



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

13 October 2016

Subject: Progress on Children's Services Improvement Plan in response to Ofsted Single Inspection and the Review of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board

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 14 September 2016. The report is based on data from July 2016, unless stated otherwise. The next Improvement Board will be held on 14th November 2016.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Education and Children's Scrutiny Board (2) are recommended to:
- 1) Consider the progress made to date.
 - 2) Consider the updated Action Plan at Appendix 1
 - 3) Receive regular updates from the Children's Services Improvement Board that will include further progress relating to the children's services improvement plan, including feedback from Ofsted and the DfE
 - 4) 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. The Ofsted report identified a number of priority actions and areas for improvement. In response to the Ofsted report, a Children's Services Improvement Board was established and an Improvement Plan published on 27th June 2014. A revised and updated Improvement Plan was published on 10th March 2015 and a further update was published on 22 September 2016. The updated Improvement Plan is attached in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.2 The Children's Services Improvement Board is chaired by Steve Hart, an experienced Improvement consultant and retired Her Majesty Inspector (HMI). 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 six weeks.
- 3.3 The Department for Education issued an Improvement Notice on 30th June 2014. The

Improvement notice is reviewed every six months by the Department for Education. Reviews were completed on 20 January 2015, 30 June 2016 and 2 February 2016. The two year review will be held on 30th November 2016, slightly outside of timescale.

- 3.4 The Independent Chairs of both the Improvement Board and the Local Safeguarding Children Board also submit a written report to the Minister on a regular basis.
- 3.5 An Executive Board was established in January 2015 in order to focus on maintaining momentum and evaluating progress against the Improvement Plan. This Board meets every six weeks prior to the Improvement Board.
- 3.6 The Council, alongside partner organisations will retain a relentless focus on securing improvements in services for children, young people and families to ensure they are safeguarded and achieve positive outcomes.

4 Improvement Plan Themes

- 4.1 The Children's Services Improvement Plan has been updated and refreshed to take account of the priorities for 2016-17. The Independent Chair has worked with the Director of Children's services to change actions into impact statements with a stronger focus on quality of practice and a reduction in the number of actions in the plan. The revised plan supports the over-arching Children's Services Strategy. The transformational changes taking place are significant, a number of short and long term projects planned will be delivered over the next three years. The changes include re-designing Children's Services for the future.
- 4.2 The updated Improvement Plan is also available on the Councils website:
http://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/21915/childrens_services_improvement_plan_2016-2017
- 4.3 There are six themes as follows:
 - Early Help & Partnership Working
 - Quality and Effectiveness of Practice
 - Quality of Assurance and Audit
 - Leadership and Governance
 - Services for LAC, Care Leavers and Permanency
 - Local Safeguarding Children's Board – LSCB actions have been completed in the Improvement Plan, now planning in LGA peer review.

5 Children's Services Improvement Plan Progress to date

- 5.1 The new leadership is continuing to provide the renewed focus and direction. Middle management teams are stable and committed. The new improvement partners are working at pace to help deliver the improvements and changes required.
- 5.2 The Independent Chair outlined the proposal put forward by the Director of Children's Services for closer alignment between Board and front line staff through the creation of a Shadow Board of suitably qualified and experienced front line practitioners to support the substantive Board in its aim to secure continuous improvement in the quality of services offered to children, young people and their families. The proposal was endorsed by Board members who will nominate appropriate staff for the newly established Shadow Board. Meetings of the Shadow Board will be scheduled between 7 and 9 working days before the main Improvement Board. The Shadow Board will consider papers in advance and

comments will be included with papers to Improvement Board members. One member of the Shadow Board will attend future Improvement Board meetings.

- 5.3 As a result of the Ofsted planning meeting in the summer, an Ofsted monitoring visit will be undertaken on 8th and 9th November 2016, this will involve reviewing six cases, and the focus is on practice. Ofsted have consulted on their current Single Inspection Framework, this will influence the action to be taken in the future; on either a further monitoring visit or a lighter touch inspection on the areas rated inadequate or a full re-inspection.
- 5.4 The Department for Education (DfE) have also confirmed that the two year review of the Improvement Notice will be undertaken on 30th November 2016.
- 5.5 The following progress was reported at the Children's Services Improvement Board on 14 September 2016.

6 Theme 1 – Early Help and Partnership

- 6.1 The Early Help service are continuing to decrease the numbers of cases being stepped up to social care. This will be further supported by the reconfiguration of the 'front door', which aims to divert families into Early Help who don't require a social care assessment, the new front door service commenced on 19th September 2016.
- 6.2 The Strengthening Families Programme: Intensive Family Support are working with 185 children and young people across 68 families. Innovation and collaboration is encouraged with growing resilience to change being evidenced in the payment by results data, (linked back to outcome plan), with a large majority of claims relating to evidence of sustained employment by family members, ensuring economic resilience. A recent Department for Local Government and Communities check – highlighted – solid progress made on the outcome plan with no causes for concern.
- 6.3 In July 2016 the Steps to Change outcome impact tool was tested out on 27 families to ensure its validity, before full implementation. The analysis indicates that parents understanding of how their own behaviour impacts on their children's, and how this learning influences the positive effect on child development. There are key components of learning that demonstrates the greatest breadth of change in their behaviours and from the analysis these are: a greater understanding of how to keep their children safe and secure, the importance of children's emotional well-being and the difference that positive role modelling can have on their children's behaviour.
- 6.4 From September 2016 ,CAF Co-ordinators will be attached to all primary schools – to ensure the thresholds are applied, CAF's are initiated by an appropriate member of school staff and supported by the CAF Co-ordinators who will offer systematic case oversight to ensure plans do not drift and progress is achieved improving outcomes for children.
- 6.5 Robust responses are in place in respect of consent this has seen a decline in the number of contacts received. Early identification of need has led to an increase in families being diverted to the Early Help provision. MASH discussions are robust and decisions made according to need. This has led to less work requiring a statutory assessment.
- 6.6 A presentation on return home interviews for missing children was presented jointly by the Police and the Youth Offending Service. The presentation highlighted the improvement journey made over the last six months:
 - Timescales have improved drastically over the last 6 months, from 43.2% in timescale in the calendar month of March 2016, to 91.1% in August 2016.

- Detailed analysis shows that month on month approx. 8-10 children account for a gap of approximately 40 interviews. Around 90 per cent of these children do have at least 1 RHI within the month.
- ICT changes are being implemented to ensure a full understanding of the reasons why individual children do not benefit from RHI (for example interview declined).
- As part of the response to the Improvement Board priority daily reports on current missing episodes are routinely sent to Missing Co-Ordinator.
- A Dedicated Missing coordinator post for children services established January 2016
- Dedicated Police Missing coordinator and team in place
- Internal and external commissioned providers to allow flexibility
- Joint screening with Early Help
- YOS daily screening
- Joint partner LSCB audit

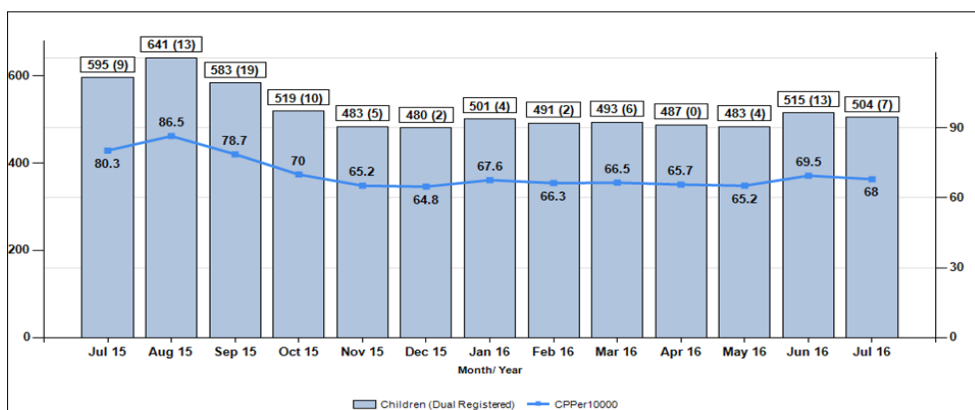
7 Theme 2 - Quality and Effectiveness of Practice

7.1 Timeliness continues to improve across the service. The percentage of children visited as per statutory requirement is identified and reviewed weekly with Service Managers and monthly with Team Managers to ensure compliance. Clear guidance has been issued to social workers about the expectations of the visiting requirements to children on both CIN and CP plans.

7.2 The numbers of children subject to a child protection plan has continued to decrease and is currently 504. This is a positive sign and gives a good platform to continue to decrease the numbers based on improved and less risk averse practice. All of those on plans for more than 18 months have been reviewed by the safeguarding service and measures are now in place to ensure that drift is avoided.

7.3 The table below highlights the direction of travel of children subject to a child protection plan.

Table 1: Number of Children subject to Child Protections plans



7.4 The Workforce Strategy and Action Plan is monitored monthly via the Workforce Development Board. The microsite continues to be developed to recruit further social workers and on-going recruitment campaigns/ initiatives are agreed via the Workforce Development Board. To date 54 offers of employment have been made in the last 6 months. (23 experienced SW, 1 Team Manager, 1 Service Manager and 29 NQSW's) of these 29 new staff have started and 10 have agreed start dates in September and October and a further 15 are awaiting the recruitment checks.

8 Theme 3 - Quality Assurance and Audit

- 8.1 Audits continue to be 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.
- 8.2 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 the Children's Service

9 Theme 4 - Leadership and Governance

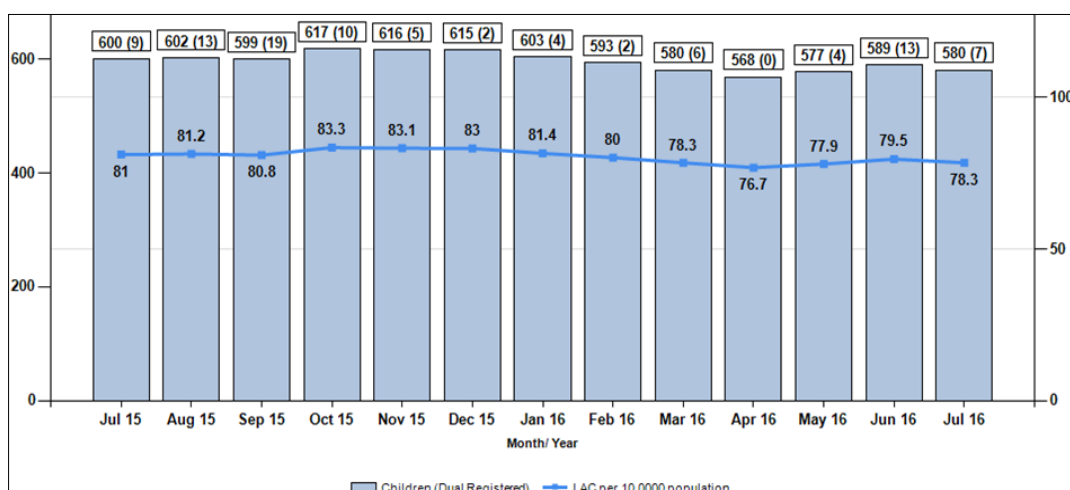
- 9.1 On-going scrutiny of front door activity is underway to review and streamline processes. Social workers are based in the MASH and respond to referrals to discuss concerns relating to those children who may be at risk of significant harm.
- 9.2 Caseloads remain steady across the service areas and have improved further in RAS. Reporting is in place to identify managerial oversight on cases.
- 9.3 Step down now occurs across the service area. This is supporting families who may still require ongoing targeted intervention but not at level which requires CSC input. Closer alignment between Early Help and CSC at the "front door" has resulted in families that require early help rather than statutory assessment being redirected to an early help provision.

10 Theme 5 - Services for LAC, Care Leavers and Permanency

- 10.1 At the end of March 2016, performance for health assessment completion was 93.5%. Performance in July 2016 was 97.6%. Regular scrutiny of the list of children who have not received a health assessment is undertaken by commissioners, social care and the service provider (CWPT) to ensure the circumstances of any outliers are understood and follow up action taken.
- 10.2 93% of young people had received a dental check at year end. Where it is identified young people have not received a dental check, this is being addressed through performance monitoring with team and service managers, contacting external providers to understand what action has been taken, and through routine contract management meetings.
- 10.3 A Specialist fostering scheme commenced on 1 September 2016. Residential provision is being re-commissioned; market engagement was undertaken in July 2016.
- 10.4 A range of 2-4 bedded units has been commissioned to more effectively meet the needs of 16 – 17 year olds and care leavers. A re-commissioning process will start in Q3 and a new service model will be implemented in December 2017 when the current contracts end.
- 10.5 At the end of March 2016 – 54 children were adopted and as 3 children with complex issues were adopted, this impacted negatively on the indicator. At end of July 25 children are placed for adoption, 18 are adopted and 6 applications are lodged with court (since April 2016).
- 10.6 Coventry is continuing to work with the regional adoption agency partners to access the larger pool of adopters as well as targeted local recruitment and use of Adoption Link. The DfE targets have moved from 16 months in 2015/16 to 14 months in 2016/17 and these are more challenging, but our practice and performance have improved.

- 10.7 A 2016-18 marketing and recruitment plan for foster carers is in place and endorsed by senior leadership. There is refreshed improvement plan and robust tracking data to ensure that the enquiry level remains high and the customer journey leads to suitable conversions into fostering households. There are currently 30 assessments in progress and enquiry rates are good. Fortnightly tracking is in place. The recent appointment of Service Manager for Fostering in August will strengthen delivery of the improvement plan.
- 10.8 The total number of children looked after by the local authority has reduced since the new DCS was appointed. This is a result of better management oversight and grip
- 10.9 The table below highlights the direction of travel over the last twelve months for the numbers of Looked After Children.

Table 2: Number of Looked After Children



11 LSCB Progress

11.1 The LSCB reported progress against the three requirements set out in the Improvement Notice:

- the LSCB to be strengthened so it can ensure that partners work together effectively
- multi-agency practice and individual partner audits are robust
- all partners are committed to a shared set of priorities for safeguarding, child protection and early intervention

1. The Coventry Safeguarding Children Board is a strong body in which partners work together effectively. The Board are committed to a shared set of priorities. Both multi agency practice and individual partner audits are robust.
2. The findings of recent multi-agency audits were reported to the last Improvement Board and the planned action in response to those is now underway. The S175 schools audit has now been completed by 100% of schools. The findings indicate a mostly good picture on statutory compliance and where there are gaps, as for instance with safeguarding training for governors in some schools, putting this

right will be monitored. The S11 audit is also now complete and will be presented to the October Board.

3. The board's lunchtime seminar on domestic violence was heavily over-subscribed by staff from a wide range of agencies, reinforcing the need for a more widespread programme of DV training across the city. The seminar will be run again in the autumn.
4. The improvement work planned to fill gaps identified in the last Board self-evaluation has been successfully completed. In particular, the development of the Board's peer review panels has given Board members a much better understanding of the quality of safeguarding practice. This has enabled the Board to identify and feedback on both good practice, system problems and other areas of weakness. The Board has become steadily stronger and more effective over the last two years. It is now in a good position to confidently carry out its assurance function to the full.

12 Communication

- 12.1 The e-newsletter continues to be produced focusing on Children's Services ahead of Ofsted re-inspection. 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 achieving a better Ofsted result. In addition to this, the Director of Children's Services completes a regular blog, hold open sessions for all staff and gets out and about visiting teams and talking to staff.

Authors:

Sonia Watson, Children's Improvement Plan Project Manager,
John Gregg, Director of Children's Services

Contact details: john.gregg@coventry.gov.uk Tel: (024) 7683 3402
sonia.watson@coventry.gov.uk Tel: (024) 7683 1890

Coventry Children's Services Improvement Plan 2016/17



August 2016



Coventry City Council

Contents - update

Introduction	Introduction from the Director of Children's Services	Page 3
Section 1:	Background	Page 4
Section 2:	Children's Services Governance	Page 6
Section 3:	The Vision	Page 8
Section 4:	Improvement Progress	Page 9
Section 5	Plan on a page	Page 10
Section 6	Measuring our improvement	Page 11.
Section 7:	Looking Forward	Page 12
Section 8:	Action Plan	Page 14
Section 9	Glossary	Page 28



As Director of Children's Services, I am passionate about improving services for children. It is clear there is a real commitment from politicians, partners and staff to making a real difference to ensure that children are at the heart of everything we do. Coventry City Council is committed to protecting vulnerable children and families in need of support and protection. This is a key part of our work in delivering the overall vision for the City: ***"We want Coventry children and young people to: have supportive families; live safe from harm; achieve their potential; be healthy; and have positive and fulfilling lives."***

The Improvement Plan supports the over-arching Children's Services Strategy. The transformational changes taking place are significant, a number of short term and long term projects planned will be delivered over the next three years. The changes include re-designing Children's Services for the future, the service is being re-designed and will be fully implemented by April 2017. The chart illustrating the projects in progress are illustrated on page 7 and the vision statement for Children's Services is highlighted on page 8.

The size of the challenge cannot be under estimated. We have made some significant improvements, and recognise we still have a lot more to do. The governance arrangements, structure, and progress over the last 12 months and key performance measures/indicators highlight our performance to date. I am confident that we are now working at pace to drive the improvements forward and have a committed workforce who want to make a difference to children and young people. We remain committed to delivering high quality, safe services and working with our partners, we will continue to ensure that services improve for children and their families across the city.

John Gregg
Director of Children's Services

Section 1: Background

Context

A new leadership team was created in autumn 2015. The Executive Director for People came into post in September 2015. The Director of Children's Services (DCS) joined November 2015.

Children's Services in Coventry have been through a significant period of change and complex challenge over the past 3 years. At the time of the Ofsted inspection in January 2014 the service and the overall system was already under significant pressure. The serious case that resulted in a full murder trial in the summer of 2013 and the publication of a critical review report in September 2013 had already put pressures on the children's system. Case numbers had been increasing throughout 2013 and rose rapidly into early 2014.

The judgement by Ofsted in March 2014 that the service was inadequate increased the system pressures. Anxiety amongst professionals increased and case volumes continued to grow throughout 2014. Child protection cases peaked at over 900 cases in September 2014 by which time the Coventry rate was the second highest in the country.

Alongside this, whilst turnover remained relatively stable (at 6%) there was a great deal of change at managerial level and the increased case volumes meant an increased reliance on agency workers as Coventry worked to keep caseloads manageable.

By January 2015 however, staffing was still a significant issue with a peak of 98 agency workers across the social work service. From late 2014 into early 2015 case volumes began to reduce and significant appointments to management structures were made. However, the announcement at this point that the Executive Director would retire was a further destabilising factor.

Throughout early 2015 the service turned its attention to improvement, training and refreshing key policies. Agency worker numbers remained high. This had a negative effect on the quality of casework and was highlighted in the Peer Review in October 2015. The review identified that our front door assessment and Independent chair services had moved "from crisis to stability".

By the end of 2015 case volumes and in particular child protection case numbers were much more within controllable and expected levels. The refreshed leadership has led to a review of current position and a new impetus to improve. The revision of the Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement strategy and the Workforce strategy in December 2015 are again key foundations for an improving position in 2016.

The re-design of Children's Services during 2016 is a key priority, the service are looking at workflow, 'service hand-offs' and business processes. The purpose of this work is to ensure that service pathways strengthen our practice and place children firmly at the centre of our work and enable us to make and maintain practice relationships with children, parents and carers. We will build on using the Signs of Safety practice framework to create the opportunity for good social work practice to flourish. We will also focus on the way we use our resources on looked after young people to make sure that our expenditure on placements (which are our single most expensive area of spend) make a real difference to the life of each looked after child. As part of this we are already working to strengthen our fostering provision relying less on external and expensive distant placements.

The timescales for implementing the redesign is to plan to have full implementation from April 2017. The governance around Children's transformation and changes being made are illustrated in the structure on page 7.

Section 2: Governance

Governance Arrangements

A Children's Services Improvement Board was established in March 2014. The Board is now chaired by Steve Hart, an Independent Consultant, who took over from his predecessor, Mark Rogers, Chief Executive at Birmingham City, in May 2016.

The Board comprises a membership of Coventry City Council elected Members and senior officers, representatives from partner agencies in the City and is also attended by the Department for Education. The Cabinet Member (Children and Young People) is a member of the Improvement Board and reports progress to every Council meeting and Scrutiny Board (Education and Children's Services).

The board meets at 6 weekly intervals and is supported by a Children's Operational Group that was established in July 2014 to progress actions contained in the Improvement Plan.

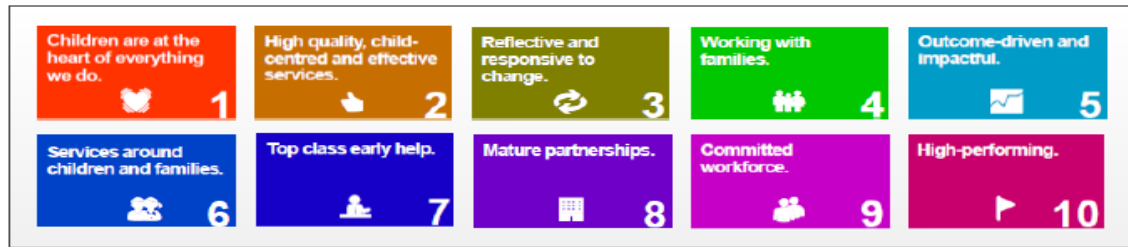
An Executive Board, established in January 2015, focuses on maintaining the momentum and evaluating the impact of changes.

The Department for Education issued an Improvement Notice in June 2014; the notice is reviewed every six months. A six month review was held on 20 January 2015, a twelve month review was held on 30th June 2015 and the eighteen month review was held on 2nd February 2016. It is anticipated that a further review will take place in November 2016. The outcome of each review shapes the work of the Board and is used to inform the Secretary of State of progress.

In order to succeed in transforming the way Coventry operates, the service have established dedicated support to oversee the programme management and governance of the ambitious change agenda. A Transformation Programme Board has been established to oversee the eight projects, the governance arrangements and structure are illustrated on page 7 and the Vision is highlighted on page 8.

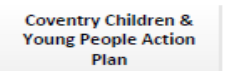
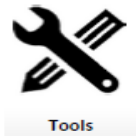
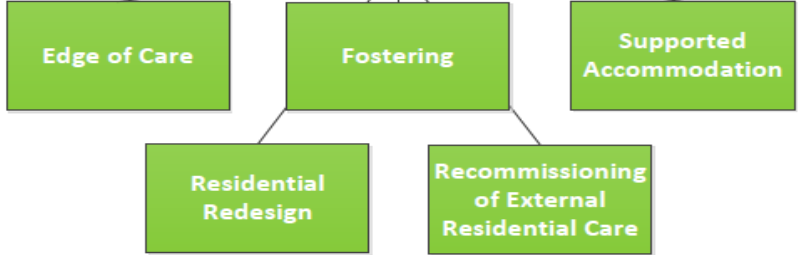


Children's Services Transformation Programme



Children's Services Redesign

Looked After Children Placement Strategy



Strategic Vision

Children's Services Improvement Plan

Right Culture

Digital Strategy & Information Management Strategy

Right Skills

Section 3: The Vision



Children's Services: Our Vision 2016

Children are at the heart of everything we do.

□ **1**

They are involved as key partners in planning and decision making.

High quality, child-centred and effective services.

□ **2**

We deliver high quality, child centred, effective help and support to children and young people, their parents/carers and family. Providing the right intervention at the right time and in the right way. We provide integrated services and seamless clear pathways from early help to specialist support.

Reflective and responsive to change.

□ **3**

Our services reflect and respond to the changing needs of Coventry's diverse population of children and young people.

Working with families.

□ **4**

We work with families to equip them with the understanding and skills they need to raise their children in a loving, happy, healthy and safe environment, which enables them to become confident and responsible adults.

Outcome-driven and impactful.

□ **5**

Services are outcome driven and we are clear about the impact we are having on children.

Services around children and families.

□ **6**

Children are supported to live at home whenever possible. When they cannot remain with their families, they are able to live in or near Coventry in the most appropriate caring home. Services wrap-around the child so as to minimise any disruption to children's lives.

Top class early help.

□ **7**

We deliver top class services for early help and early years, to optimise prospects of the best start in life for all children.

Mature partnerships.

□ **8**

Our partnerships are mature, trusting and effective at both strategic and operational level. In our partnership work, the focus remains on the child. Partners actively contribute to enhance the local authority offer.

Committed workforce.

□ **9**

Our workforce is stable, skilled, motivated and committed to delivering excellent services to children and young people in Coventry. They feel supported to make decisions, assess and hold risk and to develop creative and innovative solutions.

High-performing.

□ **10**

The outcomes we achieve for children and young people compare favourably with high performing local authorities. We make an active contribution to Coventry's ambition of achieving Top 10 city status.

Section 4: Improvement Progress

A summary of the significant progress made is highlighted in the table below by each theme:

<p>Early Help & Partnership Working Theme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed an Early Help Strategy/Action Plan • Impact Tool launched July 2016 • Completed a citywide roll out of Acting Early Sites • Increased Health engagement in CAFs • CAF Co-coordinators supporting schools • Strengthening Families approach • Launched MASH • Launched CSE team • New process for Domestic Violence in place • Contract in place with Barnado's to undertake missing from home and care interviews • Improved partnership working • Strategy Discussions/meetings compliant 	<p>Local Safeguarding Children's Board Theme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective partnership working with agreed set of priorities • Effective practice in place to safeguard and promote welfare of children • Robust performance management function • Multi-agency audit schedule in place • Self-assessment against Ofsted criteria completed • Clear picture of levels of safeguarding training across the city
<p>Quality and Effectiveness of Practice Theme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's Services Workforce Strategy in place • Recruited 50 staff between February and July 2016(social workers/newly qualified social workers/managers) • Comprehensive Learning and Development – delivered reflective supervision/chronology/.management/domestic violence training • Revised the Recording and Supervision Policy • Launched Signs of Safety • Established a Family Drugs and Alcohol Court • Reduced Child Protection Plans • Strengthened Early Professional Development Programme • Improved system on Protocol for recording • Additional Practice Educator recruited to develop and support the increase in NQSW's • Regular Safeguarding training in place for school/staff and governors 	<p>Quality and Assurance and Audit Theme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised Quality Assurance Framework • Developed robust performance information/dashboards • Developed Audit tools and increased level of audit activity to ensure consistency and quality of practice • Robust process in place for implementing recommendations from Audits • Established new IRO structure- conference chairs • Young people influence policy and practice through the Voices of Care Council
<p>Leadership and Governance Theme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective oversight of Improvement Board via Executive Board/Cabinet/Scrutiny Board 2/Council • Improved management of caseloads in RAS/Neighbourhoods/IRO service • Increasingly effective management oversight of cases • All cases are allocated • Effective supervision and reflective practice 	<p>Services for LAC, Care Leavers and Permanency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved Adoption Performance • Children remaining in care longer and appropriately • Improved timeliness of Pathway Plans • More young people" staying put" • Young people in unsuitable accommodation reducing • A Placement Sufficiently Strategy has been completed and is being implemented • A Corporate Parenting Strategy has been completed • A 2016-2018 marketing and recruitment plan for foster carers is in place

Section 5: Children's Services Improvement Plan on a page 2016-17

Theme	What we want to achieve	Our priorities for 2016-17
1 Early Help & Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ An enhanced transformed Early Help Service ❖ Full Multi Agency Engagement in CAF ❖ MASH is embedded & information shared effectively ❖ Children and young people who go missing and are vulnerable to CSE are protected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Getting the Early Help Strategy working so we can step cases down safely ➤ Implementing the "Steps to Change" outcome impact tool ➤ Working with partners to review the Front Door and contacts into the MASH ➤ Increased intelligence of children who go missing vulnerable to CSE
2 Quality and Effectiveness of Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Improve timeliness and recording of Assessments ❖ Ensure children are safeguarded ❖ Recruit and retain an effective workforce ❖ Learning and Development impacting positively on practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reduce the number of assessments that have an outcome of "no further action" ➤ Maintain a relentless focus on consistency and quality of practice ➤ Continue an active programme of recruitment for experienced social workers ➤ Promote and deliver an effective retention offer ➤ Develop a Social Work Academy
3 Quality Assurance and Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Learning from regular audits and demonstrating improved practice ❖ Learning from User Feedback ❖ Regular accurate Performance Information ❖ Strengthen care planning function of Independent Reviewing Service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continue to improve the quality of practice through the audit and review cycle ➤ Launch Children's Services Health Check and repeat annually ➤ Consolidate and expand the use of performance data at strategic and operational levels ➤
4 Leadership and Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Accountability and oversight by Chief Executive and Council Leadership ❖ Effective Management Oversight of Cases ❖ Effective Supervision and reflective practice ❖ Manageable Caseloads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Maintain the challenge function of the Children's Services Improvement Board ➤ Re-design Children's Service and deliver on transformation projects ➤ Implement a Children's Services Strategy for 2016-2018 ➤ Continue to monitor social work caseloads to ensure appropriate and manageable
5 Services for LAC, Care Leavers and Permanency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Improved service outcomes for LAC and care leavers ❖ Health of LAC ❖ Increase the number of children adopted ❖ Increase recruitment of foster workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implementing the Corporate Parenting Strategy and Placement Sufficiency Strategy ➤ Working with commissioning colleagues and partners to ensure health assessments and dental checks are completed ➤ Continue to improve timeliness of adoption ➤ Continue with the Foster placements campaign

Section 6: Measuring our Improvement

Making a difference

There must be improved outcomes for children and young people. We have captured below what this looks like, this will be measured from feedback to tell us whether we have made a difference.

	What does making a difference look like?
Child	Children are safer and will be helped earlier. Children will have their voice heard. We will carry out audits to ensure that this is happening. We will ask children and young people for their direct feedback and engage them in shaping services. We will monitor engagement of children and young people in their assessments, their participation in reviews and the timeliness in which we see them.
Parents and carers	We will work to build parents' capacity and where necessary parents will be helped to change. Parents and carers will have their views taken into account. They will see a coherent early help offer and be able to work with a range of agencies to access support at an early stage to avoid issues escalating.
Our Partners	All professionals and voluntary agencies in the city will know how they contribute to services for children and young people, particularly in relation to prevention and early help. Together we will establish new ways of working together to safeguard children. The Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) will be recognised as being effective. Everyone will play a meaningful part in safeguarding.
Children's Workforce	All professionals working with children will be well trained and supported to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people. They will receive regular and effective supervision and we will monitor this through surveys and audit. All workers in Children Services will be supported to work effectively with children and young people and families.
Front Line managers	Front line managers will provide effective management oversight and opportunities for reflective practice which contribute to better outcomes for children and young people.
Senior Management	Senior Managers will drive change to improve services and visibility to staff. They will ensure the appropriate governance is in place and performance is regularly monitored and that improvements are having a positive impact. They will develop effective relationships with partners to ensure the system works effectively for children and young people.
Elected Member	Elected Members will hold Managers to account. They will have confidence in the workforce to deliver a safe and consistent service.

Section 7: Looking Forward

Looking Forward

There is an improved understanding of the factors that led to the rise in demand for social care services. These have now largely been addressed and the focus is moving from managing demand, improving systems and process to one that focuses on the quality of practice. The arrangements to ensure the Council knows itself well have been strengthened with renewed rigour of performance management and quality assurance processes. Multi-agency engagement is increasingly strong and there is good participation in safeguarding boards and improvement board from key partners across the City. The council and its partners are confident that we are making improvements but there is no complacency about the magnitude and complexity of the challenge ahead. Children's Services will use self-knowledge and the skills of professional colleagues from within the service and nationally to help us maintain direction and momentum

The Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Framework have been revised. 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. This framework is used to support improved outcomes through a wide range of indicators of quality. An audit schedule for 2016/17 is included in the framework. 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's briefings. The current environment with a high rate of 'churn' in some front line teams present a continuous challenge in driving up quality of practice. This work is supported by a rigorous and strong performance management arrangement in children's social care which has a model which drills down on a weekly basis to the level of individual children and examines the detail of each team on a monthly basis. Professional responsibility and accountability are increasingly strong as a result of these initiatives.

The Workforce Strategy builds on the progress the service has made over the last two years and supports the aim of achieving capacity, capability and culture needed to address organisational challenges. The strategy embraces the priority of Coventry Children's Services to put children and young people at the centre of all our work.

Elected Members take a close interest and continue to be very supportive of the service, as demonstrated by the huge additional financial investment made since the previous inspection.

Corporate Parenting continues to be a high priority in Coventry. There is a Corporate Parenting Board, chaired by the Lead Member, this is constituted as a Cabinet Advisory Panel and has made recommendations on a range of areas to Council in the past. The Children in Care Council CICC (known locally as the Voices of Care) have regular meetings with elected members. This ensures there is a good awareness of the issues that affect looked after children.

Partnership engagement in improvement is shown through the Improvement Board and the progress made in the development of the LSCB. There are regular meetings between the chairs of key multi-agency boards as well as of the Officers who support them to maximise opportunities for partner engagement in key areas. The Children's Services Improvement Plan for 2016/17 will continue to be monitored and progress reported to the Improvement Board every six weeks.

Section 8: Action Plan

THEME 1 – Early Help and Partnership Working				
Desired Outcome/Impact for Children	Lead	Timescale	Action	How will we measure the difference to children?
1.1 Early Help				
Objective: <i>Measure the impact and effectiveness of early help to reduce level 4 interventions</i>				
Children and Families across the city have access to early help and this improves outcomes for children	Head of Early Help and Prevention	Gateway in place to 'go live' by September 2016	1. Establish a network of early help services and an early help gateway adjacent to the 'front door' to make the services immediately accessible	Reduction in referrals to social care and reduction in the number of contacts that proceed to assessment with an outcome of 'no further action'.
More children are helped at an early stage and do not need specialised support	Head of Early Help and Prevention	August 2016	2. Review capacity and thresholds in Early Help and Family First Service to improve access to the service (LGA PR)	Professionals are clear about inter-agency thresholds and the presence of early help staff at the front door will enable advice and services to be available to referrers which will result in a reduction of contacts that proceed to referral and re-referral stages.
More children are helped at an early stage and do not need specialised support	Deputy Chief Executive (CWPT) UHCW NHS Trust	Ongoing	3. Increase the number of CAF's/TAFF's led by health professionals	Number of CAF's/Number of TAFF's – Targets to be determined by CWPT and UHCW
	Head of Early Help and Prevention	August 2016 onwards	4. Monitor effectiveness of CAF intervention and use the information to improve CAF's and promote eCAF as the online place to demonstrate Early Help /CAF	Reduction in the numbers of children who are referred for statutory services. Increase use of CAFs and ECAFs
	UHCW NHS Trust	Ongoing	5. Record cases to be offered a CAF identified at the weekly Maternity Child Protection supervision meetings	Record numbers of Clients offered CAF and numbers accepted
More children are helped at an early stage and do not need specialised support	Head of Early Help and Prevention	May 2016	6. Monitor the effectiveness of the process in place for transfer of CAF cases that are stepped up and stepped down to Universal Services and Early Help.	Increased % of children stepped down following successful CAF intervention. Cases that are stepped up are deemed appropriate

THEME 1 – Early Help and Partnership Working				
Desired Outcome/Impact for Children	Lead	Timescale	Action	How will we measure the difference to children?
1.2 Information Sharing & Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Objectives: <i>Improve information sharing between agencies and professionals to ensure it is timely, specific and effective (Ofsted PAs 27, 29 / SCR DP 16.5)</i> <i>Deliver an effective DV screening process(Ofsted para 40) (DfE Notice 4.5)</i> <i>Ensure Police central referral process is effective (LGA PR)</i> <i>Ensure domestic violence is seen as a child protection issue and is dealt with effectively by social care and partner agencies (Ofsted PA 30 and SCR DP 16.1)</i> <i>Ensure relevant staff are trained in how to identify and respond to DVA (SCR DP 16.9)</i> <i>All referrers to receive feedback from Children's Social Care on their referral (SCR DP 16.7) (DfE Notice 2.3)</i>				
Vulnerable children and young people at risk of harm are identified and receive timely services	Head of Children's Social Care	August 2016	7. Ensure that MASH only deals with cases that fully meet the criteria the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) fully implementing processes, reporting and ensuring activity is robust	Reduction in the number of cases that are MASHED as a result of more cases being appropriately diverted to early help.
Children and young people live in households free from domestic violence	Head of Children's Social Care	Ongoing	8. Continue to monitor the effectiveness and impact of DV screening undertaking audits and DIP sampling as required	Increased number of children living safely in household's benefiting from targeted domestic violence services, including those provided at early help stages.
	LSCB Chair	Ongoing	9. Assure that staff are appropriately trained in all agencies to identify and respond to domestic violence	Increased proportion of staff trained. Early help provision will include domestic violence services.
Decision making for children is timely with decisions and actions clearly recorded and feedback to professionals.	Head of Children's Social Care	Ongoing	10. Monitor through MASH and RAS records and with partners to ensure feedback can be tracked and audited (SCR DP 16.7)	Weekly performance management meetings will report on timescales for responses and on feedback to those referrers.
Vulnerable children and young people at risk of harm are identified and receive timely services	Director of Children's Services (DCS) Detective Chief Insp (WMP)	Ongoing	11. Explore and determine whether improvements are required relating to the police central referral process: - to improve delays with strategy discussions; Section 47 investigations and visiting children - responses to requests for PNC background checks on adults who have significant contact with children (LGA PR)	Children and young people are protected through multi agency arrangements and receive timely responses
1.3 Children and Young People who go missing / are at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation				

THEME 1 – Early Help and Partnership Working				
Desired Outcome/Impact for Children	Lead	Timescale	Action	How will we measure the difference to children?
Objectives: <i>Ensure a clear plan for the CSE team that will demonstrate added value for children and the neighbourhood teams within your overall strategy(LGA PR)</i> <i>Improve the quality and availability of data (Ofsted AI 37)</i> <i>Enhance information sharing relating to young people who are missing to reduce and stop escalation to more serious incidents</i>				
Children and young people who are at risk of CSE benefit from a coordinated response that reduces harm or the risk of harm to them.	Head of Children's Social Care	Ongoing	12. Clarify the role of the team in co-ordination of wider action e.g. work with schools, communication campaigns etc.(LGA PR)	Colleague agencies and professionals are alert to CSE and the necessity for referral and action when concerns arise.
Children and young people who are missing receive a coordinated response that reduces harm or the risk of harm to them.	Head of Children's Social Care	Ongoing	13. Continue to develop the already strong interagency work in CSE using the 'operations' model when appropriate in order to protect children and bring perpetrators to justice. Ensure the availability of services for victims.	Close management oversight and monitoring will ensure high standards of practice and investigation. Increased numbers of children will be identified and services will be offered to safeguard them.
All children and young people understand their vulnerabilities and ensure appropriate plans are in place to support them.	Head of Children's Social Care	June 2016	14. Ensure all young people who have been missing from home and care have a return home interview and this is recorded and monitored (Ofsted AI 37)	All children will be offered return home interviews within 72 hours and the reasons for those which cannot be carried out will be reported immediately and scrutinised at the weekly performance management meeting.

THEME 2 – Quality and Effectiveness of Practice				
Desired Outcome/Impact for Children	Lead	Timescale	Actions	How will we measure the difference to children?
2.1 Assessments Objectives: <i>Ensure case recording evidences children are seen and spoken to and risks are assessed (Ofsted PAs 23/27/DfE Notice 4.4)</i> <i>Ensure Children are seen within timescales and robust risk assessments are carried out (Ofsted PA 23/DfE Notice 4.3)</i> <i>All assessments by the Council and partners follow the principles and parameters of a good assessment as stated in Working Together to Safeguard Children(2015) appropriately involve other agencies (SCR DP 16.4/DfE Notice 4.1))</i> <i>Progress cases more quickly through the system</i> <i>All plans to be focused on assessed needs with clear outcomes and timescales (Ofsted PA 31/DfE Notice 4.6)</i> <i>To achieve the timescales within the Public Law Outline (26 weeks)</i>				

THEME 2 – Quality and Effectiveness of Practice				
Desired Outcome/Impact for Children	Lead	Timescale	Actions	How will we measure the difference to children?
Plans and decisions are child centred and influenced by children's wishes and feelings	Head of Children's Social Care	Ongoing	15. Ensure the voice of the child and the child's needs are clearly identified and central to all interventions throughout the assessment process	Audit activity and management oversight will show that the voice of the child is understood and recorded.
Children and families receive advice and support as planned	Head of Children's Social Care	Ongoing	16. Improve timeliness of interventions to ensure children and young people are protected within statutory timescales	Weekly performance management meeting will quality assure the timeliness of interventions at an individual child level.
Children and families receive timely assessments	Head of Children's Social Care	Ongoing	17. Regularly report to LSCB on timeliness and quality of assessments (DP SCR 16.4)	Data will be collected and reported on a weekly basis to the performance management meeting to show that all assessments will be completed in a timescale suitable to the needs of the child but within a 45 day time limit. All exceptions will be understood and action will be taken to rectify any issues that arise.
Plans and decisions are child centred and influenced by children's wishes and feelings	Head of Children's Social Care	Ongoing	18. Managers across all agencies to ensure that assessments are comprehensive, child focused and achieve good outcomes for children	Council and partners' assessments are compliant and audits show that assessments are appropriately child focussed.
Decisions about children's permanency plans are made as soon as possible and they experience less disruption through placement moves	Head of Children's Social Care	Ongoing	19. All children will have an up to date care plan on their case record which will be contributed to and understood by children. Permanence plans will be agreed in accordance with policy.	Weekly performance management meetings will monitor this requirement and determine actions to prevent drift and delay. IROs will monitor compliance with this requirement at every review and will escalate concerns to managers when necessary.
Decisions are made about children and young people remaining at home. Where this is not possible permanent plans are made as earliest as possible and achieve legal permanency.	Head of Children's Social Care	Ongoing	20. Review PLO processes to ensure a more robust framework and clear timescales are adhered to, consider more regular legal planning meetings. (LGA PR)	Management data will show that PLO processes are compliant with the 12 week timescale and in exceptional circumstances will extend to 16 weeks. Court timescales for care proceedings will be met.

THEME 2 – Quality and Effectiveness of Practice				
Desired Outcome/Impact for Children	Lead	Timescale	Actions	How will we measure the difference to children?
2.2 Recording Objectives: <i>Ensure Social Workers recording practice is timely and complies with the recording policy (Ofsted PA 28)</i> <i>Develop a culture of prioritising recording (Ofsted PA 28)</i>				
Children and young people value the consistency of workers when they receive services from their social worker	Head of Children's Social Care /Head of Regulated Services	Ongoing	21. Review and clarify expectations and standards required within the Supervision Policy and approaches to reflective supervision and inform staff.(LGA PR)	Performance management data will show that formal supervision arrangements for each social worker is in place and carried out and recorded.
Children and young people have records and plans up to date	Head of Children's Social Care/ Head of Regulated Services	June 2016	22. Maximise opportunities from the introduction of mobile technology to support social workers to record more promptly. Carry out trial and roll out equipment where beneficial to ensure staff know how to access equipment and make full use of it. (LGA PR)	Children receive a better service and their outcomes are improved
2.3 Child Protection Objectives: <i>Reduce number of Children and Young people subject to a Child Protection Plan</i> <i>Effective multi -agency strategy meetings will be undertaken within agreed timescales with timely distribution of minutes (Ofsted para51 and 52 /SCR DP 16.5)</i>				
Reduce the numbers of children subject to a child protection plan	Head of Children's Social Care and Safeguarding	Ongoing	23. More children being managed safely in their communities following effective assessment. Reduce number of children on a child protection plan	Increased numbers of children managed within a children in need plan. Reduction in the numbers of children who are stepped down within 6 months of a plan being made Reduction in the numbers of children with second or further child protection plans.
Vulnerable children and young people at risk of harm are identified and receive timely services	WMP /UHCW NHS Trust /CWPT/ CCG	On-going	24. Ensure police and health attendance at strategy meetings and ICPCs (Ofsted PA 27 and 29 / SCR DP 16.5) and escalate when this is not occurring (DfE Notice 5.1)	Data demonstrates partner attendance at meetings /conferences. Reduction in number of escalations`
2.4 Recruitment and Retention				

THEME 2 – Quality and Effectiveness of Practice				
Desired Outcome/Impact for Children	Lead	Timescale	Actions	How will we measure the difference to children?
Objectives: <i>Establish a more stable workforce, invest in their development and reduce agency workers. (Ofsted AI 42)</i>				
Children will continue to benefit from consistent relationships with a suitably qualified and permanent workforce	Director of Children's Services (DCS)	January 2017	25. Implement Children's Services Workforce Strategy by continuing to recruit permanent staff and reduce reliance on agency workers (Ofsted AI 42)	Workforce Profile will show an increased number of permanent social workers and reduction in agency staff. Increase in the number of agency staff who apply for permanent posts.
Children have access to a qualified social worker	Director of Children's Services (DCS)	August 2016	26. Implement Recruitment Plan to include secondment of unqualified Coventry Family Support staff	Through "growing our own social workers " policy , children will have access to more qualified social workers
Children have access to an experienced social worker	Director of Children's Services (DCS)	August 2016	27. To review the existing Approved and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) Programme for NQSWs and develop an in-house alternative	Feedback from NQSW , Supervisors, Practice Educators, Programme's internal and independent assessment panel
2.5 Learning and Development				
Objectives: <i>Raise awareness and understanding of the Prevent Agenda (LGA PR)</i> <i>Child Protection plans comply with the requirements of the Working Together to Safeguard Children document (DfE Notice 5.2) and Looked After Children plans comply with the requirements of the Care Planning regulations</i>				
Vulnerable children and young people at risk of harm are identified and receive support from their social worker	Director of Children's Services (DCS)	June 2016	28. Children's Services staff to attend Prevent awareness training (LGA PR)	Training targeted and delivered to key groups. Refresher training is available as required.

THEME 3 – Quality Assurance and Audit

Desired Outcome/Impact for Children	Lead	Timescale	Actions	How will we measure the difference to children?
3.1 CP/LAC Assessments and plans Objectives: <i>Child Protection plans comply with the requirements of the Working Together to Safeguard Children document (DfE Notice 5.2) and Looked After Children plans comply with the requirements of the Care Planning regulations CP/LAC Case records are regularly updated (DfE Notice 5.4)</i>				
All children will have a contemporary plan to which they contribute and understand.	Head of Children's Social Care/ Head of Regulated Services	Ongoing	29. Ensure that all plans include the views of the child, time bound actions, with assigned 'owners' and with measurable, success outcomes for children and young people(DfE Notice 5.2)	All children will have a plan that will be updated as required.
Plans and decisions are child centred and influenced by children's wishes and feelings	Head of Children's Social Care / Head of Regulated Services	Ongoing	30. Ensure that plans are in every child's record and that they include review and evaluation points, with timescales agreed with other professionals along with information about their contributions (DfE Notice 5.3)	Reviews will show that IROs have considered the existence and effectiveness of plans
Plans and decisions reflect the needs of children and are influenced appropriately by children's wishes and feelings	Head of Children's Social Care /Head of Regulated Services	Ongoing	31. Document any new amended information, rationale and decisions as they arise(and new information shared as needed) (DfE Notice 5.4)	Case audits/Senior Management sampling
Plans and decisions are child centred and influenced by children's wishes and feelings	Head of Children's Social Care / Head of Regulated Services	Ongoing	32. Evidence of management oversight, decisions making and appropriate action, is set out in detail on each case file (DfE Notice 5.5)	Case audits/Senior Management sampling
	Head of Children's Social Care / Head of Regulated Services	Ongoing	33. Information arising from case audits confirms that all actions have been carried out in accordance with statutory guidance and clear improvements, actions and timescales, identified when needed (DfE Notice 5.6)	Evidence of implementation of action plans that have been developed following from case audits. Management oversight will show rigor in follow up on recommendations from case audit.
3.2 Audit and User Feedback Objectives: <i>Establish systemic feedback mechanisms so that practice is informed by the views of Children and Young People Create maintain and deliver a regular programme of audits using quantitative and qualitative evidence, with a view to the effectiveness of practice and the degree to which it is safe (DfE Notice 8.1)</i>				
Implement the audit program that has been developed to assure the effective implementation of the improvement plan.	Head of Children's Safeguarding	Ongoing	34 Ensure audit recommendations and actions are measurable and constitute best practice to inform improvements in practice as well as inform workforce development, supervision and future service development (DfE Notice 8.5)	Audit reports will demonstrate that the impact of services on children's experiences has been assessed and evaluated. Specific recommendations are made when necessary that are demonstrably considered and acted upon by managers.
Services consistently ask for the views of children and young people and use to inform	Head of Children's	On-going	35. Give consideration to the experience of the child and family and their journey through the system (DfE Notice	Feedback from children and their families is aggregated and used to inform service

THEME 3 – Quality Assurance and Audit

decisions	Safeguarding		8.2)	development and design.
3.3 Independent Reviewing Service Objectives: <i>Independent Review Officer (IRO) lead on audit activity</i> <i>Independent Review Officer (IRO) feedback is available to highlight improvement opportunities</i>				
Children and young people are able to participate fully in reviews and decisions made about their lives	Head of Children's Safeguarding	On-going	36. IRO service to be audited for quality of practice to ensure that quality of reviews are high	Audits outcomes used within the IRO service and with other practitioners to improve overall practice. Feedback from 'voices of care' used to stimulate practice development.
Information recorded about looked after children supports collaborative planning and work across professionals	Head of Children's Safeguarding	On-going	37. Implement regular reporting of summaries of IRO activity to review the quality and timeliness of recording and compliance in individual case records to inform and improve practice (DfE Notice 8.3)	Regular reporting identifies compliance. Recording will be accurate and the IRO footprint will be visible and child centred

THEME 4 – Leadership and Governance

Desired Outcome/Impact for Children	Lead	Timescale	Action	How will we measure the difference to children?
4.1 Management Oversight Objective: <i>Ensure robust management oversight of front door activity (Ofsted PA 26)</i>				
People working with children can access social work expertise and advice so that children at risk of significant harm receive timely support	Head of Children's Social Care	On-going	38. Ensure all management oversight is conducted in line with the standards set out in the <i>Working Together to Safeguard Children</i> to ensure safe practice and decision making on individual child protection cases(DfE Notice 7.3)	Audits show management oversight increases

THEME 4 – Leadership and Governance				
Desired Outcome/Impact for Children	Lead	Timescale	Action	How will we measure the difference to children?
Children are protected from harm through management oversight of children in need planning	Head of Children's Social Care	On-going	39. Ensure sufficient management oversight of CIN plans particularly in cases where reviews are chaired by agency staff (LGA PR)	Length of time children and young people are subject to a CIN plan, step down process. Reduction in children requiring CIN intervention at level 3.
4.2 Supervision and reflective practice Objectives: <i>Ensure greater consistency around the frequency and impact of supervision and reflective supervision</i> <i>Establish effective supervision and management oversight of appropriate workloads (DfE Notice 7.2)</i> <i>Ensure that managers routinely use a toolkit to evidence good quality reflective supervision, case discussion and decision making</i>				
Work undertaken and plans for children are recorded and tell the story of the child's needs and progress	Head of Children's Safeguarding	On-going	40. Improve use of chronologies and ensure greater use of direct recording tools; clearer recording of case decisions; case recording and supervision on Protocol(LGA PR)	Supervision files will evidence reflective supervision, curious questioning and hypothesis which in turn will lead to accurate assessments and children receiving the right service at the right point of need, this will decrease the numbers of children subject to statutory intervention, repeat referrals and repeat plans.
Children and young people have access to a qualified social worker and social workers have enough time to work effectively	Director of Children's Services (DCS)	Ongoing	41. Ensure social worker responsibilities and workloads are clearly and tightly defined and reviewed and improved so effective practice can take place, with a range of work for staff consistent with their level of experience and competence(including protected caseloads for NQSW's) (DfE Notice 7.2)	All children have an allocated social worker. Children and parents report through feedback and audit that they were able to contact their social worker and that they have made a positive progress through direct social worker intervention and contact.
The effectiveness of plans and decision making for children are improved through practice support	Director of Children's Services (DCS)	Ongoing	42. Develop the Senior Practitioner role to increase the use of reflective practice to ensure managers evidence good quality of practice and discussion	Number of social work cases supported by Senior Practitioner. Children and parents report through feedback and audit that they understand what social worker was involved in their family and can report that they were involved in monthly decisions for their family

THEME 4 – Leadership and Governance				
Desired Outcome/Impact for Children	Lead	Timescale	Action	How will we measure the difference to children?
4.3 Caseloads Objectives: <i>Create capacity to ensure that the front door is safe and sustainable and Reduce caseloads to between 20-25 in RAS (Ofsted PA 23 & 26)</i> <i>Ensure that Social Workers are focused on their core role and have time to spend with children and young people (Ofsted AI 33)</i>				
Children and young people have the benefit of meaningful relationships with social workers who are able to respond effectively and efficiently to their needs.	Head of Children's Social Care	Ongoing	43. Ensure effectiveness scrutiny and oversight of caseloads in RAS/Neighbourhoods	Manageable caseloads (RAS 20-25 and Neighbourhoods 20-22)
	Head of Children's Social Care /Head of Early Help and Prevention	May 2016	44. Better manage transitions to neighbourhoods and ensure cases are stepped down to Early Help where these services can meet and that cases thresholds for social care are stepped up.	Period of time child open to single social worker before change (not including transition) Children and parents report that they are able to contact their social worker Children report on their relationship and trust with their social worker positively

THEME 5 - Improving Services for LAC, Care Leavers and Permanency				
Desired Outcome/Impact for Children	Lead	Timescale	Actions	How will we measure the difference to children?
5.1 Services for Looked After Children and Care Leavers Objectives: <i>Robust high quality pathway plans are in place for all care leavers (Ofsted AI 38)</i> <i>Ensure Looked After Children are in placements that best suit their needs</i> <i>Further develop Supported Accommodation services to ensure that a range of provision is available for care leaver's and other young people</i> <i>Ensure that there is a system in place to support successful and sustainable tenancies</i>				
Young people are well supported and prepared for independence	Head of Regulated Services	April 2016 and ongoing	45. Pathway plans are completed within timescales, involve young people and partners, are aspirational and improve outcomes for care leavers.	<p>All young people have an up-to-date pathway plan that are monitored by IROs and line managers and reported to performance managers meetings. Exceptions are managed at an individual young person level.</p> <p>All pathway plans will be updated at 12 monthly intervals or more often as required.</p>

THEME 5 - Improving Services for LAC, Care Leavers and Permanency				
Desired Outcome/Impact for Children	Lead	Timescale	Actions	How will we measure the difference to children?
				Compliance monitored by IROs and performance management meeting.
<p>Develop services to ensure that :</p> <p>Children on the edge of care are supported in their communities</p> <p>Children entering care do so for the shortest time possible or permanent plans are made for them if they cannot return to their homes</p> <p>Placement moves are minimised and disruptions are prevented where possible.</p> <p>More children are in placements in or near Coventry</p>	Head of Children 's Strategic commissioning/ Head of Regulated Services	June 2015 and ongoing	<p>46. Establish an effective 'edge of care service'</p> <p>Further develop a range of suitable Placement provision of high quality that is in or near Coventry</p> <p>Placement Team to ensure that there are sufficient placements of high quality which meet the Looked After Children of Coventry</p>	<p>Reduction in the number of children entering care</p> <p>More children have their needs met in or near to Coventry</p> <p>Improved commissioning arrangements to ensure provision meets need</p> <p>Reduction in disrupted placements.</p> <p>Increased placement stability long and short term</p>
More children are in placements in or near Coventry	Head of Children 's Strategic commissioning	April 2016 – new services in place	47. Undertake a further commissioning exercise to fill gaps in service provision	A range of accommodation is available for young people including high needs
Vulnerable children and young people at risk of harm are identified and receive timely services	Head of Children 's Strategic commissioning	Ongoing	48. Implement action plan with Providers and other services to improve outcomes for young people in relation to substances misuse/CSE/mental health and employment education and training	Reduce evictions from supported accommodation enable young people to sustain accommodation in the long term
Risks are identified for children and young people to ensure they are safe	Head of Regulated Services	April/May 2016	49. Ensure risk assessments are undertaken when care leavers take up tenancies (Ofsted para 98)	Reviews and management oversight show that suitable systems are in place.
<p>5.2 Health of Looked After Children</p> <p>Objectives: <i>Ensure Looked After Children Health assessments are timely and robust</i> <i>Care leavers have a full health history</i></p>				
Children and families have access support early and this improves health outcomes for	Head of Children 's Strategic	Ongoing	50. Ensure Social Workers consistently and immediately notify health partners when a child comes into care, moves	Performance monitoring of notifications of

THEME 5 - Improving Services for LAC, Care Leavers and Permanency				
Desired Outcome/Impact for Children	Lead	Timescale	Actions	How will we measure the difference to children?
children	commissioning		placement or is discharged from care process to ensure that young people leaving care are provided with information regarding their health through provision of the health passports (Ofsted AI 35) in accordance with the Health of LAC plan	care starters to health within 5 days All looked after children will have a health passport
5.3 Fostering and Adoption Objectives: <i>Continue to achieve improved timeliness and numbers of children adopted (Ofsted AI 40 and 41) in order to achieve scorecard thresholds (DfE Notice 6.1)</i> <i>Ensure that assessments and monitoring of private fostering arrangements are timely to ensure children are safe (Ofsted PA 32)</i> <i>Continue to deliver and embed the existing improvement plan for recruitment and retention of foster carers (Ofsted AI 41)</i>				
Decisions for children to be placed for adoption and placed with prospective adopters below DfE Floor targets.	Head of Regulated Services	Ongoing	51. Ensure that clear plans are in place to improve all aspects of timeliness(local authority decision making, placement orders, matching and placement) (DfE Notice 6.1)	Performance management data shows that timeliness has improved
Time taken for children to be linked and matched with prospective adopters is below DfE floor targets	Head of Regulated Services	Ongoing	52. Embed planned improvements to the recruitment strategy for adoptive parents (DfE Notice 6.2)	Improved recruitment strategy embedded
Adoption is considered for all children who are unable to return home or to their birth families and who need a permanent alternative home.	Head of Children's Social Care	Ongoing	53. Ensure measures are taken to build on recent improvements in timeliness, including the use of case tracking in order to identify children likely to be adopted to help predict and manage future performance (DfE Notice 6.3)	Future performance trends identified through management oversight and legal planning meeting data.
Children privately fostered are managed and decisions and plans made to maintain their progress	Head of Regulated Services	Ongoing	54. Ensure the cases of all private fostered children are regularly reviewed by managers	More consistent oversight and support of privately fostered children is demonstrated through performance monitoring.
To ensure that there are sufficient foster carers for Coventry children.	Head of Regulated Services	Ongoing	55. Generate quality enquiries which lead to an increased number of foster carers	Increased rate of enquiring and improved conversion through preparation and approval processes.
To ensure that foster carers have the training, support and skills to care for Coventry children.	Head of Regulated Services	Ongoing	56. Improve the support offered to foster carers through individual support and programs of targeted training.	Improved retention rates Good take up of training opportunities Reduced placement disruption rates Improved recruitment.
5.4 Life Story Work				

THEME 5 - Improving Services for LAC, Care Leavers and Permanency				
Desired Outcome/Impact for Children	Lead	Timescale	Actions	How will we measure the difference to children?
Objectives: <i>Ensure all children remaining in LA care or where adoption is the plan have life story work completed (Ofsted AI 34)</i>				
Children looked after have life story work undertaken with them	Head of Regulated Services	Ongoing	57. Develop a standardised approach and toolkit for life story work books	All appropriate looked after children have an appropriate life story book.

Glossary

GLOSSARY	
Abbreviation / term	Meaning
ASYE workers	Social Workers in their first year after qualification
C&F assessments	Children and Family assessments
CAF	Common Assessment Framework
Cafcass	Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service
CAMHS	Children and Adolescence Mental Health Services
CBAS	Court Based Assessment Service
CMOG	CSE and Missing Operations Group
CP	Child Protection
CSCB	Coventry Safeguarding Children's Board
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
CWPT	Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust
CYP	Children and Young People
DCS	Director of Children's Services
DfE	Department for Education
DPDA	Daniel Pelka Deeper Analysis
DP SCR	Serious Case Review in relation to Daniel Pelka (numbers in plan refer to recommendation numbers)
DVA	Domestic Violence and abuse

GLOSSARY	
Abbreviation / term	Meaning
Executive Director	Executive Director for People Directorate
ICPCs	Initial Child Protection Conferences
IRO	Independent Review Officer
JCB	Joint Commissioning Board
LAC	Looked After Children
LACES	Looked After Children Education Service
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children's Board
MARAC	Multi- Agency Risk Assessment Conference
MASH	Multi- Agency Safeguarding Hub
MASP	Multi- Agency Screening Panel
NHS Coventry and Rugby CCG	Coventry and Rugby Clinical Commissioning Group
NQSWs	Newly qualified social workers
Ofsted	Office for standards in education, children's services and skills
PEP's	Personal Education Plans
PLO	Public Law Outline
PRUs	Pupil Referral Units
RAS	Referral and Assessment Service
Route 21	The Leaving Care service
SAAF	Safeguarding Children Assessment and Analysis Framework
SB2 from VoC T&F	Scrutiny Board 2 recommendation relating to the Voice of the Child Task and Finish Group, April 2014
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SCRs	Serious case reviews
TAFF	Team Around the Family
UHCW NHSTrust	University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust
VoC T& F	Voice of the Child Task and Finish group – a Member led group
WMP	West Midlands Police

