



Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)

Time and Date

2.00 pm on Thursday, 26th April, 2018

Place

Committee Room 3 - Council House

Public Business

1. **Apologies and Substitutions**
2. **Declarations of Interests**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 6)
 - a) To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 29th March, 2018
 - b) Matters Arising
4. **Quality Assurance Audit Activity** (Pages 7 - 14)

Briefing Note of the Deputy Chief Executive (People)
5. **Progress on Children's Services Improvement Plan** (Pages 15 - 18)

Briefing Note of the Deputy Chief Executive (People)
6. **Outstanding Issues**

Outstanding Issues have been picked up in the Work Programme
7. **Work Programme** (Pages 19 - 24)

Briefing Note of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator
8. **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

Martin Yardley, Executive Director, Place, Council House Coventry

Wednesday, 18 April 2018

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 Thursday 26th April, 2018 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 S Bains, J Clifford (By Invitation), S Hanson (Co-opted Member), K Jones (Co-opted Member), B Kaur (By Invitation), D Kershaw, J Lepoidevin, A Lucas, P Male, K Maton (By Invitation), C Miks, K Mulhall, M Mutton (Chair), R Potter (Co-opted Member), E Ruane (By Invitation) and P Seaman

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.

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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, 29 March 2018

Present:

Members: Councillor M Mutton (Chair)
 Councillor S Bains
 Councillor D Kershaw
 Councillor J Lepoidevin
 Councillor A Lucas
 Councillor K Mulhall
 Councillor P Seaman

Employees (by Directorate):

People S Kerr, J Gregg, L Pardy-McLaughlin
Place M Rose, A West
Apologies: Councillor J Clifford, P Male, C Miks, K Maton, E Ruane
 S Hanson, K Jones and R Potter

Public Business

56. Declarations of Interests

There were no Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

57. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st March, 2018 were approved.

58. Visit to the Central Family Hub

Further to minute 14/17 the Scrutiny Board held the meeting at the Central Area Family Hub and had a tour of the facility. The Board had been updated on the Children's Services redesign and how the eight family hubs in the city were integrating early help services across a 0-19 age range with multi-agency, multi-disciplinary teams and were keen to see this in action.

The Board discussed the following with officers:

- Working together including schools, partners and the community
- Future plans
- Opportunities for providing placement experiences
- Volunteers
- Communication with communities

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Board request:

- 1) All Councillors be advised/invited to the Open Days being held at the Family Hubs around the city during May**

- 2) **Ward Councillors be invited to contribute to the local Family Hub mapping exercise currently taking place across the city to co-ordinate services**

59. **Recommendations from the Task and Finish Group on Retention of Social Workers**

Further to Minute 3/17 the Scrutiny Board considered recommendations from the task and finish group on Retention of Social Workers.

The report of the task and finish group detailed the scope and context, retaining social workers in practice, focus groups, meeting with senior leadership team, market supplements and advanced practitioners and finance and human resources considerations.

The Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board were recommended to:

- 1) Write to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People in support of the proposed career progressions scheme for social workers and the removal of the market supplement for specific social workers
- 2) Receive a report on implementation of the progression scheme in September 2018, including details of numbers of staff leaving due to the removal of the market supplement and any associated agency costs.
- 3) Receive an annual report on exit interview data and Member focus groups with social workers.
- 4) Request that:
 - i. The Director of Children's Services ensure that members of the Children's Senior Leadership Team communicate with front line staff face to face on a regular basis.
 - ii. The Director of Project Management and Property Services, through the planned refurbishment of Broadgate House, ensure that Social Workers have sufficient equipment, desk space and private meeting space to carry out their roles effectively.
 - iii. The Director of Customer Service and Transformation give consideration to the provision of specialist administrative support to Social Work teams.

Councillor Mutton thanked all those involved in the task and finish group and commended the management team on the work already implemented regarding Social Worker retention. The Scrutiny Board discussed the following:

- Formally thanking officers for the progress that had been made on the improvement journey
- Ongoing communication with Social Workers
- Regular data to the Board
- Supporting newly qualified Social Workers

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Board agree the recommendations and also request the following:

- 1) **The report formally thank officers for the progress they have recently made on the improvement journey**
- 2) **The workforce data summary profile be considered regularly by the Board**

60. **Outstanding Issues**

The outstanding issues were picked up in the work programme.

61. **Work Programme**

The Scrutiny Board considered the work programme and noted the 26th April, 2018 was the last scheduled meeting of the municipal year.

62. **Any Other Business**

There were no other items of business.

(Meeting closed at 3.30 pm)

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Coventry City Council

Briefing note

To: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board

Date: 26th of April 2018

Subject: Quality Assurance Audit Activity

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 activity to date and provide a summary of case audit activity undertaken in Children's Services since the previous report submitted for the 11th of January Board.

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) Agree that Members from the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) will receive 6 monthly progress reports on Quality Assurance and auditing activity.

3 Background/Information

- 3.1 The Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Framework articulates how Coventry City Council Children's Services manages and measures quality. Improving the consistency in the quality of work improves outcomes for Coventry's children. This supports the development of a culture that expects and values high standards to improve the experience of users and carers. These aspirations and standards drive up expectations, improve learning, and strengthen outcomes and impact.
- 3.2 The Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Framework 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 2018/19 is part of the framework which is updated monthly.
- 3.3 The framework continues to evolve as changes as a result of information learnt from the assurance activity is embedded. It is informed by learning from the audits, single agency learning reviews and serious case reviews overseen by Coventry Safeguarding Children Board.
- 3.4 There continues to be a 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.

3.5 The service has developed a more robust programme of audit activity to inform continuous improvement in front line practice.

4 Monthly audit activity

4.1 Quality Assurance activity is mandatory for all managers across Children's Services.

4.2 Case audit activity, focussing on the impact and outcomes for children and observations of practice, are completed by managers at all levels, from the Director of Children Services to front line managers.

4.3 An increasing number of audits are now moderated by a Senior Manager to check for consistency and a standard approach. For example in February a 100% of audits were moderated by a Senior Manager.

4.4 Managers are engaged in developing action plans from audit findings.

4.5 Learning is collated and shared with staff at the Practice Improvement Forums for managers and front line practitioners.

4.6 A newly developed audit tool is now embedded onto Protocol for Social Care audits which means outcomes of audits are immediately available to managers and lead professionals.

4.7 Early Help audits are completed in word format and added to the child's file.

4.8 The audit tool used across Children Services is based on the Ofsted case tracking audit tool, which focus on outcomes based on the evidence and impact on children's lives.

4.9 Areas of audit activity identified by changes in our performance data also take place and inform the future Quality Assurance Framework schedule.

5 Training and good practice

5.1 As part of the ongoing audit training for managers, a cohort of 10 Operational Leads were trained in how to complete Coventry's audit tool on the 20th of February and 28th of March, 2018. This involved two half-day sessions that outlined the approach to auditing in Coventry and a hints and tips on how to complete each of the 12 areas in the audit tool. Good practice examples were used to illustrate the standard that is required of managers who undertake audits and a live practice run of completing one area in the audit tool was facilitated as part of the training session. Following the training, each Operational Lead was given a 'practice audit' on an early help or social care case to complete in the following month. The completed audits were moderated and one to one feedback provided to each Operational Lead. The audit training, moderation and feedback was undertaken by the Chair of the Children's Services Improvement Board and the Strategic Lead for Improvement.

5.2 Further audit training is being scheduled for May/June, 2018. Training is facilitated by the Strategic Lead, Quality Assurance; the, Chair, Improvement Board and the Strategic Lead, Improvement.

5.3 During 2017, audit training was rolled out for all Early Help managers. This has widened the area of quality assurance into Early Help whilst also increasing the pool of auditors currently completing audits on a monthly basis to cover all service areas across Children's Services.

5.4 Good practice audit exemplars are now available for managers to model their audits on.

5.5 Good practice guidance is available for practitioners on specific audit themes, such as Chronology Guidance.

6 Lead Member & Scrutiny Oversight

6.1 The Lead Member takes an active role in the work of Children's Services and regularly receives monthly audit highlight reports from the Strategic Lead, Quality Assurance and the Director of Children's Services. Quality Assurance audit activity reports are also taken to Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board.

7 Senior Management Oversight

- 7.1 Senior Managers ensure quality assurance processes are consistently implemented and that learning informs practice change to safeguard and ensure an impact for children and young people.

8 Quality Assurance Reporting

- 8.1 Quality Assurance reports are produced and will inform decision and business planning for children's services, measure performance against our priorities and outcomes for children and young people.
- 8.1 Action plans are produced to monitor progress of audit recommendations and actions.
- 8.2 Each audit undertaken includes direct feedback and discussion between the auditor and the case holder, and where appropriate, the team manager. This provides an immediate opportunity to discuss good practice and improvement opportunities, and agree timescales for any actions required to bring cases up to standard.
- 8.3 Senior Managers undertake moderation of audits and provide feedback to the individual auditors where the moderators adjust the overall judgement or identify any additional actions.
- 8.4 Where the auditor does not grade a case as at least 'meets good', Team Managers and Operational Leads ensure that appropriate corrective action has taken place within timescales set by the auditor to improve this specific case and outcomes for the child.

9 Findings from Audit Activity 2017/18

- 9.1 The results of audits from 2017/18 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 weakness in practice across the whole of Children's Services.
- 9.2 Audit themes and activity including re-auditing are linked to the Coventry Children's Services Improvement Plan - Getting to Good.

10 Audits activity undertaken in December 2017, January & February 2018

10.1 LADO Audit - December 2017

- 10.2 This audit was undertaken to seek evidence to demonstrate an improvement in timeliness and quality of investigations and support the Ofsted Recommendation. Referrals were dip sampled between August and December 2017; the dip sample was made up of referrals that led to Position of Trust (POT) Meetings and those that were advisory.

10.3 Findings:

- Overall POT meetings were being held appropriately and usually within 2 weeks of receiving the referral.
- There was evidence of clear decision making and analysis.
- Relevant agencies and organisation representatives were attending POT meetings and their views were clearly recorded to evidence the working together process and aid overall analysis.
- The current systems and processes are not sufficiently robust as regards being able to track and fully conclude outcomes of HR disciplinary actions and the future employment status of individuals who have been the subject of concern.
- Records are in place to enable the LADO to evidence their actions outside POT meetings.
- Allegations of a child protection nature against persons working with children in the City, both in a professional and voluntary capacity, are managed and monitored by the LADO; support is provided via this function to a wide range of organisations and the wider community to ensure children are effectively safeguarded.

- Even though adults about whom there are concerns are referred to the Disclosure Barring Service (DBS), in order to close the loop, there needs to be more work done to develop a system to ensure that actions have been followed through post POT meeting and that outcomes are known and recorded.

11 Looked After Children (LAC) in long-term foster care case file audits - December 2017

- 11.1 Of the 9 cases audited, the auditor overall outcomes graded 4 cases (44%) as 'Meets Good' and 5 (56%) as 'Does Not Meet Good.' Following moderation overall grading adjusted down which resulted in an overall judgement outcome of 1 case (11.1%) graded 'Meets Good' and the other 8 (88.9%) graded 'Does Not Meet Good.' There were no cases graded as 'Exceeds Good.' This is consistent with the findings of the recent Ofsted focused visit.
- 11.2 In the case judged as 'Meets Good,' 11 of the 12 domains were applicable and of these, a grading of 'Meets Good,' was achieved across all except 3.
- 11.3 In the 8 cases judged overall as 'Does not Meet Good,' the areas of practice that were least strong were in relation to effective and timely decision making and the quality of assessments and plans. Consideration and impact of diversity. Timely risk identification, response and reduction, also require strengthening overall.
- 11.4 In the 'Does not Meet Good cases , it was noticeable that within this, some domains were more consistently positive and these include effective coordination between agencies, children and young people participating in and benefitting from regular reviews of their plan and good quality placements that are meeting children's needs.
- 11.5 Significantly for all the cases where preparation for Independence was relevant, auditors judged that this domain 'Meets Good,' across the board - 100%.

12 Children with Disabilities case file audits - January 2018

- 12.1 Of the total 19 cases audited, the auditor overall outcomes graded 5 (26%) as 'Meets Good' and 14 (74%) as 'Does not Meet Good.' There were no cases graded as 'Exceeds Good.'
- 12.2 As a result of moderation the outcomes remained the same which is positive as the moderators agreed with the judgements made by the auditors. This is progress.
- 12.3 Of the 15 social care audits, 3 (20%) were graded 'Meets Good' and 12 (80%) were graded 'Does not Meet Good.'
- 12.4 In the Social Care cases that were graded 'Meets Good,' the strongest areas of practice were in relation to risk, involvement, coordination across agencies, permanence, reviews and quality of placement. In all cases the help provided was felt to have made a difference for the better and impacted positively as regards improved outcomes for the children concerned.
- 12.5 In the Social Care cases that were graded 'Does not Meet Good,' 2 cases scored 'Does not meet Good,' across all the domains applicable. The areas of practice that were evidenced to be the least strong were decision making & management oversight, quality of plans, assessment, reviews and diversity. Strongest areas of practice were in relation to quality of placement and coordination across agencies.
- 12.6 Of the 4 completed early help audits, half (2) were graded 'Meets Good' and the other half (2) were graded 'Does not Meet Good.'
- 12.7 In the Early Help cases that were judged to 'Meet Good,' one met good consistently across all 12 domains; in the other, the majority of the domains were felt to 'Meet Good,' with one 'Exceeds Good.' This was for very good practice as regards effective, regular reviews.

12.8 In the Early Help cases that were judged overall as 'Does not meet Good,' one case scored 'Did not meet Good,' across all the domains and in the other case, 2 of the 12 domains were not applicable and the 10 remaining domains scored equally - 5 for 'Meets Good' and 5 for 'Does not Meet Good'. The areas of practice that were least strong across all the early help cases were involvement and assessments.

13 Practice Observations CiN Reviews and LAC Reviews - January 2018

- 13.1 Of the 7 Practice Observations completed, 6 (86%) were graded 'Meets Good,' (3 CiN Reviews and 3 LAC Reviews) whilst 1 LAC Review (14%) was graded 'Does not Meet Good.' The Director of Children's Services and the Strategic Leads were part of this cohort that completed these observations.
- 13.2 Good practice features identified in the CiN Reviews included effective engagement of parent and partners by practitioner and evidence of good transition and handover between teams/workers including period of joint working.
- 13.3 In the LAC Reviews, there was evidence of good practice as regards review being chaired well and children at the centre, good rapport between social worker and young person and IRO knowing children well and understanding their journey.
- 13.4 Areas that were less strong in the CiN Reviews included lack of involvement of significant males and a practitioner not coming across as confidently in front of others as she was able to articulate on reflection with the observer afterwards.
- 13.5 In the LAC Reviews, the case that 'Did not Meet Good,' was in the main too focused on negative aspects and would benefit from more rigorous application of Signs of Safety practice methodology to ensure a more positive and focused approach.

14 Adoption, Care Leaver, Private fostering & Early Help audits – February 2018

Case Status - SC & EH	Number
Adoption	5
Care Leaver	5
Private Fostering	2
Early Help - Level 3	9
Total	21

- 14.1 Of the total 21 cases audited, the auditor overall outcomes graded 1 (5%) as 'Exceeds Good,' 10 (48%) as 'Meets Good' and 10 (48%) as 'Does not Meet Good'. Further to moderation the overall outcomes changed; 2 (10%) were graded 'Exceeds Good,' 2 (10%) 'Meets Good,' and 17 (80%) graded 'Does Not meet Good.'
- 14.2 Of the 12 social care audits, 2 (17%) were graded 'Exceeds Good,' 2 (17%) 'Meets Good' and 8 (66%) were graded 'Does not Meet Good.' Of the 9 completed early help audits, all of them (100%) were graded 'Does not Meet Good.' 5 scored 'Does Not Meet Good' across all the domains applicable and another scored 'Does not Meet Good' across all bar one of the domains.
- 14.3 Findings:
- Permanence – There is evidence of a plan for adoption being ratified early on in the care planning for one child and a robust approach through the LAC Review process as regards planning for permanency. An excellent plan was in place to support smooth transition from foster care to adopters. For the other child, the timescale to progress the permanence plan of adoption could not feasibly have been completed in a shorter space of time – there is

clear evidence of a real focus on the need to progress without delay and this was successfully achieved.

- Decision making incorporating management oversight - clearly recorded rationale for decisions is not always evident and in some cases there are gaps in management oversight.
- Placement – Evidence of good quality adoptive placement, fully meeting child’s needs with a good support plan in place to assist stability and security throughout childhood and into adulthood. Very timely and focused adoption matching process.
- Involvement/participation – In a number of cases significant males were not involved in the assessments and planning. Children are not always engaged sufficiently in individual/direct work with practitioners and there are situations where the focus is too much on the adult/parent and not enough on the voice of the child. In one case there is a lack of consideration of parental capacity and that this is a barrier to their involvement /understanding.
- Help – The help provided has secured the opportunity for long term stability through adoption for the children concerned, and has been thorough, timely and focused.
- Assessment – In a number of cases the quality of assessments and chronologies is below expected good practice.
- Plans - The quality of plans remains variable and are not SMART.

15 Audits Schedule

15.1 The table below outlines the audit schedule from March to June 2018.

Month	Audit Activity
March 2018	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supervision audits. 2. CIN – case audits. 3. Early Help – case audits.
April 2018	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LAC – case audits. 2. Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children – case audits. 3. No Recourse to Public Funds – case audits. 4. Early Help – case audits
May 2018	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Special Guardianship Order – case audits. 2. Fostering compliance with national minimum standards audits. 3. Adoption compliance with national minimum standards audits. 4. Residential Children’s Homes compliance with

	<p>national minimum standards audits.</p> <p>5. Private fostering audits.</p>
June 2018	<p>1. Repeat CP Plan audit.</p> <p>2. Early Help - re-audit of case files.</p> <p>3. Observation of Child Protection Case Conferences by DCS, SL's and OL's.</p>

16 Ofsted Focused Visit & further developments

- 16.1 Ofsted's revised new framework includes focused visits to local authorities who are judged to be 'requires improvement' the first visit was held on 30-31 January 2018. Ofsted recognised that Leaders understand their service well and this is supporting the development of better practice. They also indicated this is supported by a range of relevant performance reports and a comprehensive quality assurance programme. They advised that the local authority recognises that their needs to be an increase in Senior Manager moderation to ensure a more robust focus on practice and its impact. This has been identified prior to the focused visit and plans had been put in place to increase moderation from 10% of cases, in February 100% of audits were moderated. Moreover Ofsted suggested that auditors need to ensure views of children, parents and carers were included in all audits and this has been taken forward through our ongoing audit training. This will also be monitored through Senior Manager moderation.
- 16.2 The Department for Education Partners in Practice programme, Achieving for Children (AfC) is offering support to Coventry as an authority who was judged to be 'requires improvement'.
- 16.3 This will include a review of the quality assurance systems and processes, and will be undertaken from September 2018 onwards.
- 16.4 A quality assurance workshop was undertaken with Scrutiny Board 2 elected members on the 14th of February, 2018. This private briefing enabled elected members to understand the process by which auditing is completed and learning fed back in to practice.

17 Conclusion

- 17.1 The themes from audit activity have been identified both in relation to areas of progress and those requiring improvement. Where audits have identified deficits in practice and a number are repeat themes it has allowed senior managers in collaboration with the Operational Leads, Team Managers and Principal Social Worker to develop action plans which will facilitate learning. This learning will take place through: action learning sets, discussions at the Practice Improvement Forums, manager's briefings, formal training, reflective supervision and informal/formal workshops. This will have an impact on the quality of practice; repeat audits in certain areas will then evidence improvement. This is particularly important where there are repeat themes and the need to evidence that practice learning has had an impact through re-auditing to demonstrate outcomes are improving for children. Audit themes and activity including re-auditing are linked to the Coventry Children's Services Improvement Plan - Getting to Good.
- 17.2 Continuing interrogation of data will also help to evidence where practice is improving and conversely where there might continue to be challenges. Indicators alone, however, are not

an accurate barometer of the quality of practice more an early warning sign or confirmation of improvement.

- 17.3 Once audits have been completed, reports are produced detailing the findings, both in terms of areas for improvement and existing strengths. Recommendations are also attached to the report. Reports are sent to Director of Children's Services, Strategic Lead's and the Principal Social Worker. Front and middle managers take part in developing action plans which address the areas for improvement within their service area. Action plans are monitored through quality assurance meetings. This does not, however, replace individual performance clinics in each service area, which are normally held fortnightly. This approach will be rigorously applied to all audits going forward.
- 17.4 It is evident that practice is improving from a low base. Only through audit and by identifying the issues in practice will it be possible to drive up standards, improve practice and make a difference to children's lives.

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Coventry City Council

Briefing note

To: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)

26 April 2018

Subject: Progress on Children's Services Improvement Plan

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To inform the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) of the progress with the Children's Services Improvement Plan reported to the Children's Services Improvement Board on 11 April 2018. The report is based on data from February 2018, unless stated otherwise. The next Improvement Board will be held on 4 July 2018.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Education and Children's Scrutiny Board (2) are recommended to:
- 1) Consider the progress made to date
 - 2) Receive regular updates from the Children's Services Improvement Board that will include further progress relating to the children's services improvement plan
 - 3) Identify any further recommendations for the appropriate Cabinet Member

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 The Ofsted Inspection of Coventry's Children's Services and the review of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), published in March 2014, judged services and the LSCB to be inadequate. As a result the Department for Education issued an Improvement Notice on 30th June 2014. The two year review was held on 30th November 2016 and focused on quality of practice; the effectiveness of the children's services system and partnership working. Ofsted re-inspected Children's Services on 6th -30th March 2017, the outcome of the inspection was published on 13th June 2017, Children's Services were judged as "requires improvement to be good". Services for Children are no longer inadequate.
- 3.2 The Department for Education (DfE) removed Children's Services from intervention on 13 June 2017, the service is no longer subject to an improvement notice. Supervision and support will be provided by the DfE for the next 12 months, which will include two reviews. The first six month DfE review was held on 23 January 2018, followed by a further review in June/July 2018.
- 3.3 To oversee the improvement journey and as a response to the inadequate rating a Children's Service Improvement Board was established. An experienced Improvement consultant and retired Her Majesty Inspector (HMI), chairs the Children's Services Improvement Board. The Board includes elected Members, Council representatives and representatives from partner agencies in the City as well as a representative from the Department for Education. Progress is reported to the Improvement Board every twelve weeks.
- 3.4 The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive have both given public commitment that Children's Services remains a key priority for the Council. This includes prioritising funding for Children's Services to maintain its capacity to improve. The Council, alongside partner

organisations continue a relentless focus on securing improvements in services for children, young people and families to ensure they are safeguarded and achieve positive outcomes.

4 Department for Education Review

4.1 The Department for Education conduct 6 month reviews for all 'support and supervision' LA's that have exited intervention. The first 6 month review was held on 23 January 2018. The focus for the visit included:

- Front Door and Assessment
- Recruitment and Retention
- Balancing Restructuring and Improvement Work
- Continuing the momentum for a consistent "Requires Improvement Service"
- A visit to a Family Hub

4.2 Feedback from the visit to the Family Hub was positive. Performance at the front door has risen to a good level; the workforce was described as having a positive story to tell; the structure is based on the journey of the child and is starting to embed. The review went well and the DfE have confirmed that they have received the level of assurance required. A summary report has been received to confirm this.

4.3 The DfE updated Coventry on the DfE's new improvement offer: linking in with Regional Alliances. West Midlands are a pilot area and, following Coventry's judgement of RI, the DfE's improvement team would like to understand more from Coventry about their previous and future improvement journey. It has been agreed that whilst the DfE intervention team will still be the link between DfE and Coventry, the DfE improvement Lead, attended Improvement Board on 11 April and will attend in future.

5 Achieving for Children Improvement Offer

5.1 The Department for Education Partners in Practice programme, Achieving for Children (AfC) is offering support to Coventry as an authority who was judged to be 'requires improvement'. Four areas of support have been scoped for Coventry from March 2018 onwards:

- Troubled Families programme
- ASYE Programme
- Coaching and/or mentoring first line managers
- Quality Assurance

6 Ofsted Focused Visit

6.1 Ofsted's revised new framework includes focused visits to local authorities who are judged to be 'requires improvement' the first visit was held on 30-31 January 2018. Two Inspectors spent two days reviewing the MASH, the front door service and speaking to social workers and partners. Visits were also made to two area social teams to review children in need cases.

6.2 The letter confirming the outcome of the two day focused visit published on 22 February 2018 confirmed that:

- Steady progress is being made
- Leaders understand the service well
- MASH quality of work is showing an improvement since the last inspection
- Inspectors did not see any children at risk of harm
- Following restructuring greater continuity of social workers for children in need, social workers know the children they work with well
- Strong quality assurance framework in place
- Staff are well informed and able to access training and development opportunities

- 6.3 The areas of further development included:
- More needs to be done to strengthen management oversight to benefit from greater consistency in the timeliness and quality of their assessments and plans
 - Some staff experience high numbers of cases
 - Assessments need further development
 - Some evidence of direct work, more extensive use of direct work tools is required
- 6.4 The areas that have been identified that require improvement are being addressed with Managers.

7 Children's Services re-design

- 7.1 A programme refresh event was held on 5 February 2018 to review and re-baseline the projects in the programme. The event was also to ensure that everyone had a shared understanding of what is being delivered to transform children's services and improve outcomes for children and delivery of the financial savings targets.
- 7.2 The event provided some contextual links with the Ofsted Focused visit, and the wider transformation agenda including the financial challenges and how children's services are doing things better to improve services. Updates were provided on progress regarding each of the projects, the approach taken and confirmation of the project team resources to deliver the projects.
- 7.3 The outcome of the event is the development of revised programme definition document, this is required due to the number of new operational Leads appointed in January 2018. The Children's Services Strategic Plan published on the website will also be updated and aligned with the transformation work. It is anticipated that this will be completed during May 2018.

8 Improvement Progress

- 8.1 Thirty Highlight reports have been completed in the last quarter demonstrating progress and completion of actions included in the Improvement Plan. Seven of the highlight reports were presented to Improvement Board on 11 April 2018 for further discussion and sign off. These included:
- Action 9.1 Multi agency enquiry panel for forced marriages
 - Action 11.2 Review the guidance about responses to domestic abuse referrals
 - Action 21.1,21.2,21.3 The Family Group Conference service
 - Action 30.1 Health service to review reasons for timescales for health histories
 - Action 31.2 Commission an offer and develop a pathway of emotional and mental health support to care leavers
 - Action 33.1 Review systems and approaches to improve school attendance
 - Action 37.4 Implement a model for effective case/permanence tracking
- 8.2 The Implementation group and Shadow Board continue to provide scrutiny and challenge to highlight reports prior to Improvement Board.

9 Performance

- 9.1 Two workshops were held in February and March led by the Director of Children's Services and the Improvement Board Chair. The purpose of the workshop was to review performance indicators and targets for 2018-19 and agree which indicators are the most critical indicators to Children's Services and agree format for reporting to Improvement Board. New targets and indicators will be reported on from April 2018.
- 9.2 Eighteen Critical performance indicators have been agreed as a result of the performance workshop. The following critical performance indicators will be reported to the next Improvement Board on 4 July 2018:

CPI1	Contact completion timeliness (1 working day)	75.0%
CPI2	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Assessment completion timeliness	70.0%
CPI3	% Re-Referrals (Referrals started within 12 months of a previous Referral start date)	<19%
CPI4	Children seen within 7 working days of being Referred to Children's Services	90.0%
CPI5	Children & Family Assessment Timeliness (45 working days)	90.0%
CPI6	Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPCs) held within timescale (0 to 15 working days)	88.0%
CPI7	% repeat Child Protection Plans	<17%
CPI8	% subject to statutory visit during the 4 weeks prior to month-end	95.0%
CPI9	% new episodes of care where the child was previously looked after in the previous 12 months	<8%
CPI10	% LAC statutory visits to children in placement for less than 12 months	95.0%
CPI11	% LAC Initial Care Plans recorded within 10 working days	80.0%
CPI12	% LAC with 3 or more placements in the previous 12 months	<9%
CPI13	% LAC long-term stability	75.0%
CPI14	A1 - Average number of days between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children that have been adopted	426 days
CPI15	% first LAC Review held within timescale	98.0%
CPI16	% care leavers EET	95.0%
CPI17	% care leavers in suitable accommodation	95.0%
CPI18	% up-to-date management oversight	95.0%

10 Overview Summary

10.1 The last three months highlights how important this phase of the improvement journey is, the Improvement plan progress and highlight reports demonstrates the progress and changes moving forward. Positive feedback from both the Department for Education and Ofsted demonstrates the service are on the right track and making steady progress. There is still have a lot to do, but Children's Services continues to make good progress with the completion of a number of actions in the Improvement plan.

11 Communications

11.1 The e-newsletter continues to be produced focusing on Children's Services. This is issued to all staff in Children's Services, all partners, senior managers and Members to ensure everyone is aware of the progress made so far, what has still to be achieved and the role all employees can play in supporting the service in 'getting to good.' In addition to this, the Director of Children's Services holds open sessions for all staff and gets out and about visiting teams and talking to staff.

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Please see page 2 onwards for background to items

29th June 2017 – formal/ informal meeting
Ofsted Inspection Report Informal briefing of the Board
13th July 2017 – 10am
Young Carers Improvement Board Report Work programme briefing note
14th September 2017
LSCB Interim Annual Report Children's Services Redesign
12th October 2017
Quality of Social Workers Regional Adoption Agency
23rd November 2017
Home to School Transport Exclusions, Alternative Provision and Elective Home Education
11th January 2018
Private Fostering Case File Audits Improvement Board Report – 18 th October 2017
14th February 2018
Ofsted Progress and Improvement Board Report – 10 th January 2018 Education Performance including vulnerable groups Extended Learning Centre
1st March 2018
Children's Services Redesign Ofsted Progress and Improvement Board Report – 10 th January 2018 Parenting Strategy
29th March 2018
Task and Finish group – Retention of Social Workers - recommendations Family Hub tour
26th April 2018
Improvement Board Report – 11 th April 2018 Case File Audits
Date to be determined
School based police panels
Next year
Home to School Transport Coventry Youth Partnership – first meeting SCR's – Baby L, Child F One Strategic Plan updates Review of the Education Service redesign Primary Progress - September Extended Learning Centre Coventry Parenting Strategy – March 2019
Standing Items
Serious Case Reviews Schools Ofsted Reports

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
29th June 2017 – formal/ informal meeting	Ofsted Inspection Report	Following the Ofsted inspection in March, the inspection report is published on 13 th June. This is an opportunity for Members to consider the outcomes of the inspection and the subsequent action plan.	Gail Quinton John Gregg Cllr Ruane
	Informal briefing of the Board	To cover the work areas of the Board plus. Looking at the Council's Corporate parenting requirements and how the Council is meeting them.	
13th July 2017 – 10am	Young Carers	Referred from the Corporate Parenting Board, to look at support offered to children and young people who are carers, especially those that are children in need, child protection or who come into care because of the health of their parents.	Paul Smith Jon Reading Cllr Ruane Cllr Abbott
	Improvement Board Report	A standing item as agreed by Council reporting progress against the areas identified in the improvement notice, to include follow up from the DfE visit	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
	Work programme briefing note	A follow up from the informal meeting to agree the work programme for the year	Gennie Holmes
14th September 2017	LSCB Interim Annual Report	Members requested to see the interim annual report of the LSCB following their consideration of the Annual Report at their meeting in January 2017	David Peplow Cllr Ruane
	Children's Services Redesign	Following on from the meeting in July, Members requested a full briefing on the changes proposed through the redesign.	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
12th October 2017	Quality of Social Workers	A 6 month follow up report from the meeting on 27 th April	Lee Pardy- McLaughlin Cllr Ruane
	Regional Adoption Agency	With the creation of a regional adoption being headed by Warwickshire County Council, Members requested further information on implementation and timescales. A Cabinet report for 31 st October 2017 will be considered at the meeting.	John Gregg Cllr Ruane

SB2 Work Programme 2017/18

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
23rd November 2017	Home to School Transport	A new policy was introduced in April and September introducing new guidelines for home to school transport. Parents have been concerned and requested an item at scrutiny	Jeanette Essex Kirston Nelson Cllr Maton
	Exclusions, Alternative Provision and Elective Home Education	Members requested a report on how children who are home schooled are supported by the LEA and also to discuss whether pupils excluded from school are being home schooled by parents	Kirston Nelson Cllr Maton
11th January 2018	Private Fostering	Following the recommendations in the Ofsted report Members requested to look in more detail at private fostering arrangements – possible Task and Finish Group	John Gregg Paul Smith Cllr Ruane
	Case File Audits	Case File are regularly audited for quality assurance purposes. This report will summarise progress. If available it should include audit information on supervision.	John Gregg Neil MacDonald Cllr Ruane
	Improvement Board Report – 18 th October 2017	Regular report – to include the refreshed Improvement Plan	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
14th February 2018	Ofsted Progress and Improvement Board Report – 10 th January 2018	Following the recommendations in the Ofsted report, Members want to look at progress, particularly at how risk is managed, including with partner agencies such as health and schools	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
	Education Performance including vulnerable groups	A regular report, looking at school performance, in particular progress of vulnerable groups	Kirston Nelson Cllr Maton
	Extended Learning Centre	To look at how the changes made to the provision at the Extended Learning Centre – to come to Board in September 2018	Jeanette Essex Kirston Nelson Cllr Maton
1st March 2018	Children’s Services Redesign	Following on from the meeting in September, Members requested a full briefing on how the implementation of Family Hubs has been effective, including partners.	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
	Ofsted Progress and Improvement Board Report – 10 th January 2018	Following the recommendations in the Ofsted report, Members want to look at progress, particularly at how risk is managed, including with partner agencies such as health and schools.	John Gregg Cllr Ruane
	Parenting Strategy		Harbir Nagra

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
29th March 2018	Task and Finish group – Retention of Social Workers - recommendations	A report to consider the recommendations identified by the task and finish group to support the retention of social workers.	Gennie Holmes John Gregg
	Family Hub tour	An opportunity for Members to have a tour round the Central district Family Hub	John Gregg Cllr Ruane Sandra Kerr
26th April 2018	Improvement Board Report – 11 th April 2018		
	Case File Audits	Following the meeting on 11 th January Members requested further information on how case file audits were being used as part of the journey to good.	John Gregg Neil MacDonald Cllr Ruane
Date to be determined	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
Next year	Home to School Transport	A follow up report covering on applications, decisions and appeals and amendments to the process.	Jeanette Essex Kirston Nelson Cllr Maton
	Coventry Youth Partnership – first meeting	To discuss the new Coventry Youth Partnership.	Cllr Ruane Michelle McGinty
	SCR's – Baby L, Child F	For Members of the Board to consider how the recommendations from the SCR have been implemented	John Gregg David Peplow Cllr Ruane
	One Strategic Plan updates	Progress on the information provided including the provision and demand for special school places across the city	Kirston Nelson Cllr Maton
	Review of the Education Service redesign	Following a meeting where the proposals for a new structure for the Educations service were considered, Members requested a progress report following implementation.	Kirston Nelson Cllr Maton
	Primary Progress - September	Members requested a report in September of the unvalidated data when available	Kirston Nelson

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
	Extended Learning Centre	A follow up report on the impact of the new managed transfer system 6 months on	Sara Mills Kirston Nelson
	Coventry Parenting Strategy – March 2019	A 12 month progress report, to include rag ratings against actions	Sue Frossell
Standing Items	Serious Case Reviews	The Board will consider recommendations from serious case reviews when they are published.	Cllr Ruane
	Schools Ofsted Reports	Members requested information on how schools with poor Ofsted reports are being supported, using Stoke Park as a case study. If any school in Coventry is rated Inadequate by OFSTED, the resulting action plan will be considered as an item for Scrutiny	Kirston Nelson Cllr Maton

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