with the most complex needs. Resources will be prioritised where there is greatest need and will also provide support in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods, as delivery will be on an outreach basis.

7.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

7.5.1 There are no specific environmental implications.

7.6 Implications for partner organisations?

7.6.1 This opportunity to deliver services to some of the city's most vulnerable families will have a positive impact on individuals, families, neighbourhoods and communities. Partner organisations including some voluntary sector organisations will have access to additional services for some of their clients and many of these organisations are already working in partnership with Children's Services, Adult Services, Coventry Community Safety Partnership and Economy and Communities Division to deliver specialist services to families with multiple problems.

7.6.2 Some partner agencies will be required to exercise their tools and powers to engage families that are reluctant to participate on the programme.

7.6.3 Delivery of the troubled Families programme is heavily reliant on the contribution of partner organisations, this is evident in the family identification and the payment by results processes which rely upon pre and post intervention data from the police, community safety, youth offending service, Department of Work and Pensions, housing and Job centre Plus, Partners are also an integral part of the challenge and support packages to turn around the troubled families.

Report author(s):

Name and job title:

Louison Ricketts,
Service Manager (Children and Families First Service)

Directorate:
People

Tel and email contact:
7678 6808
Louison.Ricketts@Coventry.gov.uk

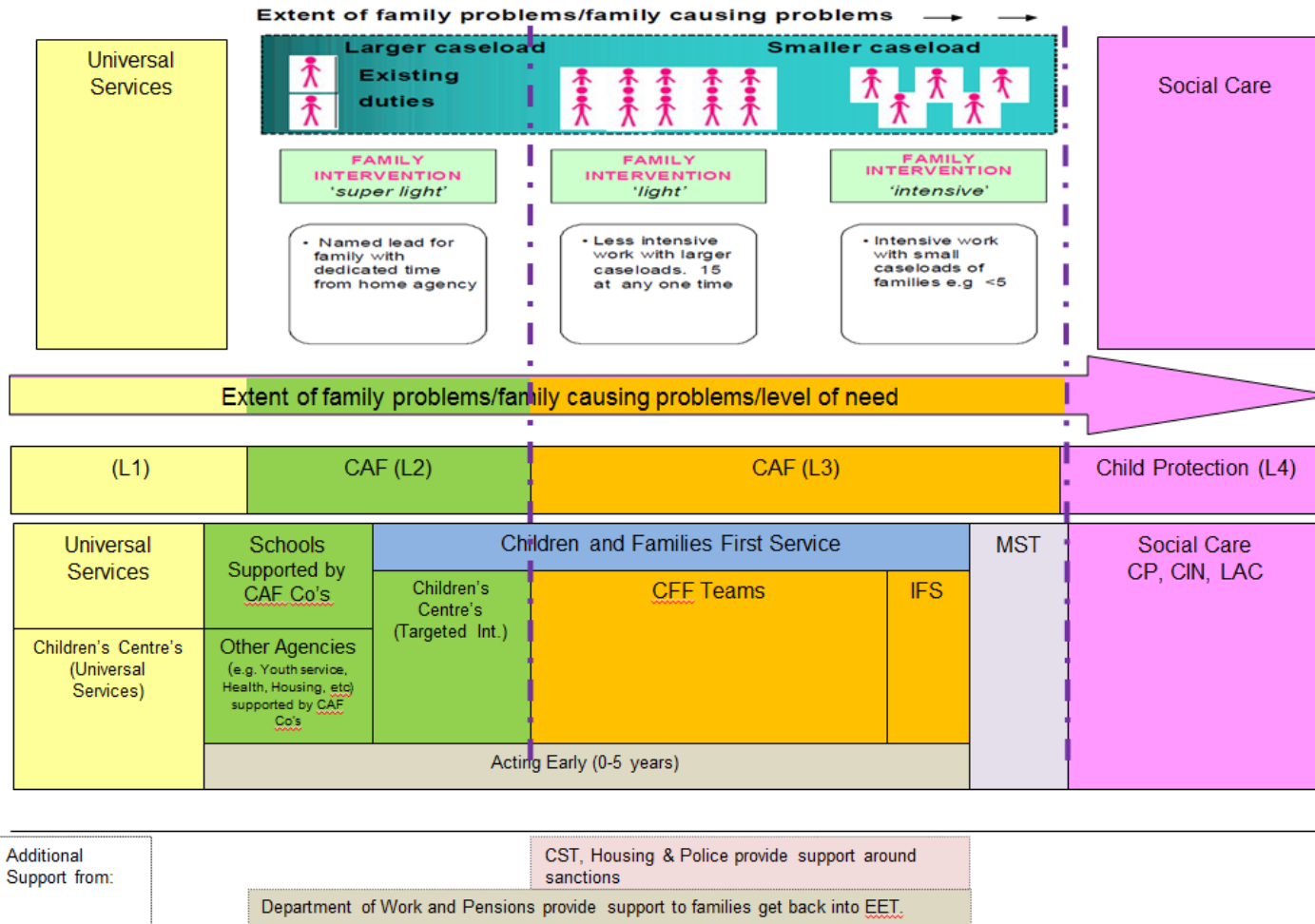
Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

Contributor/approver name	Title	Directorate or organisation	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Suzanne Bennett	Governance Services Officer	Resources	6.7.2015	8.7.2015
Yolanda Corden	Interim Assistant Director	People	6.7.2015	15.7.2015
Fran Doyle	Head of Early Help and Prevention	People	6.7.2015	15.7. 2015
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and Members)				
Rachael Sugars	Finance Manager	Resources	6.7.2015	15.7.2015
Eileen West	Lead Accountant	Resources		
Julie Newman	Legal Services	Resources	6.7.2015	15.7.2015
Brian Walsh	Executive Director	People		
Councillor E Ruane	Cabinet Member (Children and Young People)	-	6.7.2015	13.7.2015

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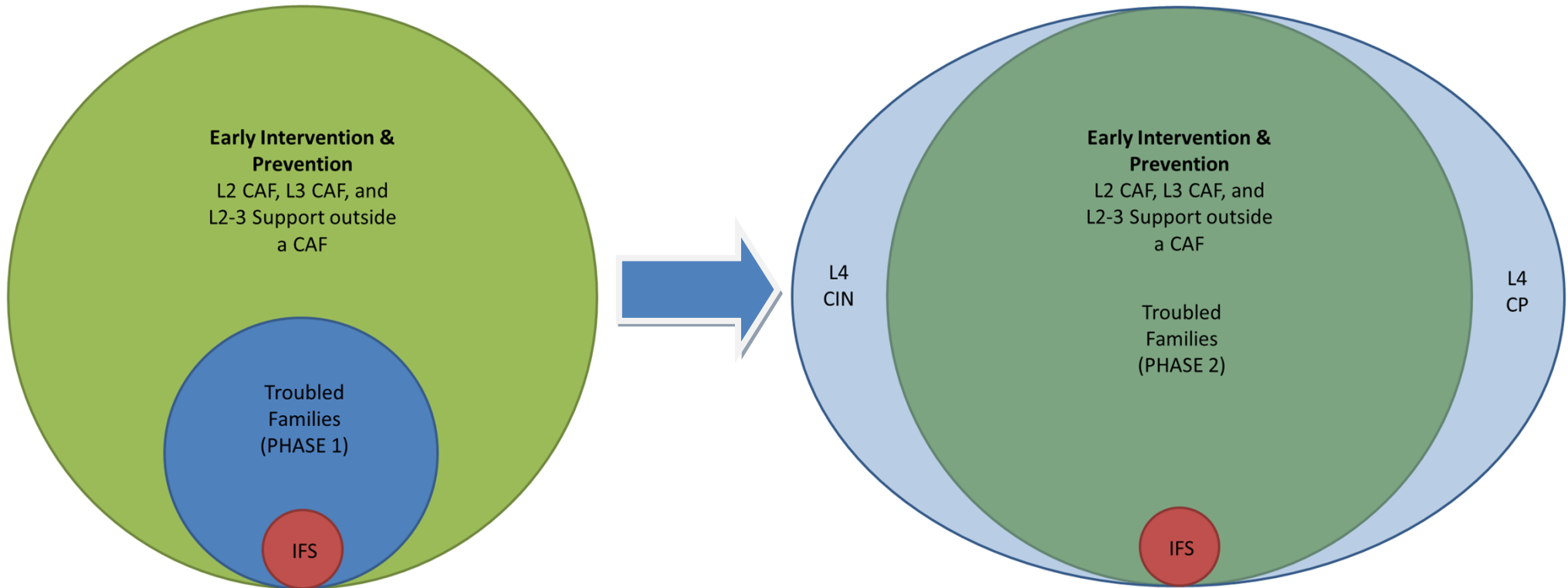
Appendix 1 – Troubled Families Delivery Model

Coventry Early Help Delivery Model



Updated 18th June 2015

Appendix 2: Phase 2 Expanded Troubled Family Programme



Phase 1: Troubled Families is part of EIP, they are cohort of families that have characteristics that meet at least 2 of the 3 national criteria. The Intensive Family Support (IFS) team work intensively with a small cohort of highest risk families.

Phase 2: The Expanded Troubled Families criterion extends the programme across the whole of EIP and into Social Care. The programme aims to stimulate service transformation, leading to both internal and external partners working differently and adopting a whole family approach

Case Study

Family Composition:

Mum (44)

Mum's partner (54)

Child A (12 Male)

Reason for Involvement:

Referral was made to Intensive Family support in August 2014. Previous history of physical, emotional and sexual abuse against Child A. The family were living in Leicestershire and had a long history of Social Care involvement involving physical, emotional abuse and neglect perpetrated by biological father, biological mother and step-father and step-mother. Child A has been subject to child protection plans in Leicestershire whilst in the care of both parents. The sexual abuse was perpetrated by Child A's half-brother.

Child A was not in education full time and attendance was sporadic and deteriorating. Within the school Child A was attending a behaviour management unit due to severe disruption in mainstream classroom. Child A also truanted from lessons within the school site and would leave site without permission. There were concerns about his mental health as well as neuro-developmental and/or communication concerns and he had been diagnosed with a disorganised attachment. Mother had a history of diagnosed depression with psychotic episodes.

Child A was at risk of committing anti-social behaviour and there were reports of aggression and threats of violence at times threatening to kill his peers. Also, there is a history of sexual offending against children in the wider family network and Child A was exhibiting sexually inappropriate language.

Team around the Family

- Education
- Educational Psychologist
- CFF Family Systemic Therapist
- CAMHS
- School SENCO
- Intensive Family Support
- Adult Mental Health services

Intervention

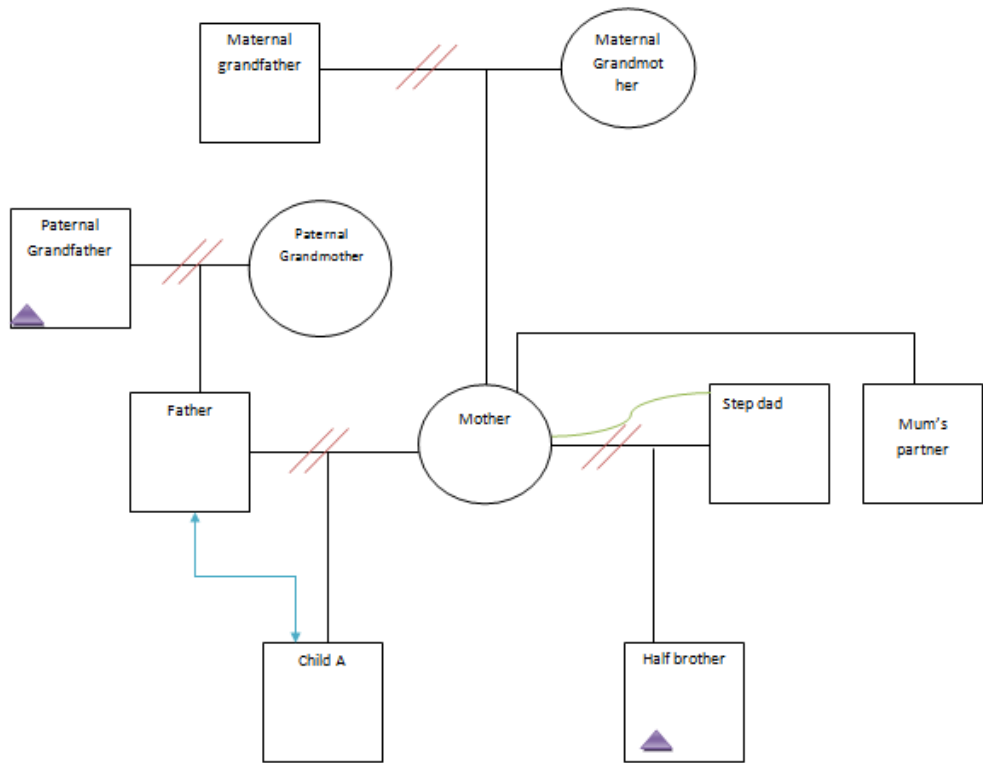
- Completion of the Educational Psychologist assessment, diagnosed with significant receptive communication difficulties which enabled the school and allied agencies to tailor the interventions to the individual needs of the child.
- Regular multi-agency review meetings (CAF)
- Behavioural management strategy implemented at school to increase attendance and schools understanding of behaviours
- Support to reintegrate into mainstream classes and reduce truancy
- 1:1 work with Systemic Family Therapist for post trauma, abuse and disorganised attachment.

- Mother had regular face to face meetings with the Children and Family worker, looking at family history and her own mental health impacting on her parenting. Strategies for managing and communicating, Child A's behaviour were discussed under the guidance Systemic Family Therapist.
- Wider family issues were also addressed by Intensive Family Support team.

Impact:

- ✓ Child A reintegrated into mainstream education with attendance above 90%
- ✓ Reduction in aggressive behaviour
- ✓ Sexualised behaviour ceased
- ✓ Engaged in intensive psychotherapy with results shared within the multi agency context.
- ✓ Intensive family support into home reduced conflict and increased parental understanding of behaviour and communication difficulties.
- ✓ Specialist education support has enabled the school to better understand and manage the needs of the child.
- ✓ Multi agency team was well coordinated and as a result were able to respond to the changing needs of Child A.
- ✓ Mom's mental and physical health continue to be addressed but have greatly improved in that she has a CPN for her mental health needs and her physical needs will continue to be addressed by her GP.

Appendix 1: Genogram



// Separated

▲ Sexual Offences

~ Violence

↔ Emotional damage / Neglect

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Our story so far...

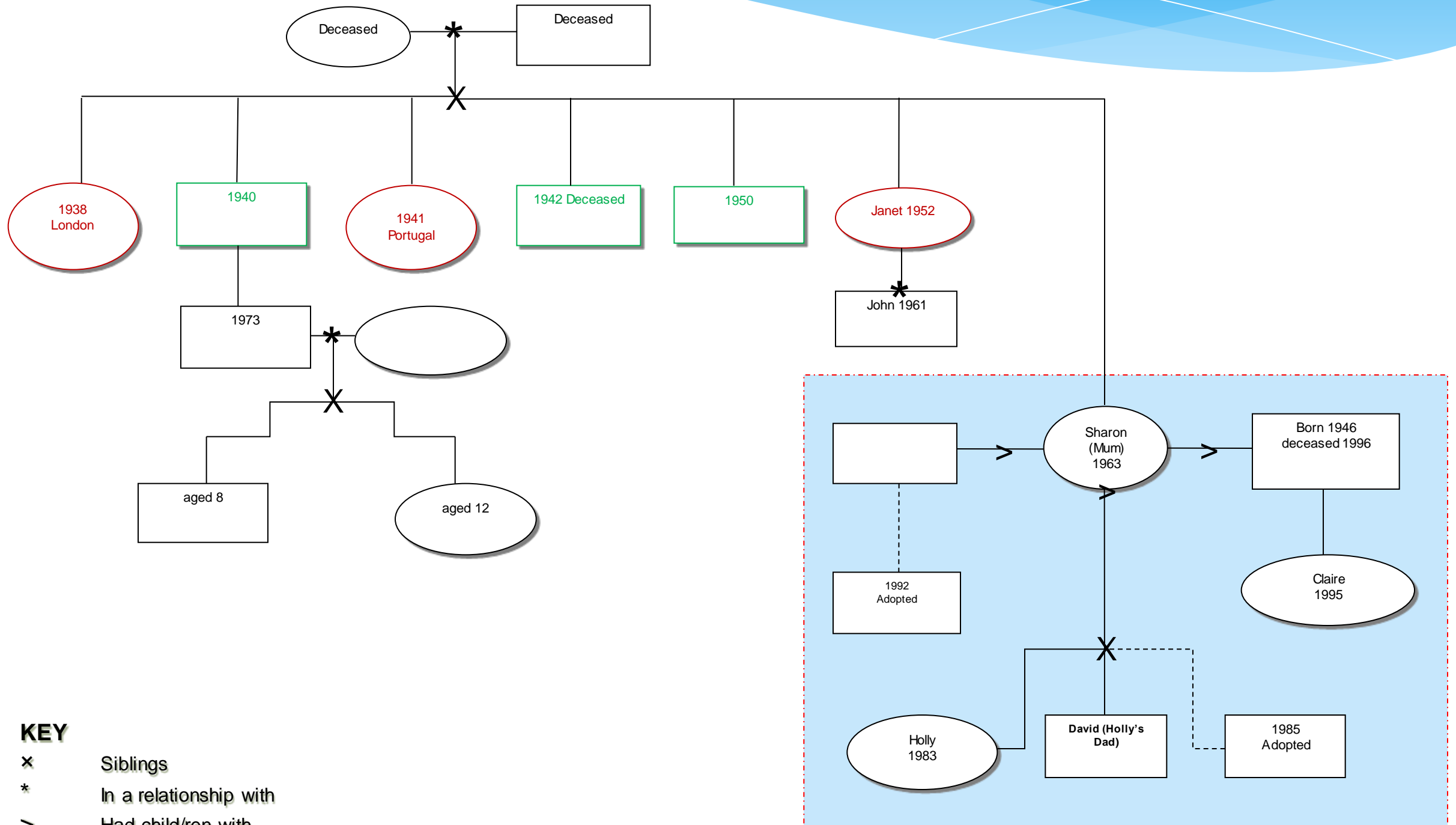
Why we needed help

At the beginning of the assessment, it was explained to us that the Government and Local Authorities needed to work better with families in need, to provide the right help at the right time.

As a family we were 'tasked' with various challenges that were often difficult at times but we knew we had to make changes as we were getting into deeper trouble and couldn't find a way out. Please note that the names used in this document are fictitious.



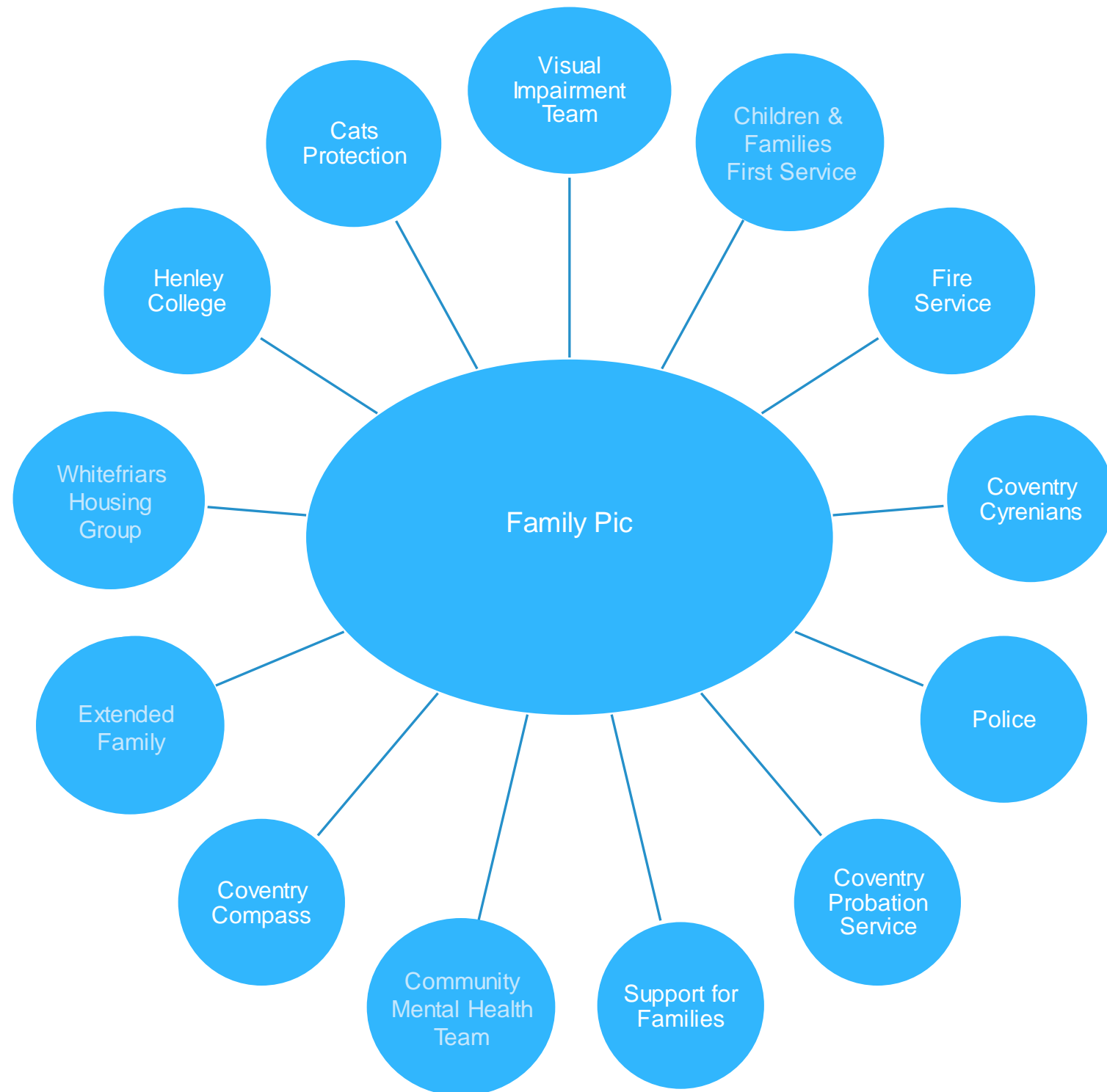
Genogram



KEY

- x Siblings
- * In a relationship with
- Had child/ren with
- Female
- Male
- Adopted

Team around the Family



Service User Feedback

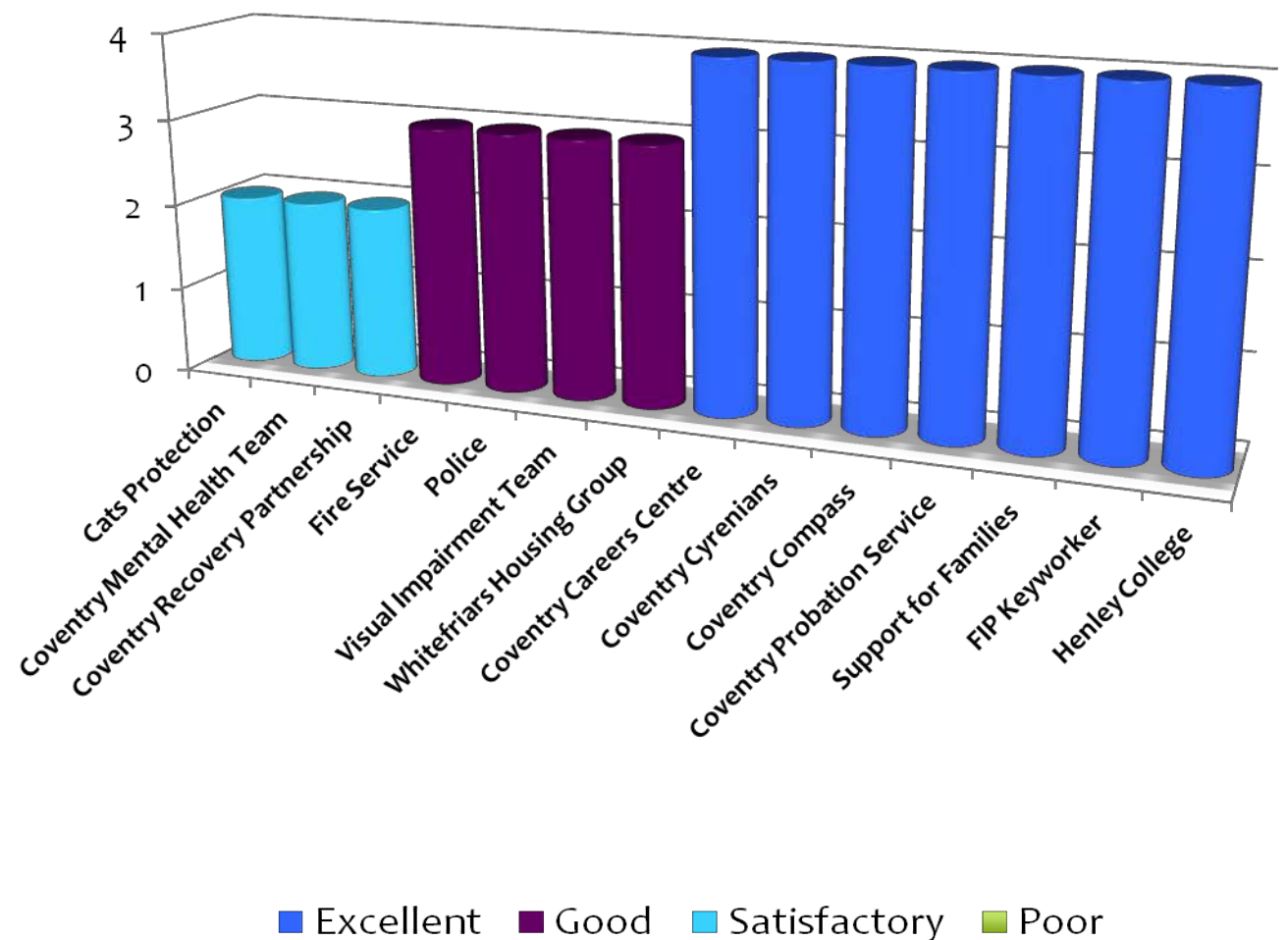
It was important for us to understand the family's journey through Family Intervention Programme from their perspective.

We asked Sharon, Holly and Claire to complete individual service user feedback forms and asked them to rate the services that have been part of the team around the family to identify how well they feel the support has been.

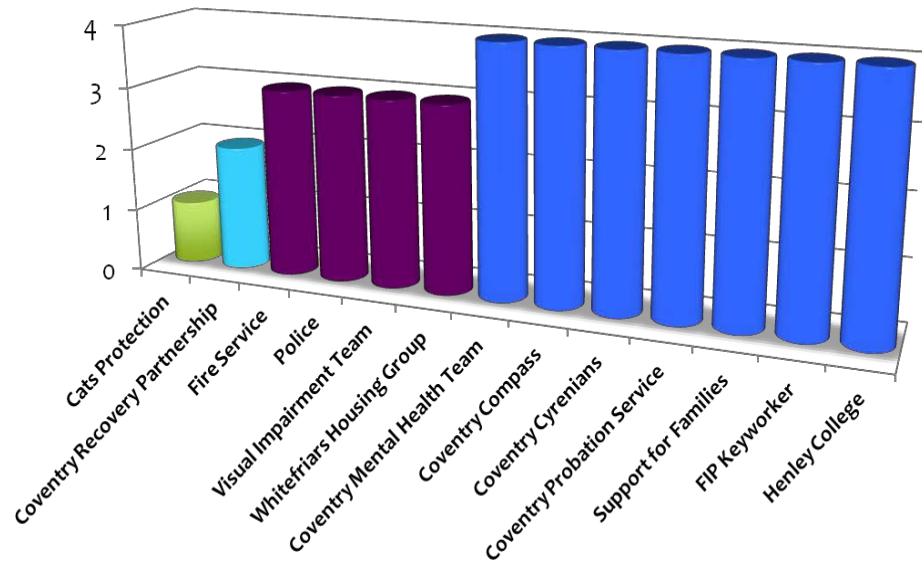
The following graphs show their collective feedback



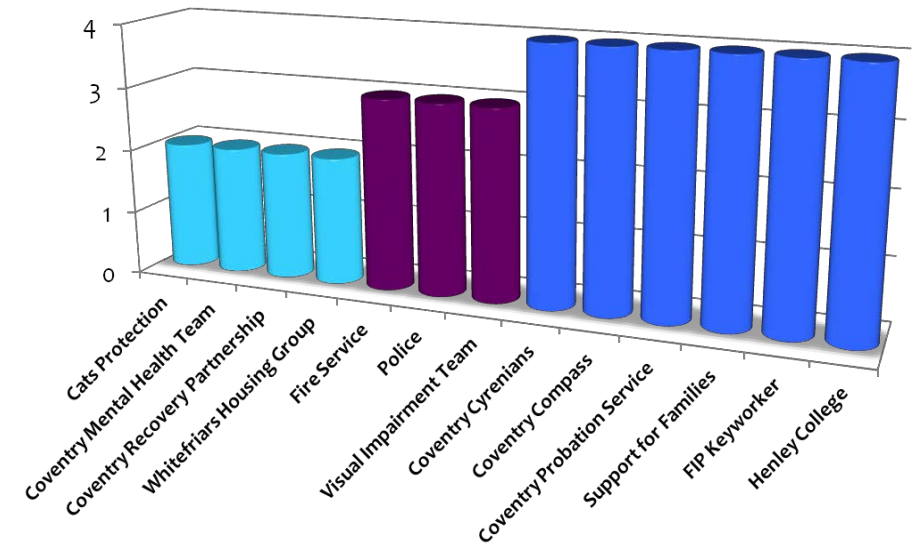
My Worker listened to me effectively and understood things from my perspective



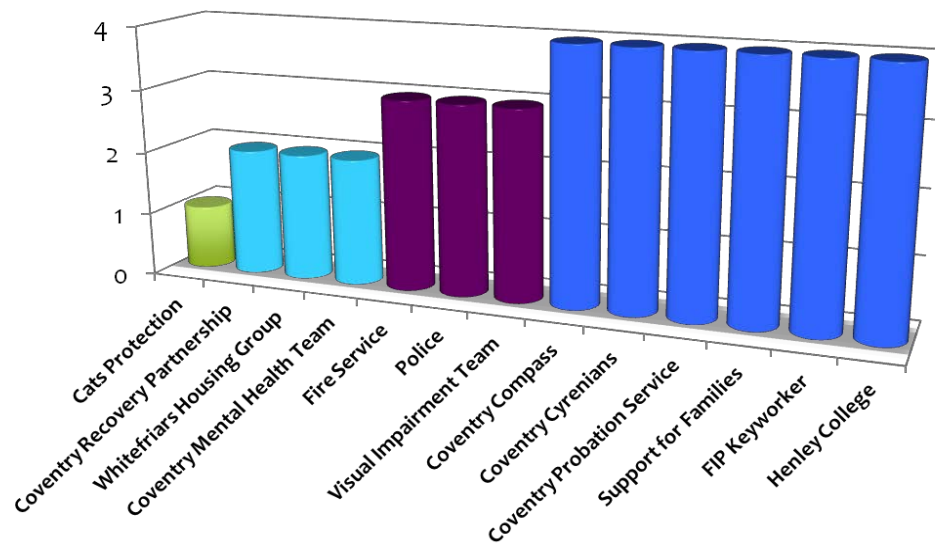
My Worker focused on what was important to me and accepted what I said without judging me



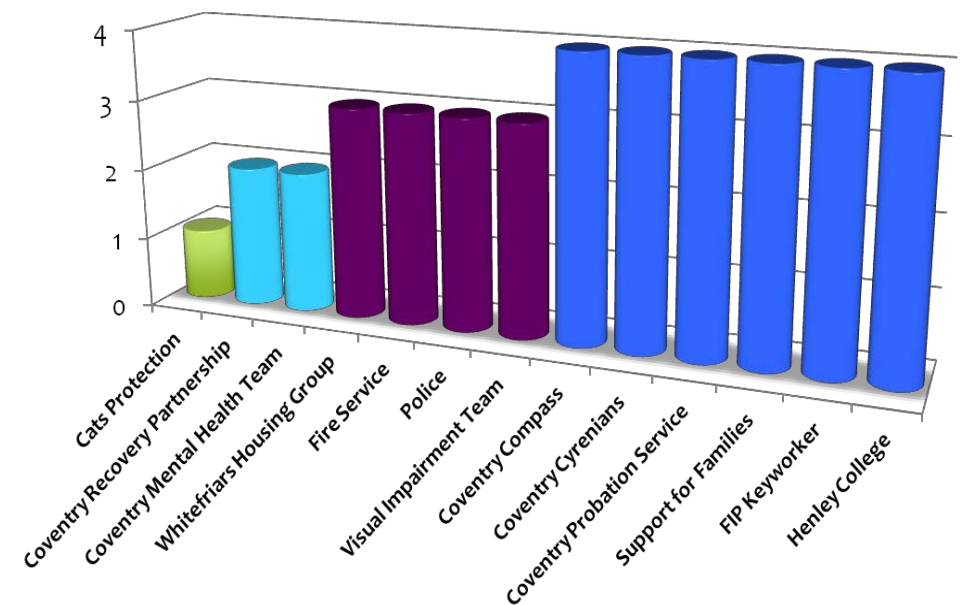
My Worker kept me updated with appointments and arrived on time



My Worker challenged me if /when appropriate



The work with my Worker helped me change my life style positively



■ Excellent ■ Good ■ Satisfactory ■ Poor

Service User Feedback

The below table shows the summary of the family's feedback as displayed in the previous graphs.

Question	Cats Protection	Coventry Compass	Coventry Cyrenians	Coventry Mental health	Probation Service	Coventry Recovery Partnership	Support for Families	FIP Keyworker	Fire Service	Henley College	Police	Visual Impairment Team	Whitefriars Housing Group
My Worker listened to me effectively and understood things from my perspective	3	1	1	3	1	3	1	1	2	1	2	2	2
My Worker focused on what was important to me and accepted what I said without judging me	4	1	1	3	1	3	1	1	2	1	2	2	2
My Worker kept me updated with appointments and arrived on time	3	1	1	3	1	3	1	1	2	1	2	2	3
My Worker challenged me if /when appropriate	4	1	1	3	1	3	1	1	2	1	2	2	2
The work with my Worker helped me change my life style positively	4	1	1	3	1	3	1	1	2	1	2	2	2

1= ExcClairret , 2=Good, 3=Satisfactory, 4= Poor

Sharon (Mum)

I became frustrated when Whitefriars Housing kept sending different people to the meetings who don't really know me, I would have preferred my worker to attend them all. Originally I was very upset with Cat's Protection because they took our cats, but looking back this was the right thing to do. The Fire Service was very helpful, they were able to talk to Whitefriars about the jobs that needed to be done by them. It has taken years to sort some of these things out as the Housing Officers kept telling me it was my responsibility and things never got done. Reading my assessment really made me think and things needed to change. At first I was stubborn, my worker from Children and Families First service was encouraging and was honest about what could happen if we didn't make the changes.

Claire

College has really helped me a lot and I have decided to start a Childcare course in September 2012. I am most worried about my cannabis use, going to Compass helps me to learn techniques to have a better lifestyle. I'm really trying hard to have less cannabis, but it's hard when everyone around me is smoking. The meetings were stressful at first, but are better now and it is nice that the actions are getting less so this means we are doing something right. This is the first time that people have listened to us and we are getting the help that is so much needed. It's now up to me to change my lifestyle because I really want to do well at college and get a job.

Holly

This has been the longest time that I have been out of prison, this is down to Henley College, enrolling was the best thing I ever did. The full time education gave me structure that I have never had before and the biggest achievement is getting my qualifications. I'm pleased the college talked to other services and knew we were in trouble so we were able to get the right help. At first I didn't like the idea of change, but eventually I knew there was a problem and started to make some positive choices about my lifestyle.

My drinking is slightly under control, cannabis has been reduced and I'm spending more money on the flat and doing nice things like going to the cinema. I'm now in a stable relationship and have a focus in life.

Challenge

Journey

Progress

Sharon

January 2011 –Drinking up to 5 litres of cider everyday, from 11am until the early hours of the morning with friends.
Average Cost per week – £30.00

6th June 2012- 1st appointment with Coventry Recovery Partnership. The assessments showed there was serious problem and agree to a liver function test. Appointments with Key Worker identified 5 alcohol free weekdays and the weekend would ideally focus on 2-litre max, but 1 litre was advisable.

Alcohol reduced to 2 litres per week.
Average cost per week £8.00.
Continues to attend 1:1 support sessions with Key Worker and attending a group “Alcohol and Me”.

Holly

January 2011
Using £20.00 per day on cannabis purchased on “Tick”
Average Cost – £140 per week.
Drinking up to 24 bottles of Alcopops at 4% and a bottle of Sambucca at 37.5%.
Average cost – £50.00 per week.
Feeling very unwell; this included self-harming and hearing voices and several A& E visits and admissions.

Attendance at Coventry Recovery Project erratic however reduced cannabis use since starting Henley College in September 2011.
Still binge drinking at weekends.

Last visit to A&E in March 2012
Self harming reduced to almost zero
Cannabis reduced to £40.00 per week, often purchased on ‘Tick’
Quote from Holly “ I want to give up drinking and slow down on cannabis even more, but it is so hard at times. The Coventry Recovery Project is helpful, but I know I’m the only one who can change things”,

Claire

January 2012
Using £10.00 per day on cannabis and purchasing on tick.
Average cost – £70.00 per week.
Binge drinking with Holly’s acquaintances on a daily basis. No cost available.

3rd May 2012
Attended initial assessment with Coventry Compass.
Open and honest about situation and really wants to reduce cannabis use. Working towards healthy lifestyles with Key Worker. Sessions have been very positive.

Cannabis reduced to occasional use only usually purchased on ‘tick’.
Binge drinking reduced to weekends; alcohol is readily available via Holly’s connections.
Continues to attend Coventry Compass.

Challenge

- Not receiving Child Tax Credit for Claire
- Housing Benefit arrears of £300
- Non-payment of water rates for six years
- Perfect Home loan for cooker and washing machine with high APR, paying £80.00 every fortnight for three-years
- £40.00 per week on electric + £1785.89 electric arrears
- Holly spending £70 - £100 per week on cannabis
- Family spending £30 – £50 on alcohol per week
- Family reliant on Cash Converter Shop and trade in X Box each week for £50.00 and pays £65.00 the following week to get the X box back.
- No TV Licence

Journey

Financial assessment completed by Money Advisor on 13th April 2012 (Job Shop, Support for Families). Family in deficit every week due to high interest loan repayments and substance misuse.



Progress

- Now in receipt of Child Tax Credit
- Bus Pass received for partially sighted (Tracy)
- Npower have agreed to clear the outstanding electricity debts
- Application to Coventry Charity - fridge freezer awarded and Glasspool Charity awarded electric cooker reducing payment to Perfect Homes from £80.00 to £64.00
- Application to Severn Trent to clear water rate debt was successful on the understanding that Tracy would pay £5.00 per week to clear arrears
- Water meter installed
- Payment plan Whitefriars Housing for rent arrears in place now paying £5.00 per week.
- Still waiting for a response from Energy Trust for washing machine application
- Family in a better position with finances and their income and expenditure is manageable.

Agency Feedback

The Team Around the Family were asked to provide feedback on Sharon, Holly and Claire's progress and engagement through the Family Intervention Programme, as part of the exit strategy.

The follow slides contain graphs showing the results of the feedback and also comments from those who supported the family.

Question	Cats Protection	Coventry Compass	Coventry Cyrenians	Coventry Mental Health Team	Probation Service	Coventry Recovery Partnership	Support for Families	FIP Keyworker	Fire Service	Henley College	Police	Visual Impairment Team	Whitefriars Housing Group
Commitment for change: This will reflect the family/ individual ability to accept there is a problem in the first instance	2	2	2	3	2	4	3	2	2	3	3	1	2
Making things happen: The family/individual see the first steps to making the change and are able to work with others	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2
Engagement: This includes attendance of appointments and the ability to be part of the solution to their problem	2	3	1	3	2	3	3	2	1	3	2	1	2
Taking Steps: the family/ individual taking specific actions to change and continue their journey.	3	2	1	2	3	3	3	3	2	4	2	2	2

1= ExcClaiRET , 2=Good, 3=Satisfactory, 4= Cause for concern

CMHT

We have had quite a bit of contact with Holly over the last few weeks and she seems to be doing much better, she is very keen to get back to College and recognises that she is doing very well there and gets lots of support. Holly wants to continue to receive this help and with her studies. She has attended every appointment that we have made and answers her mobile.

Coventry Cyrenians

I am very pleased with the progress that Holly has made, she seems at last to be gaining awareness of the link between her actions and consequences. Holly has engaged well and benefited greatly from the multi-agency partnerships.

Coventry Recovery Partnership Sharon

has a good understanding of what needs to happen and wants to reach those goals. Now attending a group to regulate lifestyle and self esteem has grown.

Cats Protection

The cats and kittens all doing well and will soon have homes to go to. The family did the right thing by letting us be involved.

Probation

Holly has completed her Court Order with Probation Service, and her attendance has been good, she understands the consequences of re offending. Holly is more aware of the greater financial responsibility she has and therefore has shown an increased motivation to try and reduce her cannabis use.

Compass Claire

is engaging well and understands the impact her substance use is having on other areas of her life, social, education, physical and mental health. Claire listens well and applies strategies to meet her care plan.



Supporting Families (ESF)

The family have engaged with me and attend every appointment that is requested. Sharon is now in receipt of child tax credit and has extra income available, several trust applications have been made involving addressing her debt and these have been granted to cover the utility arrears.

FIP Key Worker

When I became involved with the family, their entrenched lifestyle was having a severe impact on them as individuals, and they were at risk of losing their tenancy. The FIP process allowed the family to come up with their own solutions to make some positive choices, and achieve some stability.

West Midlands Fire Service

All recommendations from the Home safety check were listened to and most of them completed. The work needed to be carried out by Whitefriars after the visited was fast tracked and benefited the family as they could see progress and partner agencies linking in to improve their daily life.

Visual and Hearing Impairment Team

Sharon completed the 'Safe Route' training, and is aware of the safest crossing points and times of the day. Sharon has always engaged with our service and this was certainly the case during my short intervention.



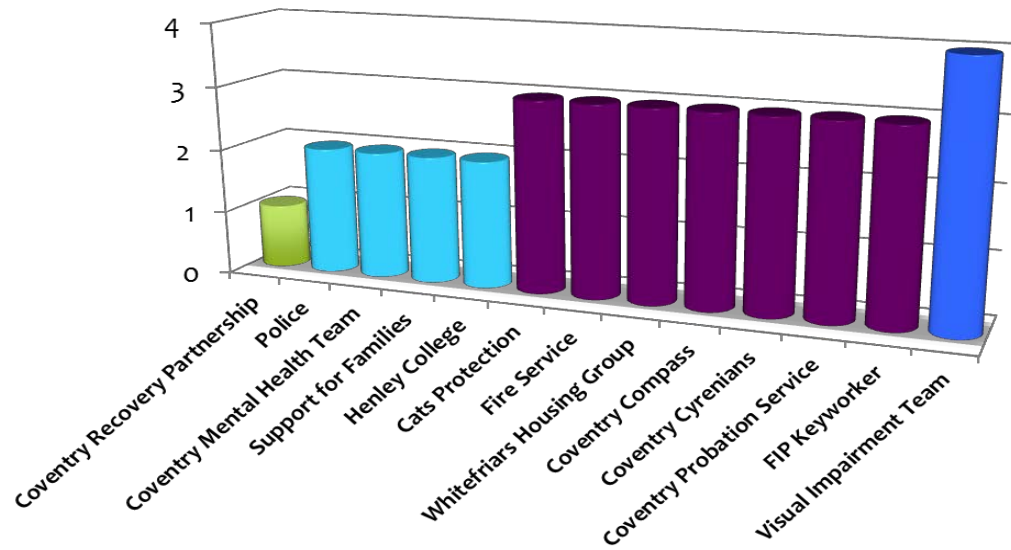
West Midlands Police

Once they accepted help and began to tell the truth and engaged more with the process results improved drastically. The family have come along way since the start of my involvement and their progress should be congratulated

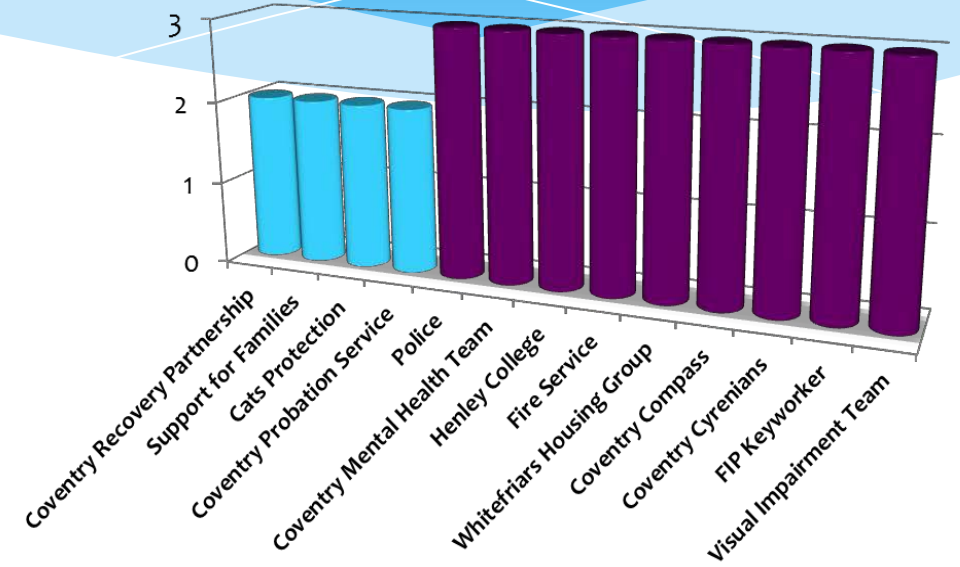
Henley College

Holly and Claire have had a highly successful year with excClairet and positive outcomes.

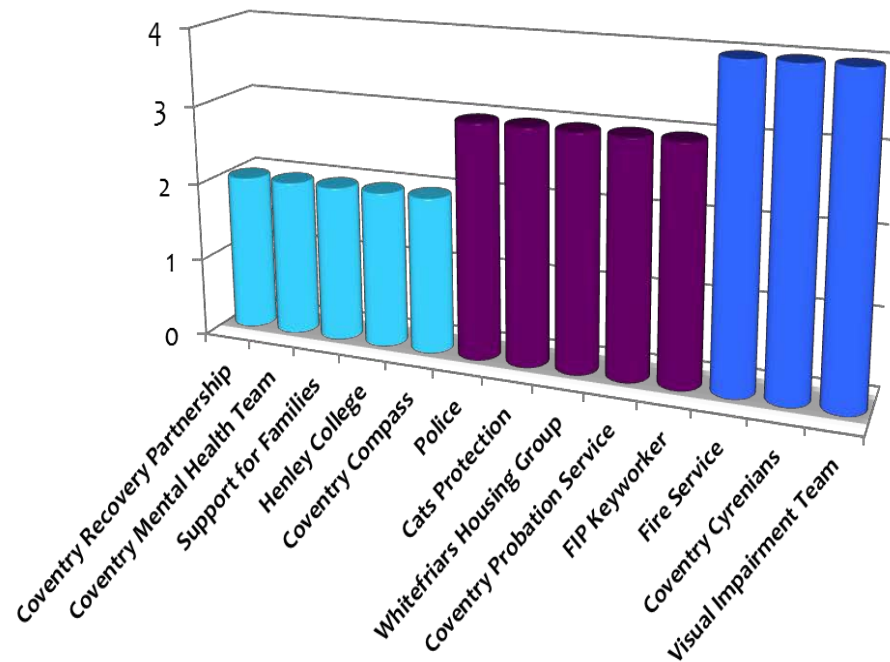
Commitment for change



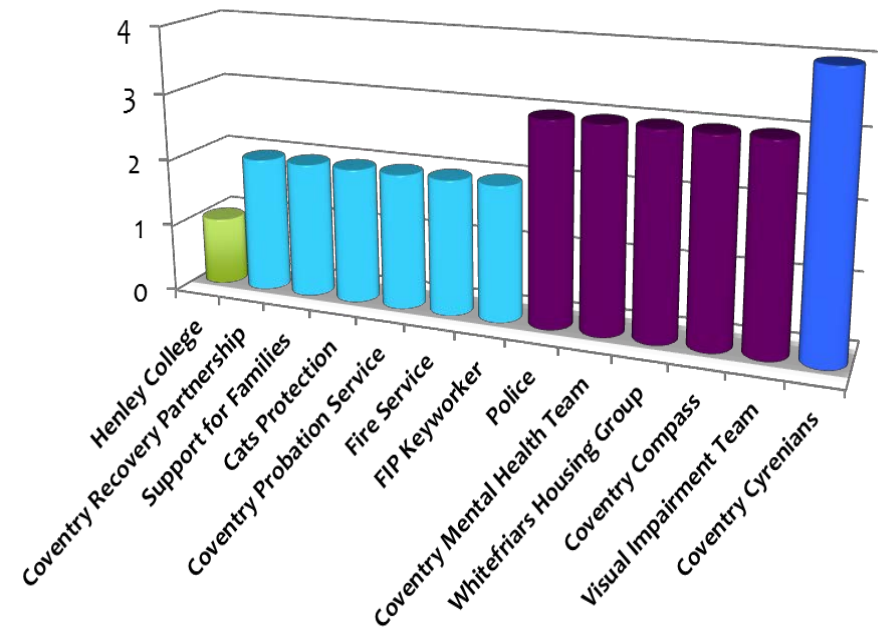
Making things happen



Engagement



Taking Steps



■ Excellent
 ■ Good
 ■ Satisfactory
 ■ Cause for Concern

Housing and Home Conditions

BEFORE



A reflection account by Sharon

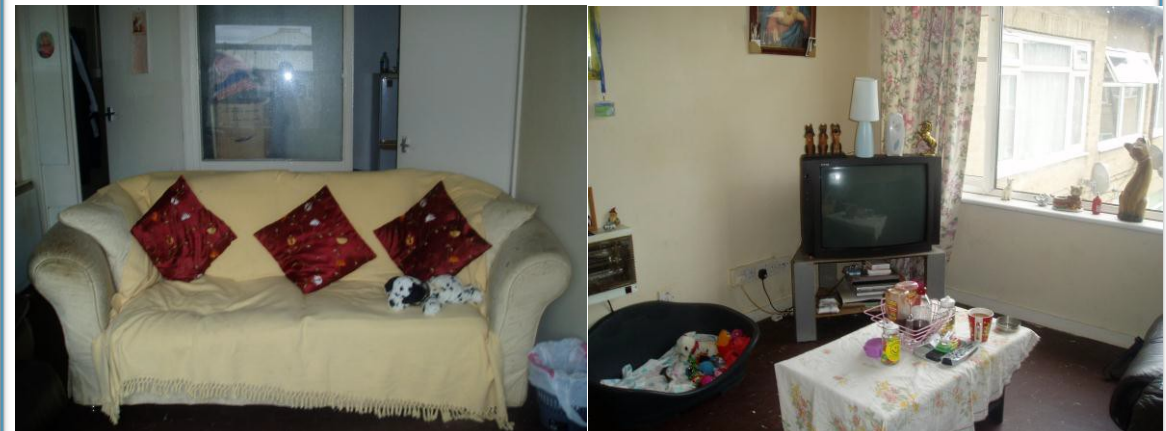
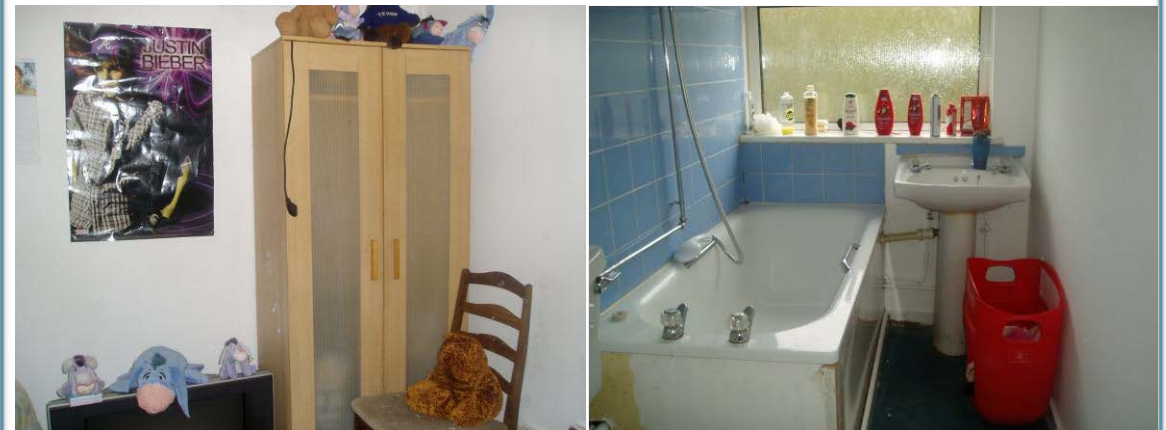
The flat was dirty, cluttered and smelly; we are all heavy smokers and never opened any windows.

We regularly use the chip pan to cook meals, and there have been some accidents. We agreed to a safety check by West Midlands Fire Service. We had overfilled ashtrays and empty beer cans and dirty plates with left over food on the floor. There were several littering trays and the cats used to urinate all over the flat. The cats littered, and it became more difficult to keep the flat clean and we couldn't afford the cat food. Cat's Protection became involved and found good homes for our beloved cats. We kept Harry. We could only move when all the jobs were completed.

The first quote to clean and decorate the flat was £850 + VAT, this shocked me.

At first we refused to do anything, but soon realised that we were at risk of losing our home. The support and encouragement we had was so helpful and we were able to de clutter, clean and decorate by ourselves. We could see the difference, there were some jobs that I could not do like paint the ceiling, the cost to do this was £190.00.

NOW



Family Assistants from the Children and families First Service worked with the family to formulate a plan to clean and decorate the house, and helped the family carry out that plan.



Mon 14 th May 12 Home visit 3pm	To introduce Family Assistants to plan cleaning & decorating timeframe with family. Also to identify unwanted items.
Tue 15 th May Home visit 1.30	Family Assistant to support with de-cluttering living room and dispose of unwanted items. Family Assistant to provide black bin liners. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to decide on layout of furniture to create more living space.
Wed 16 th May Home visit 11.15 3.30pm	[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to make a start on the bedroom, Family Assistant to provide guidance for de-cluttering and storage. Dispose of unwanted / broken items. Family Assistant to support and offer guidance to wash walls and ceiling with sugar soap in readiness for undercoat.
Thurs 17 th May Home visit 10am 3.30pm	FIP Worker to meet with Glyn to request that he explores alternative accommodation as [REDACTED] is at risk of losing the tenancy if he continues to reside at the property. Family Assistant to continue as previous day (bedroom)
Fri 18 th May Sat 19 th May Sun 20 th May	[REDACTED], friends and family to finish painting walls, ceiling and woodwork.
Mon 21 st May Home visit 2pm	Family Assistant to support and guide with completing bedroom and general tidy up.
Wed 23 rd May Home visit 1.15	Family Assistant to support and guide with de-cluttering bathroom
Thurs 24 th May Home visit 3.30	Family Assistant to support and guide with washing down walls and ceiling in the bathroom
Fri 25 th May Home Visit 1pm	Family Assistant to continue with above in the bathroom
Sat 26 th May Sun 27 th May	[REDACTED], friends and family to start painting walls, ceiling and woodwork.
Mon 28 th May T/C	To RSPCA to make arrangements to collect cats and kittens.
Tues 29 th May Home visit 10.30	FIP Worker visiting
Wed 30 th May Thurs 31 st May Fri 1 st June Home Visit	Kitchen - walls, floor and ceiling to be cleaned with hot water and sugar soap to remove smoke discoloration and walls and ceiling to be painted with emulsion paint. All woodwork and internal doors to be cleaned and gloss painted. Family Assistant to confirm times of visit with [REDACTED] for Wed, Thurs, and Friday. The family to complete decorating the kitchen by 5 th June 2012.
Wed 6 th June Home Visit 12.30pm	FIP Worker to visit with Whiteknars Housing and Fire Service to complete inspection of property. [REDACTED] should now be in a position to bid on Home Finder.



**Well Done Everyone....
Ready to Move...**

Health & Mental Well-Being

Claire:

"I'm getting help from Compass to reduce my cannabis and binge drinking, this has been very hard, because my boyfriend is a cannabis user and I'm easily influenced. I feel unwell at times, and can't sleep and my eating pattern is a worry for me. Sometimes I feel low, and I deal this by going horse riding every other weekend. Janet and John pay for this and I really appreciate their kindness."

Sharon (Mum):

"I never went out before, my life was drinking from morning to evening, I would often fall over and hurt myself and was beginning to get really worried about my health. Few years ago I was hospitalized due to my drinking and Claire had to go and live with my sister and her husband. My life is more positive now and I'm able to go out now and feel much better in myself."

Remember that you were given this life because you're strong enough to live it.



Holly:

"No hospital admissions since March 2012, self-harm reduced and medication stable. College has helped me to focus in life, still have a long way to go. I know I have to cut down on my cannabis and alcohol, and I'm getting the support to do this. Having my own flat has helped me to have a 'meaning' to life I am so proud and keep it really clean."

Sharon – The journey so far.....How it started:

“When this whole thing first started I didn’t think I had a problem, I thought you were all poking your noses in, I was happy or so I thought, I blamed Holly for telling people at college my business. Then the support started, I realised my life wasn’t my own, David was at the house all the time, I was cooking for him and receiving no help from anyone, my house smelled of cats, I had people coming in and out all the time and couldn’t control it, I rarely went out just sat drinking.

What changes have been made:

The biggest help was getting the support for Holly to move out and for me to see how well she was doing and I realised that I could do the same.

Then I started to de-clutter, with the help of Alison (CFF), I did keep a lot of rubbish and I was embarrassed how I had been living, I started the painting something I had never really done and although I did find it hard, but with Bharti’s (CFF) encouragement, I kept trying. We started painting the bedroom and it was real fun, although I got more paint on me, we had a laugh. Bharti helped to re-house the cats, I loved my cats all of them, but on the day they went I could smell the house and it made me feel sick, there was cat pee everywhere, they had to go, I know that now. Friends and family started to give me things to help make the house look nice, curtains, chairs, ornaments and quilt covers. Bharti then arranged for the bathroom and kitchen to be done, all that needs doing now is the hallway and I will try and do that at half term. It is now easier to keep clean and it doesn’t smell.

Stephanie started to help and she was playing by the rules and our relationship is much better, she is cooking, she enjoys that although we still have our fallouts sometimes.

I was referred to see Audrey to help sort my finances, she helped me get Child Tax Credit for Claire, I had never paid water rates in all the time I had been living in the flat, but I am now, as well as my TV Licence, she also got me a fridge freezer and cooker.

Annette (ESF) applied for a registration card for visually impaired and a bus pass, so I can go out any time and it’s free. I have reduced the amount I pay to Perfect Homes and we never go to Cash Convertors now, we did sometimes put Claire’s Laptop in to get cash.

Bharti and Annette made me realise that I was drinking too much, I was wetting the bed at least twice a week, but I would say the smell was the cats but I couldn’t blame them now they were gone. When the team first got involved I was drinking three litres a night every night if I had the money. Holly bought 4 cans the other night I had two, gave David the other one and one is still in the fridge. I do feel better, I try to drink hot OXO now, I still have a drink but it is probably once every ten days when I get paid. I have even took Holly and Claire for lunch in town on different times because I had the money, where before I would have used the money on drink.

I am taking more pride in my appearance and have even changed the colour of my hair.

What more could I do in the future:

David (Holly’s father) has come back and he has been staying at the flat, I have asked him to move out but he won’t listen, I would like help to get him out, he didn’t want me to come today but I need to put my daughters before anyone else.

I would like to learn computers and promise to stick to it

Keep bidding for a new property

Get my health back on track, I think my ulcer has been playing up due to the stress but I have made an appointment with the doctor.

My dreams:

I want my own bedroom

I want my independence back

I want to keep building a relationship with the girls

To be more positive

More help for Holly, I think she is slipping into her old ways

I am glad we got the help when we did and have never looked back. I know I’ve got to try harder.

Holly – The journey so far

Before I attended Henley College I was involved in a lot of anti social behaviour. I thought that it was more fun to drink and smoke than have an education. Why would I want to learn I was told I would amount to nothing in fact I was nothing! I enjoyed messing around and getting into trouble. I never realised that I was wasting my time and that not everyone acted the way I did!

We all use to live with mum, in a one bedroom flat. We had too many cats, and though I love Marshall more then anything I knew if I loved her I had to let her go to a new home. The house smells fresh now (no cat urine smells) the whole of mothers flat has been painted and it looks really nice.

I started working with Frances, she asked how she could really help me. No-one made me make this decision, but I told her I wanted to live on my own. Frances and I together filled in an application form for housing through Coventry Cyrenians. Can you believe we ticked every box (besides one) on the form? I was allocated accommodation at 7 Chester Street. I had a new keyworker Lauren. The house was really nice but things didn't go as planned. Not long after Lauren went on Coventry Homefinder with me and I was offered my flat. I love my new flat its amazing. Its mine and it belongs to me. I'm working with housing and Claire so I don't mess up and I can keep my flat.

Before all the agencies got involved our life was pretty much all about alcohol and drugs! I started to attend appointments at recovery, yet my weed intake is still on the high side, my alcohol intake has reduced to once a month and then I'm only drinking socially. Also mum attended recovery for about 2 weeks but gave it up, though most of the time she is only drinking once a week, mum drinks more when the wrong people are about or if she is stressed. Claire attends Compass and has cut her weed intake down. She has no problems at all with alcohol. We all need to do more work on this subject, but we are all getting better.

I came to the college with mum and Claire for the first time in the summer of 2011. Claire was taking forever so I walked off and met someone called Louise that later became my maths tutor. I said I had no grades at all, an hour later after assessment and with the help of Louise I enrolled on to the Step Forward course and I didn't look back. Last year I passed all the exams I was entered for. I was also class rep for my tutor group. At the end of the year there were rewards and I got 3- tutors student of the year, over coming barriers and over 95% attendance. I met a lot of really good friends and things just got better and better. This year I'm doing Step Forward level 1 GCSE D-C. This year I'm class rep for my group and my tutor Kay is finding out how I can apply to be a member of the student union council. I've also made even more mates again this year. I'm not turning back now I'm going to keep going until I have my dream job!! I want to be involved with animal care.

Through the people who supported me I began to realise that I could learn and that I was a valued part of my class. I made new friends who were not interested in my past, only being with me and helping me when I couldn't cope in lessons.

Claire – The journey so far.....

When I lived with my aunt, I never touched drugs or alcohol and went horse riding, had lots of friends and lots to do.

When I went home to live with my mum and sister, I was happy that we were all back together, but this is when I started to use drugs and alcohol. I met my boyfriend who uses cannabis and I started to use this everyday. This effected my education and home life and Frances from Henley College supported me to keep me on my course and work towards a qualification.

I sought help from Bharti, who has always been there for me and she referred me to Compass. I was worried about meeting Compass and then I met Lynne my worker, I learnt lots about cannabis, the short term and long term effects, the laws around using cannabis and how it may affect my future as an Early Years Worker.

I have now cut right down and only have an occasional puff on a cannabis, I am attending college everyday, have new friends and I am able to sleep better since receiving sleep hygiene techniques from my worker at Compass (Lynne).

Compass has been very helpful, Lynne has been very good and understanding, she has helped me a lot, she has been very easy to talk to and has help support me to quit.



Police and Probation Service



March 2006 – May 2012: There have been approximately 169 calls made to Police from Sharon’s address, majority being substance misuse related and breach of the peace. The number of calls to Police has reduced considerably during the intensive intervention by agencies. Sharon confirms “I think this is because I’m more careful who I let in the flat and there is less drinking going on”

Holly served her first prison sentence (14 months) when she was 17 years old for arson. This followed by a further six prison sentences; the last sentence was reduced for good behaviour and was released on a ‘tag’.

At the age of 24 years, Holly was involved with arson again, this time to a derelict building. Holly received a 2-year supervision order. This has now ended and Holly is taking everyone's advice and states “I want to make a go of my life and this is the first time that I have ever had something of importance to call my own and there is no way that I’m going to lose my flat”



Holly moved into her own tenancy in May 2012.

There have been 8 calls made to Police between May and September 2012 from Holly’s address, mostly substance misuse related and disorder on Police arrival. Holly is starting to make positive choices and is open and honest with PC Claire Edwards. Holly shared that her relationship with police and housing is positive and understands the importance of the ABC Contract. Clare said she was 'ecstatic' that there had been no bogus 999 calls that were often made after Holly’s substance misuse.

Education

Holly

Attended several primary schools due to frequent house moves. There was some stability with attendance at Alice Steven's School, however Holly found school life difficult and left school with no qualifications. Holly is now attending Henley College and has already started the 'Step Forward' course.

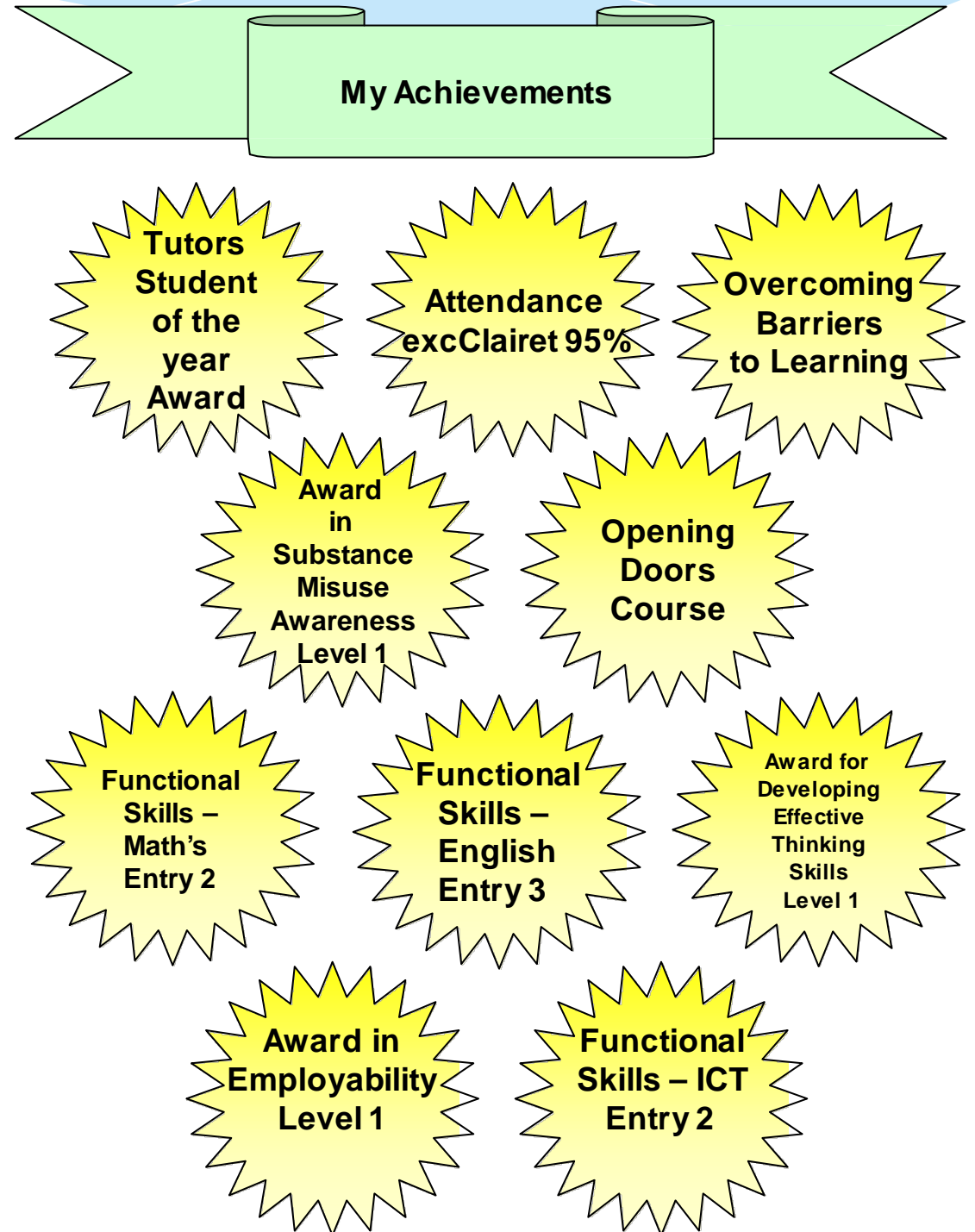
This course is designed for adults who want to return to study or improve their skills in English, Math's and ICT at level 1. In addition, there will be the opportunity to develop personal life skills, study skills and have an introduction to aspects of employability.

The course includes:

- English and communication skills
- Math's and numeracy skills
- Information Technology
- Employability skills.

Aspirations

Holly would like to do some voluntary work with animals in the future and is hoping to complete the Aspect to Youth Programme NVQ Level 2, and is exploring the possibility of a placement at the Princes Trust.



Education

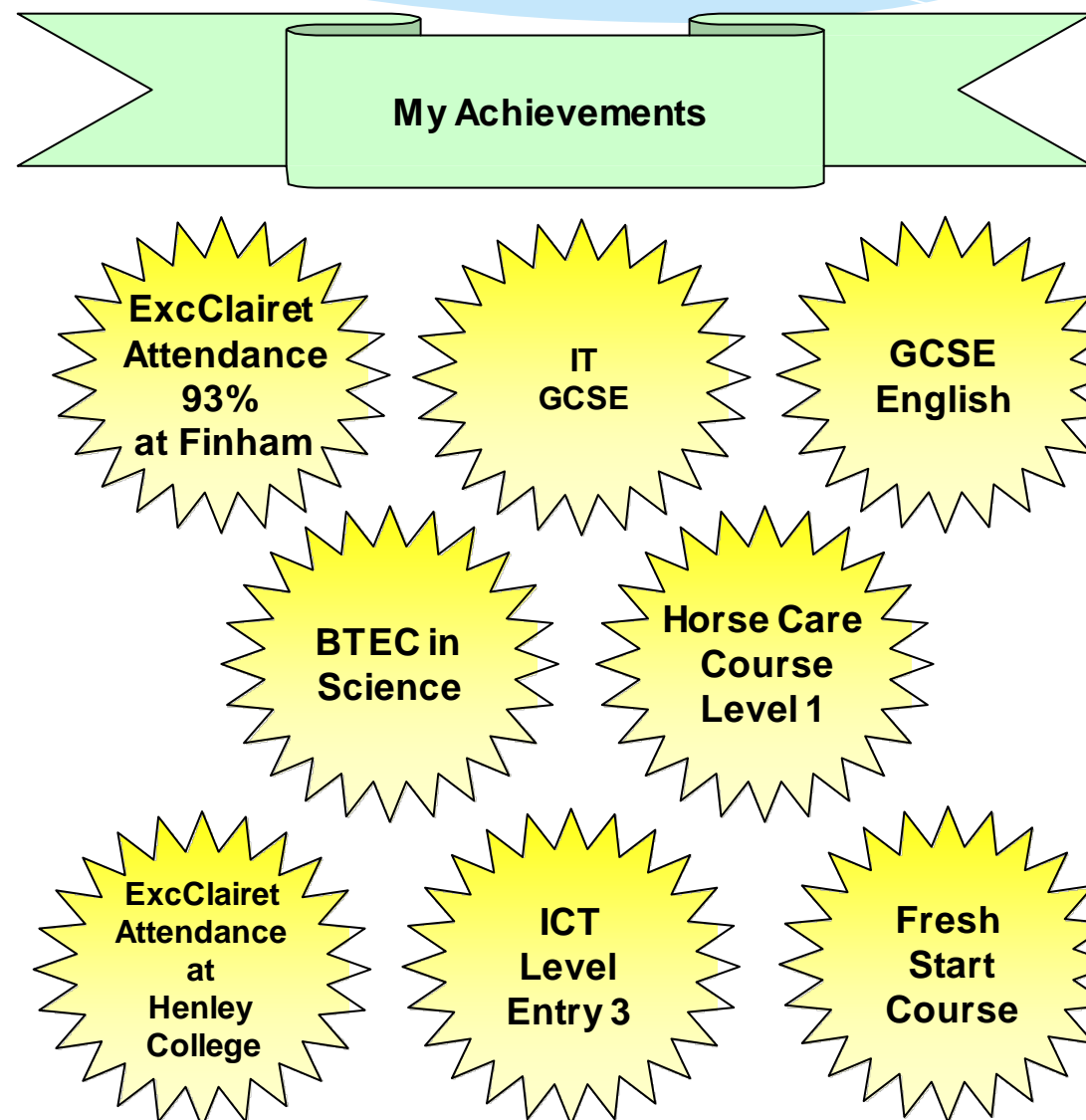
Claire

Claire has attended several primary schools due to frequent house moves. Claire went to live with her maternal aunt and uncle on a Residency Order from 2006 – 2011, and finally settled to school life at Finham Secondary School.

Claire now attending Henley College, last year completed “Fresh Start Course” with excClairet feedback and attendance. Claire is now focusing on completing a Childcare Course and will soon be experiencing a nursery setting as a placement.

Aspirations:

Claire hopes to complete Childcare Course and get a job in a nursery or school.



With thanks to the following services:

Cats Protection

Children and Families First Service

Community Mental Health Team

Coventry Compass

Coventry Cyrenians Coventry

Probation Service Coventry

**Recovery Partnership Henley
College**

Support For Families Project

Visual Impairment Team West

Midlands Fire Service West

Midlands Police Service

Whitefriars Housing Group





Public report

27 July, 2015

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People – Councillor Ruane

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Executive Director of Resources

Ward(s) affected:

None

Title:

Outstanding Issues Report

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

The City Council has adopted an Outstanding Minutes System, linked to the Forward Plan, to ensure that follow up reports can be monitored and reported to Members. The attached appendix sets out a table detailing the issues on which further reports have been requested by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People so he is aware of them and can monitor progress.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People is requested to consider the list of outstanding issues and to ask the Member of the Strategic Management Board or appropriate officer to explain the current position on those which should have been discharged at this meeting or an earlier meeting.

List of Appendices included:

Table of Outstanding Issues.

Other useful background papers:

None

Has it or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it, or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report author(s):

Suzanne Bennett

Name and job title:

Governance Services Officer

Directorate:

Resources

Tel and email contact:

Tel: 024 7683 3072

E-mail: Suzanne.bennett@coventry.gov.uk

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

Contributor/approver name	Title	Directorate or organisation	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Other members	Not applicable			
Names of approvers: (officers and members)				
Finance: Name	Not applicable			
Legal: Name	Not applicable			

This report is published on the council's website: www.coventry.gov.uk/meetings

	Subject	Date for Further Consideration	Responsible Officer	Proposed Amendment to Date for Consideration	Reason for Request to Delay Submission of Report
1	<p>Proposed Revised Model for Those Requiring Supported Accommodation who have High Levels Needs</p> <p>Report requested as part of the consideration of the report on Supported Accommodation for Young People 16-24</p> <p>(Cabinet Member for Children and Young People – 20 January, 2015)</p>	Appropriate time prior to the commencement of the tendering process	Executive Director of People		

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