



### **Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)**

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**Time and Date**

2.00 pm on Thursday, 15th September, 2016

**Place**

Committee Rooms 2 and 3 - Council House

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**Public Business**

1. **Apologies and Substitutions**
2. **Declarations of Interests**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 8)
  - a) To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> July, 2016
  - b) Matters Arising
4. **'Stepping Up' and 'Stepping Down' Process for Social Care Cases**  
(Pages 9 - 12)

Briefing Note of the Director of Children's Services
5. **Quality Assurance Auditing** (Pages 13 - 16)

Briefing Note of the Director for Children's Services
6. **Staying Put Arrangements and Policy** (Pages 17 - 22)

Briefing Note of the Director of Children's Services
7. **Outstanding Issues** (Pages 23 - 26)

Briefing Note of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator
8. **Work Programme** (Pages 27 - 32)

Briefing Note of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator
9. **Any Other Business**

Any other items of business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.

**Private Business**

Nil

Wednesday, 7 September 2016

Notes: 1) The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Michelle Rose, Governance Services, Council House, Coventry, telephone 7683 3111, alternatively information about this meeting can be obtained from the following web link: <http://moderngov.coventry.gov.uk>

2) Council Members who are not able to attend the meeting should notify Michelle Rose as soon as possible and no later than 1.00 p.m. on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2016 giving their reasons for absence and the name of the Council Member (if any) who will be attending the meeting as their substitute.

3) Scrutiny Board Members who have an interest in any report to this meeting, but who are not Members of this Scrutiny Board, have been invited to notify the Chair by 12 noon on the day before the meeting that they wish to speak on a particular item. The Member must indicate to the Chair their reason for wishing to speak and the issue(s) they wish to raise.

Membership: Councillors N Akhtar, S Bains, D Gannon, S Hanson (Co-opted Member), K Jones (Co-opted Member), D Kershaw, M Lapsa, A Lucas, P Male, K Maton (By Invitation), C Miks, M Mutton (Chair), R Potter (Co-opted Member), E Ruane (By Invitation) and P Seaman (By Invitation)

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.

**Lara Knight/Michelle Rose**

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**Coventry City Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)**  
**held at 2.00 pm on Thursday, 21 July 2016**

Present:

Members: Councillor M Mutton (Chair)  
Councillor S Bains  
Councillor D Gannon  
Councillor D Kershaw  
Councillor R Lancaster (substitute for Councillor Lucas)  
Councillor M Lapsa  
Councillor P Male

Co-Opted Members: Mrs S Hanson

Cabinet Members and  
Deputy Cabinet Member: Councillor K Maton  
Councillor E Ruane  
Councillor P Seaman

Invited: Councillor Duggins – Leader Coventry City Council  
Janet Mokades – Local Safeguarding Children's Board  
(LSCB)  
DCI – Ian Green – Police Representative

Employees (by  
Directorate):

C Coulson-Haggins, Resources Directorate  
J Gregg, People Directorate  
G Holmes, Resources Directorate  
J Moynihan, Chief Executive's Directorate  
J Newman, Resources Directorate  
M Rose, Resources Directorate  
H Walker, People Directorate

Apologies: Councillors N Akhtar , Lucas and C Miks  
K Jones and R Potter

## **Public Business**

### **7. Declarations of Interests**

There were no Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

### **8. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2016 were agreed as a true record.

Further to Minute 4/16 there were three Members interested in the Task and Finish Group to consider the Recruitment and Retention of Social Work Staff.

**RESOLVED that if any other Scrutiny Member would like to join the Task and Finish Group they would contact the Chair**

**9. Serious Case Review**

The Scrutiny Board considered a briefing note of the Serious Case Review (SCR) Co-ordinator for Adult and Children's Safeguarding Boards which updated the Board on the outcome of the SCR published by the Coventry Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) on 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2016.

The police commander referred the cases of five young people, who previously or at the time of the abuse had been in receipt of services from agencies in Coventry, to the Independent Chair of Coventry's LSCB. It was agreed that this case should be subject to a SCR in March 2015, as it met the criteria identified in the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015' government guidance in that there was information that:

- (a) abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected; and*
- (b) either (i) the child has died; or (ii) the child has been seriously harmed and there is cause for concern as to the way in which the authority, their Board partners or other relevant persons have worked together to safeguard the child.*

The Police investigation was a result of information that several teenage girls were victims of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) perpetrated by a group of men in Coventry. Five men were subsequently convicted of a number of criminal offences, including physical assault, witness intimidation and the supply of drugs and were given custodial sentences. The men had also been charged with a number of sexual offences, but these charges did not result in any convictions.

The Serious Case Review Report was appended to the briefing note and detailed background, methodology, summary of experiences, links between the children and those abusing them, an appraisal of practice, current practice and implications for future work.

The review was not required to work to prescriptive Terms of Reference; instead 3 core questions were posed:

- i) What can we learn specifically about these cases, as well as more widely around responses to troubled young people?
- ii) Why did it happen and could it have been prevented?
- iii) Could it happen now? If yes, what do we need to change?

The Review was also specifically asked to consider:

- the voice of the children, their understanding of their own situations and the implications for what disclosures they make
- Professionals' relationships to the children

The recommendations of the SCR were:

1: The LSCB to ensure that assessing the impact of Coventry's CSE strategy on outcomes for children is identified as a priority including giving consideration to the option of commissioning a research led project to identify the outcomes.

2: That the LSCB and partners consider how to promote and develop a relationship based model of working with children who present as vulnerable and at risk.

3: The Board to co-ordinate a task and finish group to consider the longer term needs of those children and young people who have experienced abuse and how these can be met within Coventry.

4: The LSCB share this SCR with the Adult Safeguarding Board and review options for joint working or commissioning of services for the victims of CSE.

5: The Board to ensure that learning from this SCR regarding the vulnerabilities following adoption breakdown are shared with relevant professionals in order for the implications for post adoption support in Coventry to be considered.

6: This SCR to be shared with YMCA England in order for the lessons to be considered within the wider organisation, including access to safeguarding support for members of the Federation.

Janet Mokades, Independent Chair of the LSCB attended the meeting along with DCI Ian Green representing the Police.

Councillor M Mutton was clear that the role of elected members on the Scrutiny Board was not to hear the review again but to scrutinise and review the recommendations. Councillor M Mutton also requested that members be mindful of the young people referred to in the report and also that procedures had changed.

Janet Mokades noted the timescales in the report and the background, she noted changes in the management of CSE. DCI Ian Green reported on preventative CSE.

Having considered the report the Scrutiny Board questioned those present on the following:

- Reassurance regarding whether victims feel safer when providing information
- Partners working together (including licensing and housing as well as health, police, education and social care) and private companies sharing information (including) hotels and bed and breakfasts
- Targeted youth services
- Linking small pieces of information
- Improvements to information recorded in Children's Services
- Ways scrutiny could help improvements

The Cabinet Member requested that all Councillors view these young people as 'if they were their own' and DCI Green requested any information and intelligence as

a preventative measure advising Members not to 'assume' the Police had the information .

The Director for Children's Services noted that the improvement journey would take time but requested Members champion Childrens Services when possible in order to attract quality Social Workers to Coventry.

Janet Mokades noted that the action plan following the SCR with progress on recommendations would be available to Members on request.

The Scrutiny Board discussed government funding for long-term support to victims of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) into adulthood and also to support local targeted youth work to the most vulnerable to enable preventative work and the collection of soft intelligence on CSE.

The Scrutiny Board also thanked Janet Mokades for all her work with the Scrutiny Board over the last few years representing the LSCB, as this would be their last meeting with her as Chair of the LSCB.

The Scrutiny Board were very thankful to those congratulated within the report and wished to thank the individuals.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1. The Scrutiny Board note the recommendations and request that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People write to Government regarding Funding for long-term support to victims of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) into adulthood and also to support local targeted youth work to the most vulnerable to enable preventative work and the collection of soft intelligence on CSE**
- 2. The Board requested that the individuals noted in the report as evidencing good, determined practice be congratulated**

**10. Early Help Strategy Progress Report**

Further to Minute 37/15 the Scrutiny Board noted a progress report of the Executive Director for People regarding Early Help. The Early Help Strategy and Action Plan were appended to the report.

The report outlined the significance of Early Help in supporting families and children at the earliest possible point/transitions in children's lives, and before problems escalate, needing acute, and costly services. The Early Help Strategy outlined key strategic objectives which supported and strengthened the collaborative working arrangements and partnership of agencies and organisations across Coventry – to focus on improving outcomes for children and young people with a range of specific measures aimed at evidencing progress.

The report highlighted early help measures that were indicators of the effectiveness of early help and progress against them:

- Maximise school readiness

- Maximise School attendance
- Minimise the numbers of referrals to social care
- Maximise the numbers of assessments completed to support the family when a need emerges
- Minimise the number of parents and children involved in crime and Anti-Social Behaviour
- Minimise the number of Looked After Children
- Minimise the number Child Protection Plans

The report provided an update on phase 2 of the Strengthening Families programme (formally Troubled Families) which agreed intervention methods (with a holistic approach) to ensure that the 'root cause' would be addressed and provide support to sustain change and to 'break the cycle' of entrenched family behaviour. The report outlined the new outcome tool 'Steps to Change'. The report noted challenges including high caseloads in Referral and Assessment (RAS) and future proposals under Connecting Communities to introduce 'family hubs'.

The Scrutiny Board questioned the officers and the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People on aspects of the reports which included:

- Measuring effectiveness
- Challenges
- Definition of 'school readiness' and the impacts of changes
- Risk averseness
- Funding
- Family group conferencing

Officers reported that family group conferencing was now part of Early Help.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1. the Board noted the report and requested a briefing note in 6 months to update members on Early Help**
- 2. the Board requested that officers investigate whether there is a standard definition of 'school ready' so that the expectation can be shared with all providers**

**11. Improvement Board Progress Review**

Further to Minute 3/16 the Scrutiny Board noted a joint briefing note which detailed progress on the Children's Services Improvement Plan, Reported to the Children's Services Improvement Board on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2016, based on data from May, 2016.

The progress report included an update on the six themes aligned to the Department for Education (DfE) Improvement Notice including an update on the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

The Scrutiny Board questioned officers on the following:

- The new Chair of the Improvement Board
- The new Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board

- Recruitment
- Child Protection Plan numbers
- The improvement journey

**RESOLVED that the Board requested**

- a) The new Chair of the Improvement Board be invited to the Scrutiny Board**
- b) A letter of thanks be sent to Mark Rogers for his support to the Improvement Board**

**12. Outstanding Issues**

The Scrutiny Board noted a briefing note of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator which detailed the new approach to be taken on progress, outcomes and responses to recommendations and substantial actions made by the Scrutiny Board. The new template and examples were attached to the briefing note.

When recommendations and actions were made at a Scrutiny Board, following the scrutiny meeting, they would be circulated to the relevant Cabinet Member and officer, and recorded on a recommendations tracker. The tracker would bring to the Boards attention the responses received from Cabinet Members and Officers in regards to recommendations and actions. Following a response or an action, it would be removed from the report and kept in the full recommendations tracker. The complete tracker could be viewed by contacting the Scrutiny Team.

**13. Work Programme**

The Scrutiny Board noted the work programme.

**14. Any Other Business**

There were no other items of business.

(Meeting closed at 4.00 pm)





## Briefing note

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**To:** Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)      **Date:** 15 September 2016

**Subject:** Progress on Stepping Up and Stepping Down social care cases

### **1 Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 To inform the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) of the progress with "Stepping Up and Stepping Down" processes for Social Care cases.

### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board:
- 1) Consider the content of the report and note the progress made to date
  - 2) Identify any recommendations for the appropriate Cabinet Member

### **3 Information/Background**

- 3.1 A Quality Assurance audit was undertaken which identified that the lack of step up/down between Early Help and Children social care had a significant impact. On-going work has been undertaken to align more closely the work of Early Help and Children Social Care, as part of the step up/down model which was re-introduced in April 2016.

### **4 The Process**

- 4.1 Where the needs of families change and risk escalates or reduces a process to step up or step down cases between early help and social care exists. This means that those families who require on-going involvement from specialist services but do not require a statutory intervention are able to have support via this service. The process includes a "warm handover" so the family are introduced to a new worker from the Children and families first team by the exiting the social worker.
- 4.2 The process supports a closer alignment between the early help service and the statutory service and supports a consistent approach to threshold for intervention based on needs of children and families.
- 4.3 Service Managers from both social care and Early Help have been heavily involved in mapping new processes – to ensure any changes aligns to operational management and performance reporting. A flow chart to support movement of work from the social care neighbourhoods is attached in Appendix 1.
- 4.4 As part of the emerging work on transforming children's services there will be further work undertaken to streamline this process and more closely align services to strengthen outcomes for children.

### **5 Performance**

- 5.1 Overall it can be noted that step downs and conversions into Early Help and Prevention have increased. There are systematic processes and systems that are

understood by social care colleagues in particular Referral and Assessment, and MASH, for example from June 2016 there have been 807 diversions from contacts and 205 step downs – grand total 1012. A small proportion of the number have come from social cares Neighbourhoods, whilst the process/flow charts have recently been reviewed and updated (appendix 1), a quarterly review will ensure new practice is embedded with staff on the ground, ensuring that children who don't need a statutory intervention are fully supported in by Early Help and Prevention services.

## **6 The Policy**

- 6.1 The policy was last updated in 2012, a new policy will be written in November 2016 to reflect the changes and updated in the electronic policy and procedures manual used by all staff. The updates will be completed during November. The current policy has been used to support further work at “the front door” and MASH, to redirect those families who do not need a statutory intervention to Early Help services.
- 6.2 The policy will be reviewed within 6 months in line with further work in early help to move to a “Family Help Hub” model and to align the statutory services more closely with targeted help.

## **7 Appendices:**

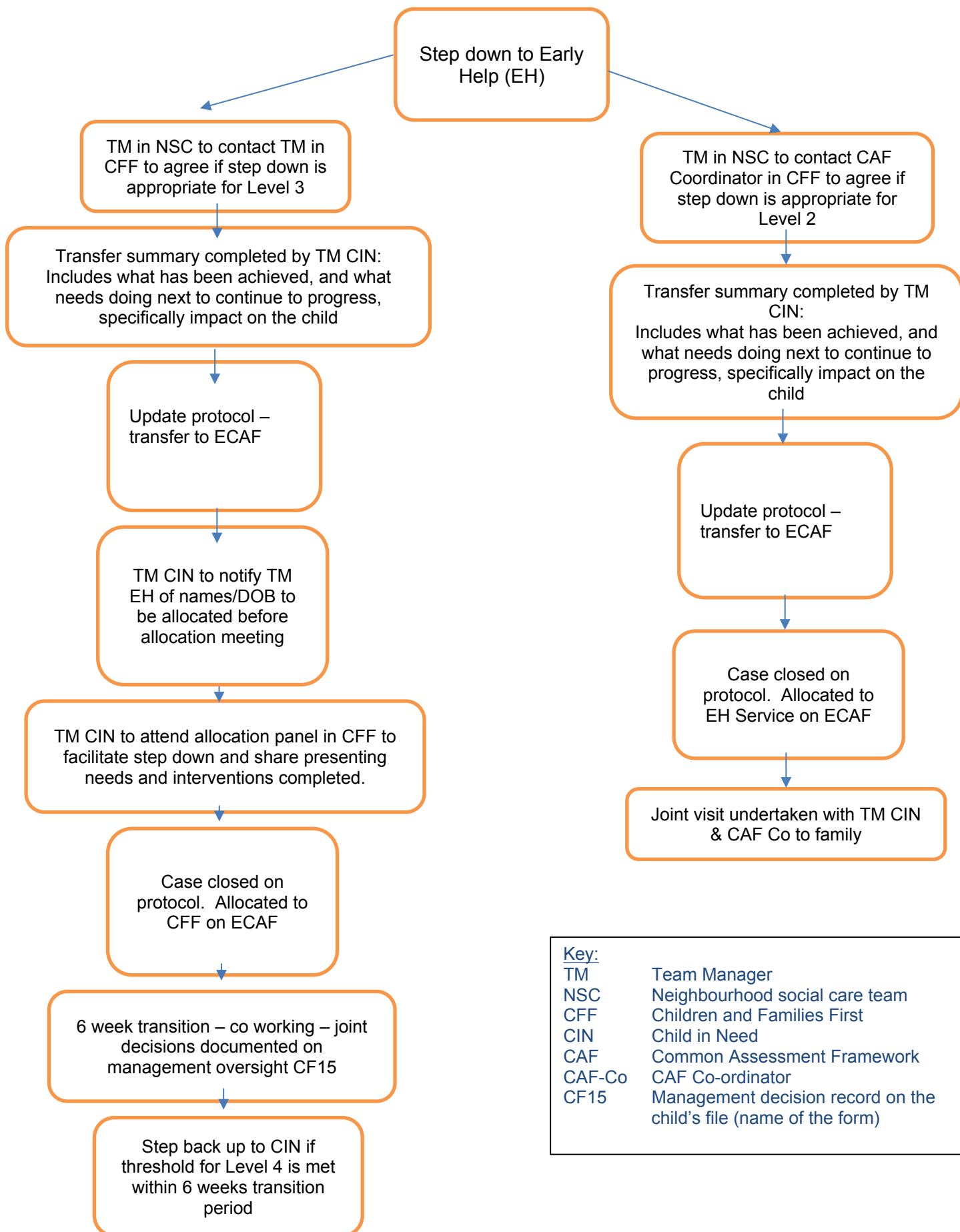
- 7.1 Appendix 1 Flow Chart

## **8 Authors:**

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## Appendix 1 Flow Chart



<b>Key:</b>	
TM	Team Manager
NSC	Neighbourhood social care team
CFF	Children and Families First
CIN	Child in Need
CAF	Common Assessment Framework
CAF-Co	CAF Co-ordinator
CF15	Management decision record on the child's file (name of the form)

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Coventry City Council

## Briefing note

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**To: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board**

**Date: 15 September 2016**

**Subject: Quality Assurance Audits**

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### **1 Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 To inform the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) of the progress on Quality Assurance and Auditing over the last six months.

### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board:
- 1) Consider the information presented and note the progress made to date.
  - 2) Identify any recommendations to the appropriate Cabinet Member.

### **3 Background/Information**

- 3.1 The Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Framework was revised in December 2015. It focuses specifically on casework services for children provided by children's social care and early help services with an emphasis on quality assurance that underpins continuous improvement. The framework has been used to support improved outcomes. Assuring quality of practice is essential to the provision of a good service to the children and young people of Coventry. A revised Audit schedule for 2016 is part of the framework which is updated monthly.
- 3.2 Since November 2015 there has been a renewed and relentless focus on improving the quality of practice through the audit and review cycle, which is linked to developing practice through the use of supervision, team meetings, practice improvement forums and manager briefings.
- 3.3 The service have developed a more robust programme of audits to inform continuous practice

### **4 Improvement.**

- 4.1 Audits have been undertaken by a number of different sources, including, Practice Improvement Partners and the LSCB. The outcomes of each audit have led to the construction of action plans, focused on using the findings of audits to drive up the quality of practice.
- 4.2 The results of audits have reinforced findings across a range of different services along the child's journey. This has allowed for some triangulation and definitive conclusions in relation to both the strengths and weaknesses in practice across the whole of Children's Services.
- 4.3 The headlines from the audits are:
1. Children are seen, and they are listened to.
  2. Social Workers are committed and motivated.
  3. There are some examples of good practice.
  4. Early help workers are proactive and tenacious when intervening with families.
  5. There are early signs that practice is becoming less reactive.

6. Conferences are beginning, through Signs of Safety to consider a more collaborative approach.
7. Care planning continues to cause concern, with drift and lack of contingency planning.
8. Neglect and “start again” syndrome is highly visible on a high proportion of cases including those held in early help.
9. Focus is on assessment, rather than on intervention, impact and outcomes.
10. Looked after Children, have too many moves.
11. Life Story work continues to be inconsistent.
12. Placement sufficiency has a negative impact on the ability of the service to identify appropriate placements for those young people ready for independence.
13. Whilst children are being seen, it is sometimes unclear about the purpose of the visit or nature of the intervention.
14. Recording is still inconsistent
15. Use of chronologies is not routine or properly understood.
16. Supervision is task focused and not reflective.

4.4 Whilst audits have identified the deficits in practice it has allowed senior managers to begin in collaboration with training courses and the Principal Social Worker to develop action plans which will facilitate clear processes, learning through: action learning sets, the Performance Improvement Forums, formal training, reflective supervision, informal/formal workshops. This will begin to have an impact on the quality of practice; repeat audits in certain areas will then evidence improvement. The on-going monthly audits should show an increase in the number of those cases where practice is considered good, as opposed to “not yet good enough”.

4.5 The inconsistent quality of the actual audits, as opposed to the practice has meant work has also had to be undertaken to help managers develop skills in auditing to be able to conduct an audit with the impact on the child firmly at the centre as opposed to a task centred management audit. Mentoring and support has begun to develop “audit champions” who are confident and able to audit with the impact on the child being the primary focus.

## **5 Indicators and audit – the connection**

5.1 Indications are numerical and as such relate to quantity and timeliness whilst the analysis of data around indicators identifies the trajectory against benchmark and target, this does not in itself give a narrative about quality. The trend of an indicator, however, is often the first sign that there may be problems relating to the quality of practice. It is therefore, critical to analyse and interrogate indicators, in order to hypothesise about practice and then test the hypothesis through the audit process. In relation to audits undertaken in Coventry, other than the regular monthly ones, it has been the indicators which have led to move to a detailed exploration of certain areas of practice, through the audit process. Through examination of data, the following audits were identified as necessary:

1. Re referrals (% was raising)
2. Placement Stability (% of children with 3 or more placements increasing)
3. Use of Police Powers (numbers appeared high in comparison with statistical neighbours)
4. Thresholds (LSCB audit, following high number of families receiving one visit and NFA)
5. Care Planning (LSCB audit, concern that care plans do not reflect outcomes for children rather they detail actions for parents)
6. Early Help (re-referral audit identified potential issues with step-up and step-down)
7. Ofsted preparation audit.

5.2 All of the above have now been completed. Continuing interrogation of data will help to evidence where practice is improving and conversely where there might continue to be problems. Indicators, alone however, are not an accurate barometer of the quality of practice more an early warning sign or confirmation of improvement.

## **6 Closing the audit loop – improving practice**

- 6.1 Once audits have been completed, and this includes the regular monthly audits, a report is produced, detailing the findings, both in terms of areas for improvement and existing strengths. There is also a set of recommendations attached to the report. Reports are then sent to relevant Heads of Service and the Principle Social Worker. Heads of Service produce action plans which address the areas for improvement, within their service area. Action plans are sent to the Head of Safeguarding to monitor their progress, through quarterly quality assurance meetings. This does not, however, replace individual performance clinics in each service area, which are held more regularly.
- 6.2 A number of mechanisms have been introduced to enable learning from audits to be disseminated to staff. These include, the practice improvement forum, learning sets, formal and informal training, training through LSCB, learning reviews, workforce development and through reflective supervision.
- 6.3 The regular monthly audits show a steady improvement in practice with the identification of an increasing number of good cases which can be used for appreciative enquiry. Dip sampling in individual service areas, will also evidence whether learning is becoming embedded.
- 6.4 The safeguarding team, (CP Chairs and IRO's) also have a quality assurance and scrutiny role. They are beginning to demonstrate more robust challenge in relation to perceived poor practice and they are expected to identify areas of concerns which may warrant further attention, input and development. The process for management alerts when concerns are identified has been reinforced and is now in line with the IRO management handbook.

## **7 Moving forward and next steps**

1. Training in audit process, from the view of the outcome / impact on the child, has now been undertaken by 3 cohorts of managers/IRO. This will enable the actual quality of the audit to become more child centred, and therefore learning will also become more child focused. This should lead to practice becoming more about outcomes and impact which will begin as a natural consequence to improve practice.
2. A planned Ofsted preparation audit was undertaken mid-June by those trained in the new audit format.
3. The quality assurance framework includes a programme of audits. This will be added to as appropriate through the use of performance data and practice outcomes.
4. A programme of learning will be developed and delivered through regular mandatory practice improvement forums.
5. Audit outcomes will be used to identify and commission training.
6. Trend analysis will be completed over the next 3 months, to measure any differences in the outcomes of audits – ie. The number of good, and not yet good. If training / learning / supervision is having an impact on practice the number of cases audited as good, should gradually increase.

## **8 Update July 2016 - Overview.**

- 8.1 The new audit tool has been introduced which replaces the existing audit judgements of; inadequate, requires improvement, good and outstanding with: not yet meets good, meets good and exceeds good. The focus of the new audit tool is about the impact of social work intervention on the child and whether this is evidenced throughout the file and in discussion with the allocated social worker. The process of audit then becomes less about a management review and more about understanding the child's experience and being able to evidence that intervention has had a positive impact/outcome for the child.

- 8.2 Training in relation to the new audit tool has been provided. This is, however, in its infancy and it has become clear that staff find the new audit tool difficult with the focus continuing to be about what has/has not been done rather than being able to assess the impact on the child. It will take some further training and practice for this more child centred approach to embed.
- 8.3 There have been a number of audits conducted through the LSCB which have been multi agency these have been very successful and helped to bring agencies together to compare views and look at a shared understanding of what good looks like.
- 8.4 A further selection of audits have been conducted. These audits have usually been commissioned due to questions raised by the performance data and have been specific to areas where the data has suggested that something is not quite right and requires further examination.

## **9 Summary of Audit Activity: January to June 2016.**

- 9.1 Monthly case file audits; completed by heads of service, service managers and team managers. These have been moderated by the head of safeguarding. Total number of case file audits from January to May 2016 is 81 in addition 10 were specific to the voice of the child only. An Ofsted preparation audit was undertaken with 25 case file audits. There were also a total, over the same timeframe, 36 case file audits undertaken within in children and families first.
- Children with 3 or more placement moves.
  - Missing Children. (LSCB)
  - Children made Subject of Police Powers.
  - Quality of Practice review.
  - Re Entry into Care.
  - Section 47.
  - Private Fostering.
  - Early Help.
  - Re referrals.
  - Thresholds for Referral (LSCB)
  - Care Plans (LSCB).
  - Children with Disability child protection.
- 9.2 Each of these audits have a set of recommendations based on audit findings which have been sent to relevant heads of service to develop action plans to address the issues. These action plans are held by Quality Assurance who will monitor progress against the action plans through continuous audit and feedback. This should focus on areas of strength as well as weakness. These action plans should be scrutinized through a quarterly performance meeting.
- 9.3 The audits undertaken through the Quality and Effectiveness sub group of the LSCB have generated a multi-agency action plan. Due to the themes from each of the 3 LSCB audits being interlinked and having commonality, the action plan is a combined one taking the learning from each of the 3 audits. This action plan will be monitored through the QE sub group. Any relevant training will be raised through the LSCB training sub group.

### **Authors:**

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## Briefing Note

**To:** Education and Children's Service Scrutiny Board    **Date:** 15 September 2016  
**Subject:** Staying Put Arrangements and Policy

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### **1 Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 The purpose of this note is to update the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board on the Staying Put arrangements and policy.

### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board are recommended to:
- 1) Consider the content of the report and note progress
  - 2) Identify any recommendations for the appropriate Cabinet Member

### **3 Information/Background**

- 3.1 This reports sets out the progress of the implementation of the Staying Put Policy approved by Cabinet Member for Children on 8 December 2015.
- 3.2 The Fostering task and finish group which concluded in March 2015 recommended that additional research and monitoring was undertaken to inform the policy in respect of the following issues.
- a. the affect that any potential drop in income has on the number of staying put places offered to young people
  - b. the number of young people who would like to stay put and aren't able to as their carers don't offer,
  - c. the statutory requirements and associated funding implications
- 3.3 The staying put policy has been revised to fully consider the recommendations of the task and finish group. The report and the policy was approved in December 2015.
- 3.4 When a young person becomes 18 they are no longer in the care of the Local Authority. However the local authority will continue to be involved in providing leaving care services, and this can include supporting arrangements for a young person to continue to live with former foster parents. This is a separate arrangement from fostering, and is known as 'Staying Put'.
- 3.5 Under the Staying Put scheme, young people continue to live with their former foster carer(s) after they reach the age of 18 until they are ready to move on to independence, or reach the age of 21.
- 3.6 Within Coventry there has been a history of Care Leavers Staying Put as the benefits of remaining with their former foster carers are clear, particularly where young people are vulnerable, not ready to move to independence or continuing in education. The policy was reviewed in order to reflect changes to the legal framework, and to more clearly set out the implications for foster carers of entering into the scheme.

## **4 The Legal Framework**

4.1 The 'Care Matters: Time for Change White Paper 2007' identified the importance of Care Leavers having a transition to independence more akin to that of their non-Looked After peers, given that this is often a turbulent time for young people. They need the opportunity to move when they are emotionally and financially ready, instead of being "pushed out too early by the system".

4.2 Further statutory guidance in 2010<sup>1</sup> and 2011<sup>2</sup> stated that Local Authorities should develop Staying Put policies. It emphasised the need for a more gradual approach in young people's transition to adulthood and stated that policies should provide foster carer/s and young people with information and guidance on all aspects of Staying Put, including the criteria for those arrangements, support and the practical, financial, tax and benefit issues involved.

4.2 The statutory framework around Staying Put was strengthened through Section 23CZA of the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014 which came into effect on 20 May 2014. This places a duty on Local Authorities to:

- Provide advice, assistance and support to former relevant young people and their former foster carers
- To maintain a Staying Put arrangement until the young person reaches 21;
- Provide support (including financial support) to the former foster carer/s;
- Monitor the Staying Put arrangement

4.4 It does not apply if the Local Authority considers that the staying put arrangement is not consistent with the welfare of the young person.

4.5 The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations, Volume 3: Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers 2010 (Revised January 2015) provides additional statutory guidance including:

- Preparation and planning for Staying Put from the age of 16
- Support to young people in developing a range of independence skills
- Financial support to Staying Put hosts which includes all reasonable costs of supporting the young person to live with them and considers the impact of the arrangement on the family's financial position that may vary from family to family
- Drawing up of a Living Together Agreement which sets out details of the arrangements
- Provide information to foster carers and young people
- Consideration of potential training and support needs of individual Staying Put hosts
- A requirement to treat young people the same irrespective of whether they are living with internal or independent agency foster carers.

## **5 Profile and Number of Young People Staying Put**

5.1 There has been an increase in the number of such arrangements over recent years. There are currently 34 young people who remain in staying put arrangements and 68% of these are with internal carers. There are a further 10 young people who are likely to enter staying put arrangements in 2016/17

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<sup>1</sup> The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 3: Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers (2010)

<sup>2</sup> The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services 2011

As Table 1 shows, the numbers of young people benefitting from Staying Put was relatively consistent between 2012 and 2014, but increased in 2014/15 and again in 2015/16 and 2016/17..

Table 1: Analysis of young people benefiting from the Staying put scheme

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 estimated
No of bed nights	4,653	5,570	9,296	11,570	12,817
FTE	12.75	15.26	25.47	31.70	35.12
Change in FTE from previous year		2.51	10.21	6.23	3.42

- 5.2 The length of time that young people have remained in Staying Put arrangements has fluctuated somewhat, though there has been a gradual increase in the percentage Staying Put for over 3 years. The numbers are envisaged to continue to increase in 2016/2017.
- 5.3 Table 2 shows that a significant proportion of Staying Put hosts are Coventry foster carers, though the number from Independent Fostering Agencies has gradually increased. These are actual numbers throughout the year not FTEs as used for financial calculations.

Table 2 - Staying Put Hosts	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16	
Internal	19	70%	20	69%	26	62%	34	63%
External	6	22%	8	28%	15	36%	20	37%
Connected Person	2	7%	1	3%	1	2%		
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100%</b>

- 5.4 National Staying Put pilots<sup>3</sup> indicated that there are significant benefits for individuals and potentially longer-term gains from Staying Put. For example:
- Young people were more likely to make a successful transition to independence and more likely to be in full-time education at 19 or pursuing higher education. In contrast, those who did not Stay Put were more likely to experience complex transition pathways and housing instability after they left care.
  - Higher educational attainment means that in the future, those young people are in a position to earn more and pay more taxes and are less likely to be reliant on state support later in life.
  - There are costs to the public purse and well-being costs to individual young people if Care Leavers experience difficulties in making the transition to adulthood.
- 5.5 The revised Staying Put policy and procedure builds on current arrangements but reflects the changed legal framework and provides much more detailed and clearer guidance and procedures for young people, foster carers/Staying Put hosts and social workers.
- 5.6 Some of the key elements are as follows:
- a) A clear fee structure which is made up of:
    - Rent paid, in most cases through Housing Benefit
    - A contribution from the young person
    - The remainder paid by the Council through Section 23C of the Children Act 1989 (duties towards former relevant children).

<sup>3</sup> ER Munro, C Lushey, D Maskell-Graham & H Ward (2012), Evaluation of the Staying Put: 18 Plus Family Placement Programme: Final Report, p.12

- b) A total fee of £230 per week in each year the scheme is operating (up to 3 years) and Coventry opted not to introduce a 'step down' to a lesser fees in year 2 and 3. This is in recognition of the valuable role which foster carers play in helping to prepare young people for independence. The City Council contribution has been set at £118 per week.

The fee structure is shown in Table 3 below.

<b>Table 3 - Fee Structure</b>	
<b>Fees</b>	<b>Age 18-25</b>
<b>Lodging Fee/Rent</b> (Housing Benefit)	<b>£92.00</b>
<b>Services and Support</b> made up of:	<b>£138.00</b>
Young person's contribution	£20.00
Council Contribution	£118.00
<b>Total Staying Put cost</b>	<b>£230.00</b>

- c) The financial arrangements take account of potential variations so that all hosts receive this amount. For example, if a young person lives in an area where the Housing Benefit rate is less than Coventry's, or Staying Put resulted in a carer's own benefits reducing, the Council would pay the difference so that the net effect is the same.

- d) This is a standard fee that applies to all Staying Put arrangements.

Whilst recognising the concerns of some foster carers about the reduction from the allowances and fees, it should be noted that this is no longer a foster placement; it is an arrangement between the host and young person (effectively landlord and tenant) which is facilitated and supported by the Council. Hosts will not be expected to provide allowances for birthdays, festivals, clothing etc. as they would under fostering as they will come from young people's benefits/earnings and with additional financial support available to all Care Leavers under Money Matters. This is why the Staying Put fee is not the same as the Fostering Maintenance Allowance.

- e) Procedures emphasize early planning for Staying Put as part of a young Person's Pathway Plan and Looked After Review, and give clear guidance on respective roles and responsibilities and timescales.
- f) Clarity between the interface between Staying Put and Shared Lives for young people who meet the access criteria for Adult services, as stated in Department for Education, Department for Works and Pensions and HMRC guidance May 2013 (Staying Put - Arrangements for Care Leavers aged 18 and above to stay on with their former foster carers):

- 5.7 The "Staying Put" framework is aimed at looked after children (former relevant) who require an extended period with their former foster carer/s due to delayed maturity, vulnerability and/or in order to complete their education or training.
- 5.8 Where young people have an on-going cognitive disability and meet the adult services Fair Access to Care Services criteria (Putting People First), foster placements should be converted to Adult Placements/Shared Lives arrangements when the child reaches their eighteenth birthday. This is important to ensure that both the child and young person and the foster carer and adult placement carer have a formal regulatory and safeguarding framework that addresses their respective needs.

## 6 Financial implications

6.1 Table 4 below summarises the financials for the Staying Put scheme since it started in 2012/13.

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 estimated	
No of bed nights	4,653	5,570	9,296	11,570	12,817	
FTE	12.75	15.26	25.47	31.70	35.12	
Change in FTE from previous year		2.51	10.21	6.23	3.42	
<b>Total cost</b>	<b>£133,926</b>	<b>£144,231</b>	<b>£190,530</b>	<b>£248,180</b>	<b>£293,687</b>	
Grant	£0	£0	(£47,335)	(£94,670)	(£142,004)	Note 1
Core Budget	£0	£0	£0	£0	(£124,666)	Note 2
<b>Net cost</b>	<b>£133,926</b>	<b>£144,231</b>	<b>£143,195</b>	<b>£153,510</b>	<b>£27,017</b>	
<b>Average CC contribution per week</b>	<b>£201</b>	<b>£181</b>	<b>£143</b>	<b>£150</b>	<b>160</b>	Note 3

Note 1 The grant for 2016/17 has increased significantly

Note 2 Core budget has been added this year to improve the financial position as part of a wider piece of realignment work

Note 3 The 2016/17 figures include a short term bespoke package. Without this, the average council contribution per week is £147 per week, a small reduction on last year

6.2 The average weekly contributions vary greatly over time. The new policy with the agreed council contribution rate of £118 per week started in December 2015, and provides certainty and transparency for those involved in the scheme. New cases will move onto the new arrangements and as cases are reviewed on an on-going basis cost will begin to reduce to the expected level, as table 5 below.

**Table 5** below shows the expected revised cost when the full Staying Put cohort is on the new scheme. It also shows that when the new scheme is fully implemented, applying the weekly rate of £118, this budget will be in balance, even allowing for the expected increase in numbers. Numbers are expected to even out in the next year.

Table 5: Expected costs when the new rates are fully implemented	Existing numbers	2% increase*
	New rates	New rates
Expected costs	£216,058	£244,573
Grant and core budget	(£266,670)	(£266,670)
Net position	(£50,612)	(£22,097)
Average cost per week - Gross	£118	£118
FTE	35.12	39.86

\* Staying put cohort as a % of total fostering placements

Jivan Sembi  
Head of Children's Regulatory Services  
7683 2895

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Coventry City Council

## Briefing note

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**To: Education and Children's Scrutiny Board**

**Date: 15<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

**Subject: Outstanding Issues Report**

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### **1 Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 To inform Members of the approach to be taken on progress, outcomes and responses to recommendations and substantial actions made by the Scrutiny Board.

### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 Members are recommended to:
- 1) Note the attached outstanding issues at Appendix 1

### **3 Information/Background**

- 3.1 When recommendations and actions are made following a scrutiny meeting, they are circulated to the relevant Cabinet Member and officer, and recorded on a recommendations tracker.
- 3.2 The purpose of this report is to bring to the Boards attention the responses received from Cabinet Members and officers in regard to recommendations and actions from previous meetings.
- 3.3 Once a response has been received or an action dealt with, it will be removed from this report and kept in the full recommendations tracker. The complete tracker can be viewed by contacting the Scrutiny Team on the details below.

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Scrutiny Co-ordinator  
gennie.holmes@coventry.gov.uk  
024 7683 1172

## Appendix 1 - Outstanding Issues

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Cabinet Member/ Responsible Officer	Rec', Action or Information	Recommendations/ Actions	Officer contact	Response/ Status
21st July 2016	Serious Case Review	Cabinet Member	R	Requested that the Cabinet Member write to Government regarding Funding for the long-term support to victims of CSE into adulthood and also to support local targeted youth work to the most vulnerable to enable preventative targeted work and the collection of soft intelligence on CSE.	Gennie Holmes	Briefing note with recommendations sent 26/7/16. Acknowledgement received 26/7/16 COMPLETE
21st July 2016	Serious Case Review		A	A letter of thanks to Janet Mokades for all her work with the SB over the last few years representing the LSCB, as this would be their last meeting with her as Chair of the LSCB.	Gennie Holmes	Letter sent via email 26/7/16 COMPLETE
21st July 2016	Serious Case Review	LSCB	A	The individuals noted in the report as evidencing good, determined practice be congratulated	Hardeep Walker	
21st July 2016	Serious Case Review	Members	I	The action plan following the SCR with progress on recommendations is available to Members if they wish	Gennie Holmes	Email to Members of the Board asking them if they want the information 27/7/16
21st July 2016	Early Help Strategy Progress Report	John Gregg	I	The SB were keen to communicate to all providers including schools and nurseries a standardised definition of 'school ready' including a list of expectations ie be able to tie a shoe lace	John Gregg	
21st July 2016	Early Help Strategy Progress Report		A	Requested that they be kept informed about Early Help	Gennie Holmes	To be added to the work programme for next year for information only. COMPLETE
21st July 2016	Improvement Board Progress Review		A	The new Chair of the Improvement Board be invited to the Scrutiny Board	Gennie Holmes/Michelle Rose	The new Chair, Steve Hart, starts in September. Officers to check availability.



21st July 2016	Improvement Board Progress Review		A	A letter of thanks be sent to Mark Rogers for his support to the Improvement Board.	Gennie Holmes	Letter sent 26/7/16 COMPLETE
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## Education and Children's Services (2)

Scrutiny Work Programme 2016/17

<b>16<sup>th</sup> June 16</b>
Recruitment and Retention of Social Work Staff (task and finish group) Improvement Board - 11 May 2016
<b>21<sup>st</sup> July 16</b>
SCR Early Help Strategy Improvement Board - 22 June 16
<b>15<sup>th</sup> September 16</b>
'Stepping Up' and 'Stepping Down' Process for Social Care cases. Quality Assurance Auditing Staying Put Arrangements and Policy
<b>13<sup>th</sup> October 16</b>
Supervision of Social Care Staff recommendations Teen pregnancy and PSHE in schools Health Visiting Contract Improvement Board Report – 14 September 16
<b>10<sup>th</sup> Nov 16</b> <b>8<sup>th</sup> December 16</b>
Improvement Board Report – 2 November 16
<b>12<sup>th</sup> January 17</b>
Education Performance Report Improvement Board Report – 14 December 16
<b>9<sup>th</sup> February 17</b>
Improvement Board Report – 25 January 17
<b>9<sup>th</sup> March 17</b>
Monitoring of SCR recommendations from 15/16
<b>6<sup>th</sup> April 16</b> <b>Progress Reports</b> -These items will only be reported to the Board by exception. Where progress is on track reports will be circulated to the Board for information only
Changes to adoption agency – progress report Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children - briefing note LSCB Annual report Youth Offending Service – progress report Family Drugs and Alcohol Court – progress report MASH update - progress report 12 Jan 17 Children's Social Care Workforce Strategy – progress report 9 Feb17 Early Help Strategy
<b>Proposed Agenda Items</b>
Voices of Care Consultation on proposed changes to the school transport service. Young Carers Serious Case reviews

Commissioned Services including Residential Care  
CAMHS  
Academisation Programme  
Short Breaks Review  
School based police panels  
Prevent in schools  
SCR – Child F

<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer</b>
<b>16<sup>th</sup> June 16</b>	Recruitment and Retention of Social Work Staff (task and finish group)	Members wanted to look in depth at the recruitment of social workers including consideration of reasons for lack of interest in previous recruitment campaigns and remuneration and responsibility levels of social workers. To include reputational factors as well.	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
	Improvement Board - 11 May 2016	A standing item as agreed by Council reporting progress against the areas identified in the improvement notice.	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
<b>21<sup>st</sup> July 16</b>	SCR	The Board will consider recommendations from a serious case review.	Janet Mokades Cllr Ruane
	Early Help Strategy	To receive a progress report on the Early Help Strategy including the Strengthening Families. Also to include hard to engage families (see SCR recommendations)	John Gregg Fran Doyle Cllr Ruane
	Improvement Board - 22 June 16	A standing item as agreed by Council reporting progress against the areas identified in the improvement notice.	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
<b>15<sup>th</sup> September 16</b>	'Stepping Up' and 'Stepping Down' Process for Social Care cases.	Following the Boards consideration of the SCR on Baby C Members requested more information on the new processes implemented as a result of the recommendations	John Gregg Fran Doyle Nancy Meehan Cllr Ruane
	Quality Assurance Auditing	Following the Boards consideration of the SCR on Baby C Members requested more information on the auditing of case work to ensure consistency and quality of practice	John Gregg Terri Cartwright Cllr Ruane
	Staying Put Arrangements and Policy	To look in more detail at the Staying Put Policy, involving representation from the Foster Carers Association. The report should cover promotion of the policy with young people, children social work support at 18, financial support to Foster Carers. The Voice of the Child Task and Finish Group raised the issue of independence training and the Chair suggested that it be looked at separately.	John Gregg Jivan Sembi Cllr Ruane
<b>13<sup>th</sup> October 16</b>	Supervision of Social Care Staff recommendations	A progress report on the recommendations accepted by the Cabinet Member on 14/4/16	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
	Teen pregnancy and	To consider what schools are doing to support the Teenage	Kirston Nelson,

<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer</b>
	PSHE in schools	Pregnancy Strategy and how the Council is supporting them	Nadia Ingliss Judith Simmonds Cllr Maton
	Health Visiting Contract	Members wanted to know more about the current health visiting contract particularly Health Visitors involvement in CAF's.	Cllr Ruane Jane Moore
	Improvement Board Report – 14 September 16	A standing item as agreed by Council reporting progress against the areas identified in the improvement notice.	
<b>10<sup>th</sup> Nov 16</b>			
<b>8<sup>th</sup> December 16</b>	Improvement Board Report – 2 November 16	A standing item as agreed by Council reporting progress against the areas identified in the improvement notice.	
<b>12<sup>th</sup> January 17</b>	Education Performance Report	An annual report with the headline performance data from schools, including vulnerable groups including children educated out of school and excluded pupils.	
	Improvement Board Report – 14 December 16	A standing item as agreed by Council reporting progress against the areas identified in the improvement notice.	
<b>9<sup>th</sup> February 17</b>	Improvement Board Report – 25 January 17	A standing item as agreed by Council reporting progress against the areas identified in the improvement notice.	
<b>9<sup>th</sup> March 17</b>	Monitoring of SCR recommendations from 15/16	The Board wanted to know how the outcomes of recommendations from SCR's are monitored and whether implemented recommendations have been effective in protecting children	Cat Parker
<b>6<sup>th</sup> April 16</b>			
<b>Progress Reports -</b> These items will only be reported to the Board by exception. Where progress is on track			

<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer</b>
reports will be circulated to the Board for information only			
	Changes to adoption agency – progress report	A regional adoption agency has been established. Members wanted a progress report and information on performance	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children - briefing note	Members requested to be kept up to date on numbers of UASC in the city and services to support them	John Gregg
	LSCB Annual report	The annual report of the local safeguarding children's board	
	Youth Offending Service – progress report	An update on progress of the Youth Offending Service	Angie Parks Cllr Ruane
	Family Drugs and Alcohol Court – progress report	Progress on the work of the FDAC	John Gregg
	MASH update - progress report 12 Jan 17	Following the meeting in January 2016, Members requested a further progress update, particularly in relation to the recommendations made.	
	Children's Social Care Workforce Strategy – progress report 9 Feb17	Following the introduction of the Workforce Strategy at their meeting on 25 February, Members requested a further progress report	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
	Early Help Strategy	Members requested further progress reports following their meeting on 21 <sup>st</sup> July 2016	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
<b>Proposed Agenda Items</b>	Voices of Care	Members requested regular updates on the work and benefits of the Voices of Care Council, including the results of surveys with LAC	Sheila Bates
	Consultation on proposed changes to the school transport service.	Following the change in timescales to implementation of changes Members requested that the Board considers the new proposals as part of the new consultation process.	Jeanette Essex Cllr Maton
	Young Carers	Referred from the Corporate Parenting Board, to look at support offered to children and young people who are carers,	Suzanne Lawlor – Carers Strategy

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
		especially those that are children in need, child protection or who come into care because of the health of their parents.	
	Serious Case reviews	The Board will consider recommendations from serious case reviews when they are published. To also include Wisteria Lodge investigation.	Cat Parker/Hardeep Walker Cllr Ruane/Janet Mokades
	Commissioned Services including Residential Care	Members requested further information about commissioned services and how contracts are awarded and monitored, including Barnardo's. Members requested information on residential care provided by both the local authority and commissioned services	John Gregg/Sally Giles Cllr Ruane
	CAMHS	A follow up and progress report on work done with SB5 last year, especially in terms of prescription drug use. Also a task and finish group to investigate why there significantly high number of referrals through CAMHS on the ASD pathway.	Jacqueline Barnes
	Academisation Programme	The Board wanted to consider the implications of the Government white paper and the proposals for all schools to become academies by 2020.	Kirston Nelson Cllr Maton
	Short Breaks Review	To look in more detail at the provision of short breaks for disabled children	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
	School based police panels	A report on how the police are supporting improving behaviour in schools and tackling anti-social behaviour in partnership	Kirston Nelson Cllr Maton
	Prevent in schools	To look in more detail how the Prevent agenda is being delivered in schools	Kirston Nelson Cllr Maton
	SCR – Child F	The Board will consider recommendations from a serious case review.	