



Oversight and Governance

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EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday 18 July 2023
2.00 pm
Warspite Room, Council House

Members:

Councillor Reilly, Chair

Councillor Carlyle, Vice Chair

Councillors Mrs Beer, Dr Cree, Dingle, Harrison, Holloway, Loveridge, McLay, Penrose, Stephens and Tippetts and one Conservative vacancy.

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf. This meeting will be webcast and available on-line after the meeting. By entering the Warspite Room, Councillors are consenting to being filmed during the meeting and to the use of the recording for the webcast.

The Council is a data controller under the Data Protection Act. Data collected during this webcast will be retained in accordance with authority's published policy.

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Tracey Lee
Chief Executive

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1. To note the appointments of the Chair and Vice-Chair for the Municipal Year 2023 - 2024

To note the appointment of Councillor Zoe Reilly as the Chair and Councillor Charlotte Carlyle as the Vice-Chair for the Municipal Year 2023 – 2024.

2. Apologies

To receive apologies for non-attendance submitted by Councillors.

3. Declarations of Interest

Councillors will be asked to make any declarations of interest in respect to items on the agenda.

4. Minutes (Pages 1 - 12)

To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 February 2023.

5. Chair's Urgent Business

To receive reports on business which in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.

6. Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference: (Pages 13 - 24)

7. Children's Social Care - Improvement Plan: (Pages 25 - 104)

8. Unregistered Arrangements: (Verbal Report)

9. Contextual Safeguarding, Exploitation and Extra-Familial Harm: (Pages 105 - 112)

10. Performance Scorecard and Risk Register: (Pages 113 - 142)

11. Finance Monitoring Report: (Pages 143 - 148)

12. Work Programme: (Pages 149 - 150)

13. Tracking Decisions:

**(Pages 151 -
154)**

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Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 15 February 2023

PRESENT:

Councillor Laing, in the Chair.

Councillor Mrs Pengelly, Vice Chair.

Councillors Allen, Mrs Beer, Briars-Delve, Cresswell, Harrison, Loveridge, McLay, Reilly, Tippetts and Tofan.

Also in attendance: Sharon Muldoon (Director of Children's Services), Jane Anstis (Service Director for Children, Young People and Families), Annie Gammon (Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills), Alan Knott (Policy and Intelligence Advisor), Dr Lucinda Ross (Education Improvement Officer), Paul Stephens (Performance Advisor), David Northey (Section 151 Officer) & Jake Metcalfe (Democratic Advisor).

The meeting started at 1.30 pm and finished at 4.40 pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the Panel will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

125. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

126. **Minutes**

The minutes from 9 December 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

127. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

128. **Tracking Decisions Log**

The Committee agreed to recommend to share best practice to all Headteachers in the city following the School Uniform Motion on Notice and this would be done via the Headteachers bulletin and would share two to three case studies.

129. **Education and Children's Social Care Policy Brief**

Alan Knott (Policy and Intelligence Advisor) presented the item to the Committee. In response to questions raised it was reported that:

- a) In relation to the announcement from the Prime Minister that set out an

ambition to ensure all school pupils in England studied some form of maths to the age of 18, the Committee were concerned around the practicalities of this considering the recruitment for maths teachers was challenging. It was noted that the pass rate for pupils re-taking their maths examinations was low at 25% and the announcement required further thinking in principal and in terms of resourcing;

- b) A revised letter would be produced in relation to the Josh Macalister independent review of Children's Social Care which would request long term investment from national government;
- c) The Committee welcomed the news that Ofsted were introducing a new, separate judgement to the framework for inspecting local authority children's services specifically about the experiences and progress of care leavers.

The Committee agreed to note the report.

130. **OFSTED Focused Visit Update and Response**

Councillor Carlyle (Cabinet Member for Education, Participation and Skills) introduced the report to the Committee. Sharon Muldoon (Director of Children's Services) and Jane Anstis (Service Director for Children, Young People and Families) provided an update to the Committee and highlighted the following key points:

- a) Ofsted conducted a two day visit on 14th December 2022;
- b) There had already been an improvement plan in place following the appointment of Sharon Muldoon (Director of Children's Services) which focussed on the Front Door;
- c) There had been a need for a stronger Early Help offer which was launched on 23 January 2023. People were able to pre-book onto an advice line and this had been designed following feedback from schools and early help settings advising that it would take too long to get support through the Gateway;
- d) The two priority areas talked about consent and thresholds and the requirement for partners to have a solid understanding of seeking consent from families before making referrals to Children's Social Care. There would be a city wide event for partners of 26 April 2023 which would advise practitioners on consent and thresholds;
- e) There would be a fortnightly meeting with Police colleagues which would look at incidents of 'No Further Action' which would evaluate whether the correct decisions were being taken;
- f) There were positive narratives around the Senior Leadership Team and the direction of travel. Additional resource had been provided by the Council to implement the changes required;

- g) There was an additional team manager and improvement manager which would support development and understanding within the front door service in areas such as consent and understanding and applying consistent application of thresholds;
- h) The second priority action plan, timeliness of safeguarding functions for Strategy discussions and Initial Child Protection Conferences, there had been an additional team manager in place which would chair Strategy discussions to ensure timeliness. The Service Manager within the conferencing space had worked hard in understanding the changes required and has since seen the service come from a concerning low base to a good standard of service;

In response to questions raised it was reported that:

- a) It was agreed in September for additional resource for an Improvement manager as part of a transformation bid;
- b) The Early Help offer had been fragmented and the service would be looking to enhance this and to make use of the good assets within the city as well as combining the family hub programme into the offer;
- c) There was six weekly events in which the whole service would meet and was well attended to get the right culture in place. Staff awards took place weekly and was generating positive activity and Sharon Muldoon and the Senior Leadership Team were present in the staff building having open conversations with the workforce regularly;
- d) The issues around continued professional development and workforce development particularly around large caseloads and complexity were going to be rectified via the new Targeted Operating Model which would re-design some of Plymouth's services;
- e) The structures in place involved lots of handovers for families as they moved through different parts of the service. This was being re-designed and the service would move to a locality structure that would provide continued support for a family;
- f) Domestic abuse training had been revised and was providing a refreshed toolkit to support professionals. The introduction of the additional team manager was providing an improved triage response to domestic abuse;
- g) In relation to partners involvement in understanding consent and thresholds, instead of partners filling out forms, they would be calling in to have a conversation where they would be able to have advice;
- h) The Committee would be able to see if the advice line was working through how many referrals were being made into the MASH. The Committee should also begin to see the number of families within the

Early Help population increase with the number of safeguarding referrals diminishing. There was no waiting time on the advice line as people were using the booking system, this would be monitored continuously and the service would move resource if required;

The Committee agreed to note the report.

131. **Recruitment and Retention Update**

Councillor Carlyle (Cabinet Member for Education, Participation and Skills) introduced the report. Jane Anstis (Service Director for Children, Young People and Families) presented the report to the Committee and highlighted the following key points:

- a) The Recruitment and Retention looked to deliver a stable and able workforce and had five key priorities and included:
 - Priority 1 - Create the right climate and conditions for a thriving workforce
 - Priority 2 - Realise an inclusive culture
 - Priority 3 - Create an enhanced career pathway and development offer that remains attractive to staff as their careers and lives develop
 - Priority 4 - Establish a competitive and intentional approach to recruitment and Retention (IRCSC2)
 - Priority 5 - Ensure sustained focus, investment and accountability
- b) The Plan aimed to provide better professional development for team managers and social workers and also to provide the right conditions for social workers to work with families and children;
- c) Plymouth would look to implement a new social worker assistant role to address some of the administrative tasks preventing social workers from carrying out direct work and being unable to develop meaningful relationships with families;
- d) There would be a retention incentive which was competitive regionally and nationally and would set out the right response to secure valued staff;
- e) There would be reports and scorecards in place that would demonstrate the reduction in the use of agency social workers;

In response to questions raised it was reported that:

- a) Assistant social workers would be based within the Children's Social Work service (centre part of the service), before the looking at other area's;
- b) Plymouth City Council had a post-graduate scheme through the University which was being utilised. The service would be developing an apprenticeship

offer and there would be a meeting in March to co-collaborate the design of a degree apprenticeship;

- c) Plymouth had partnered with an experienced recruitment agency which delivered a significant amount of work for the recruitment of international social workers post and pre-arrival which would be on-going for a year. The service had also connected with the social workers still with Plymouth following a previous cohort of international social workers to find out what did and didn't work for them;
- d) Councillors would have an event to meet with international social workers being recruited to Plymouth City Council.

The Committee agreed to note the report.

132. **Performance Scorecard**

Councillor Carlyle (Cabinet Member for Education, Participation and Skills) introduced the report to the Committee and in response to questions raised it was reported that:

- a) Absence from education had increased significantly across the country with Plymouth sitting above the national average. There had been particular issues with children/young people in years 9,10 and 11 not attending which seems to have correlated with the pandemic and pupils not having to be in the classroom for lessons. Locally, Plymouth would be driving an inclusion agenda to bring down those children absent from education which would, if left unchecked would prevent students obtaining basic English and Maths skills;
- b) There was a place based plan which looked at attendance and absence. There was an information sharing agreement with Multi-academy trusts to compare what was happening in Plymouth;
- c) Children/Young people in unsuitable accommodation had reduced and was lower than the national average. This was being monitored weekly to further reduce but the figures would include children/young people in police custody;
- d) The service would be joint funding an EET Personal Advisor post as part of the wider work of the city for Care Leavers, following national learning and visits from Mark Riddell. There would also be a Seeking Education and Employment (SEET) strategy for Plymouth to fix and support the issues of NEET;
- e) The Skills Launchpad was working intensively with employers in the city in developing supportive placements for young people. The number of supported internships would increase over the coming years due to the work which was being done;

- f) For children placed outside of the area, they would have parity of offers with Plymouth's local children/young people until they were 25;

The Committee agreed to note the report.

133. **School Attainment**

Councillor Carlyle (Cabinet Member for Education, Participation and Skills) introduced the report to the Committee. Annie Gammon (Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills) presented the report to the Committee and highlighted the following key points:

- a) In the 2021/22 exam series, the performance of students in Plymouth matched the national benchmark for attainment 8 for the first time. The gap with regional and statistical neighbour benchmarks was also closed significantly;
- b) In addition, the average progress 8 score for Plymouth students closed significantly with regional and statistical neighbour benchmarks. However, whilst students were making a greater amount of progress between years 7 and 11 than in previous years, they were still falling short by approximately a fifth of a grade across measured subjects;
- c) In 2021/22, the number of students achieving the 'basics' measure significantly increased from 37.6% in 2018/19 to 45.9%, closing the gap with the national benchmark to 0.7%;
- d) There were three significant drivers for this change across the Plymouth secondary education landscape. The first was the introduction of high performing multi-academy Trusts into the city (Reach South, Greenshaw, Thinking Schools & Ted Wragg) as well as the expansion of locally based Westcountry Schools Trust. The opportunity of joining a large high performing trust had offered school leaders the opportunity to develop curriculum, share resources and provide teachers with high quality professional development;
- e) The second driver had been Plymouth's 'Place Based Approach'. Improving outcomes in English and maths was a focus of the 'place based' plan and increased the amount of students achieving the 'basics' measure to at least 47% from a baseline 37.6% in 2019 is one of the key performance indicators. That 45.9% achieved of students this measure in 2022 indicates that city schools are on target to achieve this improvement in the 2023 series of examinations;
- f) The final driver for change was the increasing the number of secondary schools graded as good or outstanding in the city. The inspection pause meant that the last comparable point for published data was 2019 when 47% of secondary school were graded good or outstanding. This figure stood at 67%;
- g) It was notable that those Plymouth schools rated good or outstanding

outperformed national benchmarks for both the 'basics' and attainment 8 measures. This indicated the importance of strong leadership in Plymouth schools. Through our 'place based' plan, city education leaders had set themselves the target of 70% of secondary school judged as good or outstanding by the end of the 2022/23 academic year. This figure stood at 67%, with an inspection judgement of an inadequate school pending publication and further secondary school inspections due by July 2023. In addition, the development of strong and sustainable school leadership in the city as a means to secure rapid improvement in schools is captured as a discreet strand of the 'place based' plan;

- h) The attainment of those pupils in receipt of free schools meals (FSM) was better than regional and statistical neighbour benchmarks for the first time; Plymouth schools also closed the gap with the national benchmark significantly. However, as is reflected nationally, the gap in attainment between children in receipt of FSM and all children remains stubbornly high. Nationally this gap is 15 points and in Plymouth it is 14.5 points;
- i) In terms of progress, although Plymouth pupils in receipt of FSM made better progress than statistical and southwest benchmarks for pupils in receipt of FSM; the cohort made significantly less progress than all Plymouth pupils (-0.69 Vs -0.20). 25.4% of children in receipt of FSM achieved the 'basics' measure in comparison to the Plymouth benchmark of 45.9%;
- j) Lower education performance was mirrored by lower rates of school attendance for this group. The absence rate gap between children eligible for FSM and all other pupils widened by 1.1% between 2018/19 (9.7%) and the last published data point in 2020/21(10.8%). The overall absence rate for Plymouth pupils at the last published data point (2021/22) was 8.8%;
- k) 58.7% of pupils who had more than 90% attendance achieved a strong pass in English and maths. 30.7% of pupils who had less than 90% attendance achieved a strong pass in English and maths. 3% of pupils who had less than 50% attendance achieved a strong pass in English and maths.

In response to questions raised it was reported that:

- a) The Committee requested an update as to what work had been done by schools in selecting texts which would better engage boys in reading. The Committee were advised that this was a key strand within the place-based plan and schools had stepped forward to deliver training and gender was a part of that;
- b) There were 7,249 children with SEN support in the city with 2,660 children with EHCP. Parents waiting for a 6 week decision for an EHCP, this had been 95% for January and 94% in February and was above the southwest average which was 49%;
- c) In terms of the 20 week decision, In November the decision rate was 38% and in January had increased to 76% which was further evidence that

Plymouth was improving outcomes for families in reducing the time they were waiting;

The Committee agreed to:

Recommendation: For the Education, Participation and Skills service to ensure students in Plymouth were aware of the accompanying entitlements when they receive free school meals to enable better outcomes for children and young people in the city. This information would also be disseminated in Family Hubs to ensure families are aware of their entitlements.

134. **Financial Monitoring Report - Month 9**

David Northey (Section 151 Officer) presented this item to Committee and highlighted the following key points:

- a) The Children's budget had a net variance of £2.757 mil;
- b) The directorate had £2.204 mil of mitigations identified and included:
 - Reduction in Court fees
 - Reduction in assessments
 - Family support reviews
 - Out of Hours working
 - A challenge for the Education, Participation and Skills department for £300,000 of management savings which was achieved
- c) Continued discussions were taking place with the ICB to receive a £500,000 contribution.

The Committee agreed to note the report.

135. **Risk Monitoring Report Scrutiny Update – January 2023**

The Committee agreed to note the report.

136. **Refugee and Asylum Seekers accessing Education in Plymouth**

Dr Lucinda Ross (Education Improvement Officer) presented a verbal report to the Committee and highlighted the following key points:

- a) There were 350 asylum seekers in the city with most receiving support from the national border agency. Nationally and locally there was no accurate data on the number of refugee and asylum seeking children accessing education in the city;
- b) Through the school induction process the EMAT team were able to understand whether children/young people coming from asylum seeking backgrounds;

- c) EMAT had provided 29 training sessions to schools across the city;
- d) In 2014 Plymouth participated in the afghan relocation scheme, relocating afghan civilians that had served with British forces in Helmand province. At that time across the Council established systems, deploying Home Office grant funding for one year to support families in respect of welfare, health, accommodation and education. Since then small numbers of Afghan families settled in the City and included 10 families with 25 children. EMAT had provided support to those children and training for teachers to support the families wellbeing. The children had made good progress with one young person going onto university. Case studies in this area contributed to the City gaining city of sanctuary status;
- e) Between 2015 and 2021 the City welcomed people from the Syrian refugee population, with the overall number including 73 children under 18. These children presented with a greater need but were making good progress;
- f) Several families within the Syrian community required additional funding even though funding from central government had ceased;
- g) There were 15 children in the city under the vulnerable children resettlement scheme from Sudan, Iraq, Somalia and Afghanistan. There had been no grant funding for those children but the EMA team were including them when working with schools as much as possible;
- h) The homes for Ukraine people brought 57 children to the City plus ten 18 year old unaccompanied asylum seeking children into the city. The unaccompanied asylum seeking children were all attending City College and Suzanne Sparrow Language school and all were reported as making good progress. Reports from schools in the City state that all families were making good progress, although 3 families had returned to Ukraine;

In response to questions raised it was reported that:

There was a good wrap around package supporting families in their first year. For many families that good wrap around Care within the first year was adequate. Within each of the resettlement programmes, the majority of children presented with low levels of social and emotional behavioural needs. The group that presented with the most mental health needs were children from the Syrian resettlement programme. The government funding for wrap around care lasts for one year and after families were expected to gain work and to move into private accommodation. For several of the Syrian families, they had struggled with this which led to homelessness, living in temporary accommodation and children moving schools;

The Committee agreed to:

- I. Write a letter to the relevant minister highlighting that the one-year support package for refugee and asylum-seeking families had not been enough and encouraged the government to review the support packages in place and extend those packages;

2. Note the verbal report

137. **Early Years and Childcare Sufficiency**

Councillor Carlyle (Cabinet Member for Education, Participation and Skills) introduced the report. Annie Gammon (Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills) highlighted the following key points:

- a) There were 245 Ofsted registered childcare providers in Plymouth with sufficient childcare places in Plymouth for two, three and four year olds;
- b) Nationally the sector was under pressure including workers being low paid; a change in the way parents use childcare, with parents working at home choosing to lower the amount of days they send children to childcare providers and the subsidised 30 free hours of childcare was not enough for providers and didn't cover the costs;
- c) The number of providers closing was faster than those new providers but provision in Plymouth was still sufficient;
- d) The financial viability of running nurseries was of concern in areas of high social-economic deprivation. Whilst the Council were unable to provide funds to those nurseries, the Council was able to provide advice;
- e) There had been a reduction in the number of childminders due to a change of career or retirement and there had been less people joining the profession;
- f) There had been a steady decline in birth numbers which would affect the number of children in the population going into a childcare provision.

The Committee agreed to note the report.

138. **Early Years and Childcare Quality and Child Outcomes**

Annie Gammon (Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills) presented the report to the Committee and highlighted the following key points:

In Plymouth 97.5% of settings were judged good and above by Ofsted. The Council provided support through networking and input through childminders and colleagues that run nurseries;

In response to questions raised it was reported that:

The data stated that there was sufficient places in Plymouth for families but it did not advise whether those places were in the right area of the right sort of placement families were looking for;

The Committee agreed to:

1. Send a letter to the relevant minister highlighting the recruitment and retention pressures on the Early Help sector and requesting the implementation of a national strategy to address this. The letter would also ask that government recognise and value the importance of the early years sector and the staff working within it;
2. To note the report.

139. **Work Programme**

The Committee agreed to:

- Deep dive into absence
- Child Exploitation update
- NEET

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PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

**PART D: OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY FUNCTIONS &
PROCEDURES**

1. Overview and Scrutiny Functions

1.1. The aims of the Overview and Scrutiny process are to-

- add value to Council business and decision-making;
- hold the Cabinet to account;
- monitor the budget and performance of services;
- assist the Council in the development of policy and review the effectiveness of the implementation of Council policy;
- review relevant central government policy development and legislation to assess the impact on the City and make recommendations to Cabinet.

2. Scrutiny Management Board

2.1 The purpose of the Scrutiny Management Board is to manage scrutiny in a way that ensures the functions of overview and scrutiny are fairly balanced across all aspects of the Council's work, with a view to improving services, reducing inequalities and improving outcomes for the people of Plymouth.

2.2 Role of the Scrutiny Management Board

- To ensure that work is allocated fairly across the four scrutiny committees and reflects all aspects of the Council's work by providing oversight and direction to the committees' work programmes
- To ensure corporate and cross cutting business is dealt with by the relevant committee
- To review performance against the relevant corporate priorities and inform work programmes as appropriate
- To commission select committee reviews where necessary and appropriate
- To receive for information, and oversee implementation of, recommendations made by each Scrutiny Committee
- To plan and oversee implementation of the process for annual Budget Scrutiny
- To produce an annual scrutiny report to Council (in conjunction with the scrutiny committees)
- To review national best practice and guidance in relation to overview and scrutiny and recommend any changes to the way overview and scrutiny is undertaken as a result

2.3 **Membership** – the Scrutiny Management Board will consist of the Chairs of each of the scrutiny committees. The relevant committee Vice-Chair can act as substitute for the relevant Chair if required.

2.4 **Chair** – the Chair of the Board will be from the from the largest opposition group.

2.5 **Vice-Chair** – the Vice-Chair will be from the group in administration.

3. Role of Overview and Scrutiny Committees

3.1. The relevant scrutiny committee will:

- hear call-ins, Councilors' call for action and petitions;
- approve time limited select committees for issues within its remit;
- monitor performance against the relevant corporate priorities;
- receive finance and performance reports;
- agree recommendations to Cabinet, Council and partner organisations;
- agree appointments of co-opted representatives;

- monitor the forward plan;
- help Council and the Cabinet to develop policy by studying issues in detail through time limited Select Committees;
- review new and developing legislation to assess its impact on the city;
- consider and introduce schemes to involve the public in developing policy;
- work with national, regional and local organisations to promote the interest of local people.

4. Growth and Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

4.1. Responsibility for

- Relevant policies in the Plymouth Plan
- Response to Central Government's Policy Making
- Capital Programme
- Strategic Procurement
- Corporate Property
- Development planning
- Strategic Highways
- Economic Development
- Heart of the South West Productivity Plan
- Strategic Transport policies and strategies
- Cultural Infrastructure
- Climate change and sustainability
- Reviewing impact of Brexit on the city
- Proposing measures that Government should take to provide stability for the council and partners in light of Brexit
- Exploring powers could be devolved from the EU directly to local authorities
- Hear call-ins relevant to the role of the committee

4.2. Partnership links

- Growth Board
- Joint Committee for Heart of the South West
- Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership

4.3. **Membership** - All members of the Committee will adhere to the general rules of Overview and Scrutiny. There are thirteen members of the Committee including the Chair and Vice Chair.

4.4. **Chair** – The Chair will be from the largest opposition group and will be a member of the Scrutiny Management Board.

4.5. **Vice Chair** – The Vice Chair will be from the group in administration and will act as substitute for the Chair on the Scrutiny Management Board.

4.6. **Urgent Decisions** – Urgent decisions will be reviewed by the Chair with relevant responsibilities

5. Performance, Finance and Customer Focus Overview and Scrutiny Committee

5.1. Responsibility for -

- Relevant policies in the Plymouth Plan
- Corporate Performance Monitoring
- Financial Performance Monitoring
- Annual Budget Setting Process
- Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Revenues and benefits
- Homelessness
- Communications
- Human resources
- Audit and Risk
- Transformation
- Bereavement Services and Register Office
- Community Safety
- Customer Services
- Street scene and Waste
- Parking
- Hear call-ins relevant to the role of the committee

5.2. Partnership links

- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Safer Plymouth
- Police and Crime Panel

5.3. **Membership** - All members of the Committee will adhere to the general rules of Overview and Scrutiny. There are thirteen members of the Committee including the Chair and Vice Chair.

5.4. **Chair** – The Chair will be from the largest opposition group and will be a member of the Scrutiny Management Board.

5.5. **Vice Chair** – The Vice Chair will be from the group in administration and will act as substitute for the Chair on the Scrutiny Management Board.

5.6. **Urgent Decisions** – Urgent decisions will be reviewed by the Chair with relevant responsibilities

6. Education and Children’s Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

6.1. Responsibility for-

- Relevant policies in the Plymouth Plan
- Early Years Services
- Schools, colleges and other educational settings
- Child Poverty
- Special Education Needs, behaviour and attendance, narrowing the gap in

outcomes

- Safeguarding Children
- Cared for children
- Youth offending
- Adoption and Fostering
- Corporate Parenting
- Hear call-ins relevant to the role of the committee

6.2. Partnership Links

- Plymouth Safeguarding Children's Board
- Plymouth Education Board
- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Regional Adoption Agency
- Children's Partnership

6.3. Membership - All members of the Committee will adhere to the general rules of Overview and Scrutiny. There are thirteen members of the Committee including the Chair and Vice Chair.

6.4. **Chair** – The Chair will be from will be from the group in administration and will be a member of the Scrutiny Management Board.

6.5. **Vice Chair** – The Vice Chair will be from the largest opposition group and will act as substitute for the Chair on the Scrutiny Management Board.

6.6. **Urgent Decisions** – Urgent decisions will be reviewed by the Chair with relevant responsibilities

7. Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

7.1. Responsibility for -

- Relevant policies in the Plymouth Plan
- Integrated Commissioning
- Hospital and community health services
- dental services, pharmacy and NHS ophthalmic services;
- public health services
- Adult Social Care Services
- Adult Safeguarding Services
- Hear call-ins relevant to the role of the committee

7.2. Statutory Role with regard to undertaking all the statutory functions in accordance with Section 244, of the National Health Act 2006, (as amended by Health and Social Care Act 2012) regulations and guidance under that section.

7.3. Partnership Links

- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Plymouth Safeguarding Adults Board
- Integrated Commissioning Board

- 7.4. **Membership** - All members of the Committee will adhere to the general rules of Overview and Scrutiny. There are thirteen members of the Committee including the Chair and Vice Chair.
- 7.5. **Chair** –The Chair will be from the group in administration and will be a member of the Scrutiny Management Board.
- 7.6. **Vice Chair** – The Vice Chair will be from the largest opposition group and will act as substitute for the Chair on the Scrutiny Management Board.
- 7.7. **Urgent Decisions** – Urgent decisions will be reviewed by the Chair with relevant responsibilities

8. Overview and Scrutiny Procedures

Conflicts of interest

- 8.1. Unless they have a dispensation, members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees cannot scrutinise decisions they were involved in taking and must leave the room when these decisions are scrutinised. Before they leave they can make representations and answer questions or give evidence if other members of the public would also have this right.

Procedure when a councillor resigns from a committee

- 8.2. A Councillor can resign from a Committee by writing to the Monitoring Officer.
8.3. A replacement member will be confirmed at the next Council meeting.

Procedure when a committee member stops being a councillor

- 8.4. If a Committee member stops being a Councillor, a replacement member will be confirmed at the next full Council meeting.

Co-opted members of overview and scrutiny committees

- 8.5. Non-voting co-opted members can serve on an Overview and Scrutiny Committees or for a specific policy review.
- 8.6. Co-opted members cannot vote unless they have the legal right to do so.
- 8.7. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee that deals with education matters will appoint four (statutory) co-opted members (two parent governor representatives and two church representatives). One of the church representatives will be nominated by the Diocesan Board of Education for the Church of England diocese and the other will be nominated by the Bishop of the Roman Catholic diocese within the area.

Overview and scrutiny committee meetings

- 8.8. The annual calendar for Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings is set by Council. If Overview and Scrutiny Committees need to have extra meetings, they set the dates

themselves.

- 8.9. The Chair is responsible for the start times of committees in consultation with the Monitoring Officer.
- 8.10. The Monitoring Officer or the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair can decide to call a special meeting.
- 8.11. If a Committee has no business at one of its fixed meetings, the Monitoring Officer can cancel it after consulting the chair.

Substitutes, quorum and training

- 8.12. Members of the Committees can send other Councillors (who must belong to the same political group) as substitutes. Substitutes have the powers of an ordinary member of the committee.
- 8.13. Substitutions must be for a whole meeting. A member cannot take over from their substitute or hand over to them part way through a meeting.
- 8.14. If a member wants to send a substitute, they must inform the Monitoring Officer before the meeting.
- 8.15. Substitutes cannot appoint substitutes of their own.
- 8.16. If a Councillor is a member of a Select Committee Review, once the group has started its work, no substitution is allowed.
- 8.17. The quorum for a meeting is three members

Chairs and vice-chairs of overview and scrutiny committees

- 8.18. Election of chair and vice-chair
- 8.19. Chairs and vice-chairs are appointed at the annual meeting of Council.
- 8.20. Resignation of chair or vice-chair
- 8.21. If a Councillor wants to resign as chair or vice-chair, they must write to the Monitoring Officer. A new chair or vice-chair will be confirmed at the Committee's next ordinary meeting.

Programme of work

- 8.22. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees set their own programmes of work. The Committees must also review anything they are asked to review by Council.

Call in

- 8.23. Items called in will be heard at a meeting of the relevant committee within 10 working days of the end of the call in period relating to that item.

Agenda

- 8.24. Any Councillor may place any local government matter (other than excluded matters – see below) which is relevant to the functions of the Committee or board on the agenda of a meeting. The Councillor will be invited to attend the meeting at which the item is to be considered and to explain the reasons for the request.

Considering matters

- 8.25. When considering a local government matter referred by a Councillor, the Committee will decide whether to:
- review or scrutinise a decision taken by the cabinet or cabinet member;
 - make a report or recommendation to the Council or cabinet on how cabinet carries out its functions;
 - review or scrutinise a decision taken by a Council body other than the cabinet or a cabinet member;
 - make a report or recommendation to the Council or the cabinet on how a Council body other than the cabinet carries out its functions;
 - make a report or recommendation to the Council or the cabinet on matters which affect the city or the inhabitants of the city;
 - take no action.
- 8.26. The Committee will then report back to the Councillor who raised the local government matter about the decision and the reasons for the decision.

Excluded matters

- 8.27. The following matters cannot be considered by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
- any matter relating to a planning decision;
 - any matter relating to a licensing decision;
 - any matter relating to an individual or body if s/he/they have, by law, a right to a review or right of appeal ;
 - any matter which is vexatious, discriminatory or not reasonable to be included in the agenda for, or to be discussed at, a Committee or board meeting .
- 8.28. The Monitoring Officer in consultation with the Scrutiny Officer and Chair (or Vice-Chair in the chair's absence) of the relevant Committee will determine whether a matter is an excluded matter.

Speaking on agenda items

- 8.29. Any member of the public and any Councillor who is not a member of the Committee can speak on an agenda item if the Chair agrees. The Chair will decide how long they can speak for (unless the meeting is for call-in).

Policy review and development

- 8.30. The overview and scrutiny Committees' role in developing the policy framework and budget is set out in paragraph 1.

- 8.31. In areas that are not covered by the policy framework and budget, the Overview and Scrutiny Committees can suggest policies for the cabinet or a cabinet member to develop.
- 8.32. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees can hold inquiries and consider future policy. This may involve appointing advisors, inviting witnesses, making site visits, holding public meetings, commissioning research or doing anything else which is necessary.

Select committee reviews

- 8.33. Overview and Scrutiny Committees may appoint time limited Select Committee Reviews to undertake pieces of scrutiny work as required and will be time specific.

Requests for reviews from full council

- 8.34. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees must review anything full Council asks them to review as soon as they can make space in their programme of work.

Requests for reviews from the cabinet

- 8.35. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees can (but do not have to) review items the Cabinet or a Cabinet Member asks them to review.

Reports on overview and scrutiny reviews

Select committees

- 8.36. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees may appoint Select Committees to undertake pieces of scrutiny work as required and will be time specific. The Chair of and members of Select Committee can be any member not excluded from scrutiny. Select Committees will be subject to rules of proportionality.

Committee/Select Committee Review report

- 8.37. At the end of each policy review, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee / Select Committee Review will send the report to the Cabinet or a Cabinet Member (if it is about executive responsibilities) or to Council (if it is about Council responsibilities) or to another organisation, as appropriate.

Minority report

- 8.38. For each policy review, there can be a minority report giving any dissenting views. The Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Full Council will consider the minority report at the same time as the Committee/ review report.
- 8.39. Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee / Select Committee Review member can vote for one report but no more than one. The report with the most votes will be the Overview and Scrutiny Committee / Select Committee Review report.

Timing

- 8.40. If an Overview and Scrutiny Committee decides to send a report to the Cabinet, a cabinet member or Council:
- the Cabinet must, where practicable, consider it at its next ordinary meeting if it is about executive responsibilities;
 - Council must, where practicable, consider it at its next ordinary meeting if it is about Council responsibilities.

Arrangements for cabinet to comment on reports to full council

- 8.41. When the Overview and Scrutiny Committee sends a report to full Council, the Monitoring Officer will send a copy to the Cabinet/Cabinet Member. Council must consider the Cabinet or cabinet member's comments on anything that affects the policy framework and budget.

Overview and scrutiny members' rights to see documents

- 8.42. Overview and Scrutiny members' rights to see documents are set out in the Access to Information Rules ([see Part F](#)).

Duty of cabinet members and officers to attend overview and scrutiny meetings

- 8.43. Overview and scrutiny meetings can require members of the Cabinet and senior officers to attend and answer questions about:
- their performance
 - decisions they were involved in
 - the extent to which they have followed the policy framework and budget

- 8.44. The Lead Scrutiny Officer will inform the Councillor or officer that they are required to attend, what it is about and whether they need to produce a report or provide papers.

Timing

- 8.45. The Councillor or officer must be given reasonable time to compile information.

Whipping

- 8.46. Political groups should not pressure their members over how they speak or vote at Overview and Scrutiny meetings.

Order of business at overview and scrutiny committees

- 8.47. The overview and scrutiny committee will consider:
- declarations of interest
 - minutes
 - anything that has been called in
 - any Cabinet/Cabinet member's responses to the committee's reports
 - anything else on the agenda

- 8.48. This procedure can be suspended if at least half of all the voting members are present and there is a simple majority in favour. It can only be suspended until the end of a meeting.

Witnesses at overview and scrutiny meetings

- 8.49. Witnesses should be treated with politeness and respect.
- 8.50. Witnesses will only be required to attend Scrutiny meetings where the law requires their attendance.

Items affecting more than one overview and scrutiny committee

- 8.51. If an item affects more than one Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Committees will consider the creation of a Joint Select Committee to review it.

Minutes

- 8.52. At the first meeting when the minutes are available, the chair will move that the minutes are correct and sign them. The committees will not discuss anything arising from the minutes.

Gaps in these procedures

- 8.53. If there is a gap in these procedures, the Chair will decide what to do.

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Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting:	18 July 2023
Title of Report:	Plymouth Children's Services Improvement Plan
Lead Member:	Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader/ Children's Social Care, Culture, Events and Communications)
Lead Strategic Director:	Sharon Muldoon (Director of Children's Services)
Author:	Jane Anstis (Service Director for Children, Young People and Families)
Contact Email:	Jane.anstis@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

This report presents an improvement plan for Plymouth Children's Services. Following an Ofsted Focused Visit to Plymouth's Front Door to Children's Services on 13/14 December 2022, an Improvement Plan was devised in response to Ofsted's report of the visit (dated 30 January). The Improvement Board was established in March 2023 in advance of an Improvement Notice issued by the Department for Education (DfE) on 19 May 2023.

The Improvement Board is chaired by Theresa Leavy, Director of Children's Services, Dorset and is attended by The Leader of the Council, The Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Director of Children's Services and colleagues from across the Council as well as key partnership leads from the Police, Health and Schools.

The Board's work is augmented by regular engagement with Dorset Council Children's Services as our DfE approved Sector Led Improvement Partners. Plymouth benefits from trusted colleagues from the Region who hold Plymouth leaders and partners to account; to challenge thinking and decision making and to undertake a series of quality assurance deep dives into our practice.

Recommendations and Reasons

Scrutiny is asked to note the Improvement Plan

Alternative options considered and rejected

The DfE Improvement Notice mandates that Plymouth establishes an Improvement Board and an Improvement Plan.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

Sign off:

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Jane Anstis (Service Director for Children, Young People and Families)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes Date agreed: 26/05/2023											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader/ Children's Social Care, Culture, Events and Communications) Date approved: 30/05/2023											

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PLYMOUTH CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES IMPROVEMENT PLAN



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INTRODUCTION

Plymouth's services for children, young people and families had its last standard inspection in 2018, with a grading of Requires Improvement, followed by a JTAI in 2019 and most recently a Focused Visit on the 'front door' services in December 2022.

The Focused Visit determined that the quality of social work practice for children at the 'front door' had declined and that the serious and widespread failing left children at risk of significant harm. The findings cemented the diagnostic and quality assurance work undertaken following the appointment of a new DCS in June 2022 and improvement and transformation activity was in motion at the point of the visit. We have however, in recognition of the grave seriousness of the Focused Visit findings, accelerated our improvement response yet further.

In September 2022 a Children's Transformation and Improvement Project was agreed by the Corporate Leadership team to address a number of systemic issues which were preventing the organisation from achieving good, consistent support and services for children and young people. This project has five key design principles and delivery areas in order to address inconsistencies in service delivery.

1. Ensure that the **workforce is stable, able, appropriately structured**, supported, have access to clear professional development pathways. This will lead to stability in the permanent workforce and a reduction of the use of agency workers. There will be a clear and specific focus on support for our Team Managers so that we enable them to be the best that they can be and provide consistent management oversight for our children.
2. To design and **implement a new Target Operating Model** that reduces the number of social workers experienced by children and their families so that strong relationships are formed and meaningful restorative and timely practice can flourish. This includes the Children's with Disabilities teams moving from Education into Social Care structures.
3. To implement a localities **structure for specific social work teams to bring together Education and Social Care services so that our most vulnerable learners, their families and stakeholders only have to tell their story once** and be supported by an integrated team. Key within this area will be the effective delivery of focus and specific Early Help support thereby, reducing the demand and 'start again' activity in the system, this will **incorporate the required changes for our SEND cohort and attendance duties**.
4. To urgently **address and improve the practice issues which are resulting in too many adolescents coming into care; evidenced by the use of supported accommodation, unregulated places, the use of residential care and placement instability** for our most vulnerable children. This will be achieved through a focused edge of care offer and a revised sufficiency strategy focusing upon our internal Fostering Services with specific development areas e.g. use and support of SGOs, emergency/turnaround respite support, support for short breaks for our children with disabilities.
5. The creation of a **Quality Performance and Planning** unit for the Service. This will address the improvements needed within our quality assurance processes across Education and Social Care so that we can understand the lived experience of children and families in Plymouth and ensure that we learn, develop and adapt at pace to bring about the improvements needed across at service in a sustainable manner.

We have created this improvement plan to respond to the recommendations, findings and priority actions of the December Focused Visit both within the ‘front door’ services, from our recent internal diagnostic lead by our DCS, this has been further supported by additional advice provided by our Sector Led Improvement Partner Dorset Council and external improvement practice consultant.

This Improvement plan is dynamic and will be updated to reflect our progress for children and families services in Plymouth. The plan will; capture the extent to which services are compliant with legal and statutory requirements; our progress in achieving quality standards; and to evidence that we have responded effectively to Ofsted’s findings.

GOVERNANCE

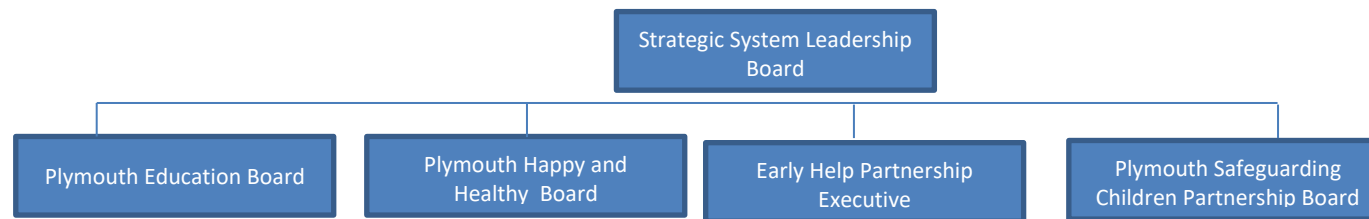
A refreshed governance structure is in place to ensure that we are getting the right support and challenge to keep on track.

Governance Structures in Plymouth

Plymouth has its Strategic System Leadership Board (SSLB) which meets on a quarterly basis. This meeting is attended by senior leaders from across key statutory and voluntary organisations.

The SSLB has four key delivery strands these are aligned to the Bright Futures Strategy; this is where ongoing strategic conversations and actions are derived to ensure that the Bright Future Strategy is delivered against.

The SSLB will continue to meet so that the long term plans of the city can be realised and that existing governance structures prevail. This ensures that the strategic delivery and operational dialogue in the wider sense can prevail through the associated delivery arms detailed below.



The Improvement Board is a time-bounded Board with an absolute focus on the delivery of specific improvement areas as identified in the Local Area SEND Improvement Plan and the wider Plymouth Improvement Plan.

Plymouth City Children's Improvement Board

The Improvement Board is chaired by Theresa Leavy as an Independent Chair for Plymouth's Improvement Board. It will meet every month. The Improvement Board will drive the **strategic** implementation of this plan and will provide support and challenge to ensure we are delivering the expected outcomes across the city. The Board includes senior representation from the council including the Lead Member for Children's Services, senior officers of the council and senior officers from statutory agencies across Plymouth.

Plymouth City Council Children's Programme Board

The Director for Children Services or CEX, chairs a **monthly** meeting that oversees the **implementation** of the plan, and the improvement priorities as they evolve in response to our own quality assurance and learning. This will be supported by a Programme Manager and will also ensure direct alignment to the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan objectives.

Outcomes for Children and Quality Assurance Review (QAF)

The Director for Children Services chairs a **monthly** Outcomes for Children and Quality Assurance Forum where Heads of Service and service/locality directors review data, learning from quality assurance and feedback as set out in the new Quality Assurance Framework. This allows progress and patterns to be seen whilst receiving support and challenge from the group about areas of strength and areas for development and ensure that the progression of quality of practice is improved each month.

Plymouth Safeguarding Children Partnership (PSCP)

Progress on the improvement plan is also reported to Plymouth Safeguarding Children Partnership to ensure alignment across the safeguarding partnership and its various sub-groups.

Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

We have identified a number of changes required in the profile of our Children in Care cohort. This will occur as we improve our Early Help offer, Edge of Care response and locality teams' response to safeguarding matters.

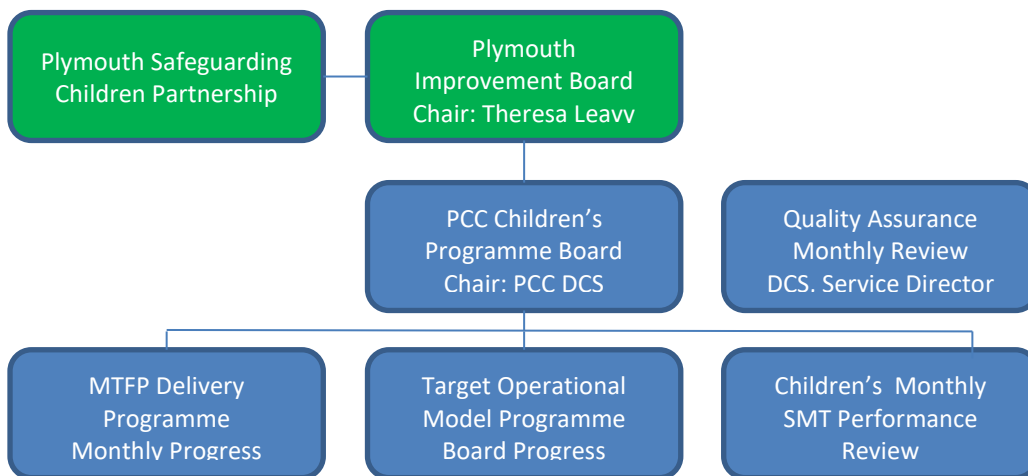
These changes will support our unequivocal focus on ensuring children's needs are met by the right support and care at the right time and will correspondingly, support the Medium Term Financial Plan and expenditure of resource allocated to the budget. Specific changes relate to: a reduction of the numbers of children in care, a reduction in the number of children cared for in residential settings, a reduction in adolescent entrants into care and an increase in Special Guardianship Orders or Community arrangements through kinship care. There are two further areas of MTFP focus within the

SEND arena; these are around projects relating to Short Breaks and SEND transport. Progress is measured through the DMT working group and there are direct links with reference numbers within sections of this improvement plan. (These are listed as MTFPI, etc.)

Target Operating Model Delivery – Programme Delivery

Throughout April to June, a monthly delivery board will be in place to track the implementation of the new target operating model for Plymouth.

Governance Boards in Place



OUR PRIORITIES

The Ofsted Letter following the Focused Visit to 'front door' services, sets out clearly the breadth and scale of the challenges facing the service, but also noted that senior leaders recognised the deficits, and that corporate support and financial investment had been secured to address the changes - and pace of change - needed. It noted that staff felt much more confident in raising potential issues and described an open and learning culture. This improvement plan will build upon these important conditions for success.

There is a clear understanding about the complexity of the journey ahead and that not all improvements can proceed within the same timescale. The timings for completion of individual elements of the Improvement Plan have been set to reflect the immediate and longer-term needs of children and the interdependencies of improvement priorities. The plan intends to ensure that improved compliance with statutory and policy requirements will be addressed in tandem with sustainable improvements in quality. The work to strengthen performance and quality assurance frameworks is central and continuous.

The Focused Visit December 2022 letter details two areas for priority actions and clear indications as to other areas of improvement;

Areas for priority action;

- The consistent understanding and application of thresholds for intervention and when to obtain or dispense with parental consent to ensure children are appropriately safeguarded.
- The convening and timeliness of child protection strategy meetings and initial child protection case conferences when significant risks are evident for children.

Areas for focused practice improvement;

- The quality and timeliness of assessments and initial plans.
- Response at the front door to domestic abuse.
- Timeliness of initial child protection conferences.
- Quality of supervision.
- Management oversight and decision-making.
- The specificity, prioritisation of actions and impact focus of the local authority's improvement plan.

Taken together with the insights derived from our self-evaluation and consultation with our SLIP and improvement consultant, our **6 improvement priorities** focus on practice for children's Social Care and Early help. While it is to be noted that Priority 2 necessarily attends to our need for a sharp focus on our Front Door development, it is the case that many of the findings provide important whole-system alerts and accordingly feature or are positioned in other pillars.

1. Governance, leadership and management
2. Early Help and Front Door responses
3. Robust and effective social work practice
4. At risk of Care, Cared for and care experienced children and young people
5. Quality assurance and audit
6. A Stable and able workforce

The detailed improvement plan set out below uses these pillars as a framework, but for ease of reading cross references all improvement priorities to the relevant sections of the Front Door Focused Visit (FDFV) letter.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

The indicators set out below will demonstrate change achieved

Early Help and Front Door Responses (Early Help / Initial Response Team (IRT) data only)		Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Direction of travel	Target	MTFP Link
1	Number of Early Help / Front Door Referrals (in month)	1,147	1,033	553	670	599	624	▲	Monitor	MTFP 1
2	Percentage of Early Help Assessments completed within 15 working days (June 2022 to date)	Report development required						◀ ▶	TBC	
3	Percentage of Early Help episodes closed within the last 12 weeks who have been referred to Social Care (June 2022 to date)	Report development required						◀ ▶	TBC	
4	Number of children stepped down from Child In Need to Early Help (in month)	Report development required						◀ ▶	TBC	
5	Number of MASH Contacts (in month)	474	489	335	464	361	609	▲	Monitor	
6	Percentage of repeat contacts where previous contact was within previous 12 months (in month)	41.3%	46.5%	30.5%	42.2%	39.6%	37.6%	▼	Monitor	
7	Percentage of Initial contact decisions made within 24 hours	Report development required						◀ ▶	90.0%	
8	Number of MASH Referrals (in month)	210	213	198	238	166	240	▲	Monitor	MTFP 2
9	Percentage of referrals leading to 'No Further Action' (in month)	4.2%	4.2%	2.0%	6.4%	9.0%	12.5%	▲	7.6% England	
10	Percentage of re-referrals within previous 12 months (rolling 12 months)	21.2%	21.1%	20.9%	20.7%	20.3%	19.3%	▼	23.0%	
11	Percentage of single assessments leading to closure (in month)	54.1%	49.0%	45.8%	60.0%	54.9%	51.4%	▼	Monitor	
12	Percentage of single assessments completed in 45 working days (June 2022 to date)	60.9%	62.3%	60.5%	63.2%	63.2%	64.1%	▲	90.0%	
13	Percentage of strategy discussions held within one working day of referral (where a Strategy Discussion was deemed necessary)	Report development required						◀ ▶	90.0%	
14	Percentage of strategy discussions with the outcome 'Section 47 enquiry required' (in month)	86.4%	80.7%	74.2%	88.6%	86.0%	74.2%	▼	Monitor	
15	Percentage of authorised Section 47 Enquiries with the outcome 'Convene initial child protection conference' (in month)	18.5%	43.9%	39.2%	18.5%	10.3%	17.0%	▲	Monitor	
16	Percentage of Initial Response Team audits graded as good or better	Report development required						◀ ▶	80.0%	
17	Percentage of Initial Response Team audits graded as inadequate	Report development required						◀ ▶	10.0%	

Robust and effective social work practice		Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Direction of travel	Target	MTFP Link
18	Rate of Children in Need (CIN) per 10,000 children (month end snapshot)	189.2r	192.4r	189.0r	197.7r	185.2r	177.1r	▼	Monitor	MTFP 3
19	Rate of Children subject to a Child Protection Plan (CP) per 10,000 children (month end snapshot)	40.7r	40.7r	44.8r	44.3r	43.7r	43.7r	◀ ▶	42.1r England	MTFP 4
20	Rate of Children in Care (CIC) per 10,000 children (month end snapshot)	89.7r	91.4r	91.4r	94.0r	92.7r	94.0r	▲	70.0r England	MTFP 5
21	Percentage of single assessments completed within 45 working days (in month)	45.9%	73.2%	53.3%	77.5%	66.3%	65.8%	▼	90.0%	
22	Percentage of single assessments completed within 45 working days (year to date)	67.7%	68.4%	66.6%	67.7%	67.6%	67.4%	▼	90.0%	
23 NEW	Percentage of children seen during assessment (completed in month)	56.6%	80.4%	80.4%	78.8%	70.7%	77.1%	▲	Monitor	
24	Percentage of Initial Child Protection Conferences held within 15 working days of Strategy Discussion (in month)	94.4%	5.6%	20.5%	51.4%	94.7%	100.0%	▲	90.0%	
25	Children subject to Repeat Child Protection Plans within 2 years (rolling 12 months)	12.4%	12.0%	10.6%	11.7%	11.0%	10.7%	▼	10.5% Ofsted Good+	
26	Percentage of children who have a closed Child Protection plan open for 2 years or more (year to date)	8.6%	7.7%	7.3%	6.8%	6.5%	5.9%	▼	Monitor	
27 NEW	Number of children with a missing episode(s) in month	47	34	25	39	53	58	▲	Monitor	
28 NEW	Number of Safer Me Assessments undertaken in month	10	14	12	18	9	5	▼	Monitor	
29	Percentage of PLO (Public Law Outline) concluding within 16 weeks	Not available		0.0%	37.5%	0%	23.1%	▲	90.0%	MTFP 6
At risk of Care, Cared for and Care Experienced Children and Young People		Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Direction of travel	Target	MTFP Link
30 NEW	Number of admissions to care in month	8	20	15	29	9	14	▲	Monitor	
31 NEW	Number of discharges from care in month	15	9	20	12	15	8	▼	Monitor	
32	Number of unregistered placements – Under 16 (month end snapshot)	5	5	4	4	3	4	▲	0	MTFP 7
33	Number of unregistered placements – Age 16+ (month end snapshot)	3	3	3	1	1	2	▲	0	MTFP 8
34	Number of residential placements (month end snapshot)	55	55	57	62	62	57	▼	50	MTFP 9
35	Number of unplanned admissions to care (in month)	Report development required						◀ ▶	0	MTFP 10

36 R12M	Percentage of discharges from care to Special Guardianship Order (rolling 12 months)	9.6%	10.2%	11.4%	9.8%	9.8%	10.6%	▲	15.0%	
37	Number of Special Guardianship Orders in place	35	29	29	30	32	27	▼	Monitor	MTFP 11
38	Percentage of children placed with 'In house' foster carers (month end snapshot)	24.7%	22.8%	22.2%	23.0%	23.1%	23.0%	▼	30.0%	MTFP 12
39	Short Term Placement Stability (month end snapshot)	9.5%	8.8%	9.5%	8.6%	7.5%	8.0%	▲	10.5%	
40	Long Term Placement Stability (month end snapshot)	67.4%	69.1%	68.3%	67.9%	71.7%	73.4%	▲	70.0%	MTFP 13
41	Percentage of children in care with health checks up to date	49.7%	76.4%	77.4%	82.2%	80.2%	74.8%	▼	95.0%	
42	Percentage of children in care with Dental checks up to date	30.4%	48.2%	48.5%	53.8%	52.0%	48.9%	▼	95.0%	
43	Percentage of children in care with Optical checks up to date	57.8%	69.1%	69.5%	69.7%	70.5%	70.0%	▼	95.0%	
44	Percentage of children in care with immunisations up to date	87.3%	85.6%	84.3%	84.7%	84.8%	84.1%	▼	100.0%	
45	School attendance rate for children known to Social Care (month end snapshot)	Report development required						◀ ▶	95.0%	
46	Number of Children in Care without a School Placement	Report development required						◀ ▶	0	
47	Number of Children in Care with a Fixed Term Exclusion	Report development required						◀ ▶	TBC	
48	Number of Children in Care with a Permanent Exclusion	Report development required						◀ ▶	0	
49	Percentage of Care Leavers aged 18 to 20 in Education, Employment or Training (month end snapshot)	50.0%	52.2%	52.8%	52.7%	50.5%	50.0%	▼	80.0%	
50 NEW	Percentage of Care Leavers aged 18 to 20 in Suitable Accommodation (month end snapshot)	92.6%	94.4%	94.4%	95.1%	97.4%	95.9%	▼	90.0%	
Quality Assurance and Audit (safeguarding)		Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Direction of travel	Target	MTFP Link
51	Timeliness of Reviews of Child Protection Plans (month end snapshot)	96.3%	98.2%	97.5%	100.0%	100.0%	99.2%	▼	95.0%	
52	Timeliness of Reviews of Children in Care (month end snapshot)	61.3%	67.6%	68.8%	70.3%	73.3%	74.3%	▲	95.0%	
53	Number of Resolution and Escalation forms completed	12	16	6	4	15	9	▼	Monitor	
54	Percentage of Resolution and Escalation forms completed in timescale	25.0%	6.3%	66.7%	25.0%	40.0%	44.4%	▲	90.0%	

Quality Assurance and Audit (auditing)		Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Direction of travel	Target	MTFP Link
55	Overall number of audits completed	Quality Assurance Framework re-developed – reporting due Apr						◀ ▶	30	
56	Overall percentage of audits completed within timescale	Quality Assurance Framework re-developed – reporting due Apr						◀ ▶	90.0%	
57	Overall percentage of audits graded as good or better at moderation	Quality Assurance Framework re-developed – reporting due Apr						◀ ▶	80.0%	
58	Overall percentage of audits graded as inadequate at moderation	Quality Assurance Framework re-developed – reporting due Apr						◀ ▶	10.0%	
A Stable and able workforce		Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Direction of travel	Target	MTFP Link
59	Percentage of Social Workers with more 20 children allocated (month end snapshot)	41.3%	45.1%	52.9%	58.6%	55.7%	58.3%	▲	5.0%	MTFP 14
60	Percentage of Case Supervision's in time – Initial Response Team (month end snapshot (all workers))	88.9%	71.5%	63.5%	67.0%	71.8%	85.1%	▲	90.0%	
61	Percentage of Case Supervision's in time – Children's Social Work (month end snapshot (all workers))	88.7%	52.5%	52.8%	59.4%	49.3%	76.3%	▲	90.0%	
62	Percentage of Case Supervision's in time – Permanency Service (month end snapshot (all workers))	98.3%	42.4%	24.5%	22.4%	30.1%	54.6%	▲	90.0%	
63	Percentage of Case Supervision's in time – Care Leavers Service (month end snapshot (all workers))	97.5%	17.8%	10.4%	10.7%	6.1%	7.4%	▲	90.0%	
64	Percentage of Case Supervision's in time – Children's Disability Team (month end snapshot (all workers))	85.3%	46.9%	16.7%	91.0%	38.0%	65.4%	▲	90.0%	
65	Percentage of Case Supervision's in time – Fostering Service (month end snapshot)	83.4%	22.9%	30.3%	14.9%	0.0%	100.0%	▲	90.0%	
66	Turnover rate for Social Workers (month end snapshot)	12.9%	12.8%	14.7%	14.6%	15.0%	14.5%	▼	12.0%	MTFP 15
67	Vacancy rate for Social Workers (month end snapshot)	23.0%	16.0%	18.3%	17.5%	14.9%	14.8%	▼	10.0%	MTFP 16

THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Progress against the planned outcomes will be shown by the following RAG rating:

Task Rating Key:
Red – Task is overdue
Amber - Task is in progress
Amber E (yellow) - Task implemented but impact not yet evidenced
Green – Task implemented and evidence (audit and quant) demonstrates embedded change

Priority I – Governance, Leadership and Management								
The Chief Executive and Director for Children’s Services will should ensure that governance, leadership, management in Plymouth are robust and relentlessly focused on improving and sustaining outcomes for children, young people and families and that all recommendations from inspection activity and quality assurance are addressed								
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time /Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
I.1	Effective leaders and managers will ensure that priorities for the service and the standards to be achieved are	Leaders and managers will demonstrate vision, ambition, confidence, and skill to ensure that the service is fit for purpose and the workforce is sufficiently trained and enabled to deliver its responsibilities to	DCS and SD.	July 23	Children will benefit from a service that knows itself well, responds to identified and emerging needs in	Statutory requirements, local policies and procedures will be complied with and practice will adhere to good practice	New TOM is designed and is on track for implementation by July 23. Recruitment and Retention Strategy is	

	clear and will lead, develop and motivate the workforce (para 6, FDFV)	meet statutory requirements and good practice standards. Senior leaders and managers will communicate improvement priorities with consistency and precision and ensure delivery through a restorative approach which includes maintaining high challenge, expectations and support to those who are accountable for ensuring services continually improve.			a timely and effective manner and provides services that are good or better.	standards. This will be evident within audit, dip sampling, management oversight and child level performance data.	approved and being implemented. (1/3/23). Worked with the Unions to agree key aspects of our recruitment and retention strategy including retention payments in the CSW service which is most affected by retention pressures and other supporting strategies; We have welcomed 6 new overseas social workers into our teams with a further 9 joining in May Whole service events are taking place every 8 weeks and service meetings monthly.	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
I.1	Effective leaders and managers will ensure that priorities for the service and the standards to be	Service Plans that mirror and develop the overarching priorities set out in the Improvement plan will be in place.	SD	May 23			Practice Approach is finalised and under consultation with Leading Practice Groups.	

	achieved are clear and will lead, develop and motivate the workforce (para 6, FDFV)	All managers will ensure the workforce understand how their work impacts on service delivery and are active in evaluating how their interventions positively impact on children's outcomes					Implementation plan in place (1/3/23) QAF and Performance Framework is finalised and implemented with first Learning and Impact forum in April. (1/3/23) Aligned service plans are completed and under review for each service area. Further development of these plans is in progress to ensure complete alignment with overarching improvement plan and will be complete by 30 th April.	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
1.2	Elected members will be well-informed	Elected members will attend all improvement boards to enable them to understand	DCS	March 23	Elected members will support and hold the service to	100% attendance at the	The first meeting of the improvement board	E

	about service priorities and challenges, corresponding improvement plans and activities and will be active in offering political challenge and support (para 6, FDFV)	<p>fully the improvement plan and their role in ensuring delivery against its priorities.</p> <p>The Lead Member will have monthly performance meeting including highlight reports that will specify progress, challenges and risks.</p> <p>The Leader of the Council and Lead Member will undertake planned visits to services and be invited to take part in a bi-annual practice week to enable them to understand progress and best practice.</p> <p>Overview and scrutiny panels will have access to relevant performance data to enable them to carry out their functions appropriately.</p>			<p>account for the provision it makes to children and their families.</p> <p>Members will be able to offer assurance to their communities about the progress that is being made.</p> <p>Children will benefit from members exercising oversight and scrutiny of the quality of services being provided to children in Plymouth and seeing evidence of progress.</p>	<p>improvement board will support the contribution of member’s overview and scrutiny.</p> <p>Improvement board will demonstrate challenge and contribution of elected members.</p>	<p>took place on 02 March 23.</p> <p>Monthly Portfolio Holder Meetings are in place with the Lead Member and include a performance highlight report.</p> <p>Practice Week has been scheduled to take place week beginning 22nd May.</p>	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
I.3	Partners and partnership boards will demonstrate a shared focus and	Partnership boards and plans will review the improvement plan against their current priorities and ensure alignment.	CEO, DCS, Directors of partner organisations	April 23	Children will benefit from consistently high quality and sustainable services, including	Systematic scrutiny through the work of the Improvement Board, partnership	PSCP Priorities for 23/24 have been adjusted to reflect priorities.	

	<p>understanding of the priorities for children and young people and have the capacity to deliver services to a consistently good or better standard. (para 2; 5; 10; 20 FDFV)</p>	<p>PSCP Board actions and Priorities for 23/34 will reflect the plan priorities.</p> <p>Partnership Launch event to launch improvement plan.</p>			<p>multi-disciplinary services that are responsive to informed understanding of need</p>	<p>boards and Council political oversight through Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny will evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership in delivering high quality services to children.</p>	<p>SD presented overview of findings at PSCP board on 2 March 23.</p> <p>New Head of Service leads appointed to PSCP boards and will support integration of improvement plan priorities.</p> <p>Partnership Launch event scheduled for 26 April 23.</p>	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG

I.4	<p>The pace of change will be increased as a result of the implementation of an improvement plan, corresponding service-level plans and improvement board with clear and measurable improvement priorities. (para 5;15 FDFV) Leaders assured of progress through the mechanisms of the improvement board and performance framework with regular performance and management reports.</p>	<p>The improvement priorities will be implemented on time.</p> <p>Regular reports on the progress of improvement priorities will be systematically presented to the improvement board, DMT and CMT.</p> <p>A new QAF including Performance Reporting Framework will be developed to ensure whole system ownership of performance and that SMT, DMT, CLT and Members are formally updated through monthly highlight reports and performance meeting and aware of challenges, achievements and positive changes being made to the delivery of services to children in Plymouth.</p>	DCS, SD, HOS and operational managers, Partners	March 23	Children will experience consistently good quality services that understand their needs and impact positively on their lives and outcomes.	<p>The improvement plan will be in place.</p> <p>The individual elements of the improvement plan will be implemented on time and reports on progress will identify positive impact for children.</p> <p>Staff and partners will report increased focus upon actions designed to improve and sustain the quality of services to children.</p>	<p>Improvement priorities for March all implemented on schedule with the exception of one element of (2.7) – on track for completion in April.</p> <p>QAF and Performance Reporting Framework complete and implemented with inaugural Learning and Impact forum scheduled for April. (1/3/23)</p> <p>Improvement plan and board in place (1/3/23).</p> <p>First Learning and Impact meeting of the QAF taking place in April.</p>	E
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	R A G

1.5	<p>The improvement plan will be specific, impact and priority-focused, owned by senior leaders who will take responsibility for sharing the improvement vision and subsequent actions with all staff (para 15 FDFV)</p>	<p>The Improvement Plan will be approved.</p> <p>The plan will be shared with the wider workforce via the Heads of Service with clear expectations on delivery that will be built into service plans and rigorously evaluated for impact through the board and QAF.</p> <p>All frontline managers and staff will attend an improvement plan launch event to enable them to understand fully the improvement plan and their role in ensuring delivery against its priorities.</p>	DCS, SD, PIL, HOS	March 23	Children will benefit from a service that fully understands and is engaged with collective agency, in the delivery of its priorities.	<p>All staff will understand and own the improvement plan and vision.</p> <p>Staff will report engagement and participation with the detail and service-level plans and the overarching improvement vision and plan.</p>	<p>Improvement plan and board in place.</p> <p>Improvement plan introductory session taken place with TM and above on 24/2/23.</p> <p>Whole service event for frontline managers and staff has taken place in March</p> <p>Review system and rhythm for aligned service-level plans will be in place by end April 23</p>	E
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG

<p>1.6</p>	<p>The Operating Model of the service will provide the conditions for relationship-based, high quality services for children, young people and their families that ensure effective Early Help and statutory responses (para 10 FDFV)</p>	<p>New Target Operating Model implemented. To include re-positioning of CDT.</p> <p>Locality approach developed with clear timeframe for implementation and project management.</p> <p>Improved performance reporting framework in place to support preventative responses.</p>	<p>DCS, SD, AD EPS</p>	<p>July 23</p>	<p>Children and Families will benefit from improved early help availability</p> <p>Children, young people and families will experience the positive impacts of continuity of relationships, reducing 'start again' syndrome.</p> <p>Vulnerable children will be supported to reach their potential through better early identification and targeted responses.</p> <p>Children with Disabilities will access the right level of support and intervention matched to their need.</p>	<p>Reduction in referrals into the statutory service and corresponding reduction in volume through the system.</p> <p>Increase in Care Experienced young people in Education Employment and Training.</p> <p>Stabilisation of social work workforce and a reduction in use and expenditure on agency staff.</p> <p>Demonstrable improvement in the Education outcomes for vulnerable learners in the city, specifically those whom are SEND and excluded/ low attendance and/or known to Social Care services, including Children in Care.</p>	<p>New TOM is designed. Implementation happening in phased approaches.</p> <p>Locality model proposal is ready for consultation and detailed modelling will taken place during April.</p> <p>Data-informed re-formation of existing centralised structure into locality areas of need is underway. Implementation by July.</p> <p>Phase One Family Hubs to be launched at the end of June.</p> <p>Recruitment and Retention Strategy is in final discussions with the Unions (w/c 17/4/23).</p> <p>QAF and Performance Reporting Framework complete and implemented (1/3/23)</p>	
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Priority 2 – Early Help and Front Door Responses

Early Help and Front Door services provide timely and appropriate help to children and their families which prevents escalation (or re-referral) to statutory services.								
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time/Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
2.1	There is an agreed understanding, vision and joined up approach to Early Help across the partnership and city, which supports the improvement priorities and prevents avoidable escalation to statutory services. (para 10 FDFV)	<p>Early Help Strategy - written and signed up to across the partnership.</p> <p>Continue to improve the understanding of the early help offer across the partnership and strategic alliances</p> <p>Early Help Advice Line data available.</p> <p>Digital information accurate, reflects the breadth of available Early Help and informs needs assessment and service planning.</p>	CSIL/ HOS Targeted Support and Early Help	June 23	Children will benefit from a rigorous approach to Early Help which will enable them to access appropriate services in a timely way and at a level which meets their needs.	<p>Fewer children will require a statutory service.</p> <p>Data will be available relating to uptake of Early Help, successful completion of early help interventions, rates of escalations to statutory services and rates of step down to Early Help.</p>	<p>Early Help Programme manager appointed.</p> <p>Successful progression of Family Hubs programme and on track for implementation of Phase I in June 23.</p> <p>Early Help advice line in place.</p> <p>Early Help case Eclipse case management system identified. Implementation Sept 23.</p>	

Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time/Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
2.1	There is an agreed understanding, vision and joined up approach to Early Help across the partnership and city, which supports the improvement priorities and prevents avoidable escalation to statutory services. (para 10 FDFV)	<p>Training with partners and bespoke sessions to improve awareness of early help agenda and develop quality assessments and plans that are impactful for families.</p> <p>A clear and accurate data dashboard available across the EH services.</p> <p>Future Early Help (Family Hubs) commissioning approach is informed by delivery of Start for Life programme 2023-2025</p>	CSIL/ HOS Targeted Support and Early Help	June 23			<p>Basic automated reporting is in place for Early Help but further development is needed city-wide following the establishment of a unified case management system.</p> <p>A range of new partnership training is taking place through the Operational MASH group to target understanding of thresholds pathways and planning and for children at risk of significant harm.</p>	

Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time/Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
2.2	Children and their families will benefit from a comprehensive offer of early help services and interventions that are timely and enable positive impact and outcomes (para 10 FDFV)	<p>Review and ensure all full spectrum of interventions correspond to the identified needs in the City.</p> <p>Implement Family Hubs Time for Change.</p> <p>Implement Targeted Support and Early Help redesign including creation of Early Help Teams with a Locality approach and Link Worker to each school.</p> <p>Review opportunities for digitisation of access to services.</p>	HOS Targeted Support / Programme Manager/ Strategic Commissioning Manager	June 23	Children young people and families will benefit from having access to high quality early interventions across the spectrum of services.		<p>Review of existing Early Help offer including digital opportunities is underway through newly appointed Programme Manager including options for shared case management system (part of Eclipse).</p> <p>Plymouth City Council has been confirmed as part of the Start for Life/ Family Hubs funded programme. As part of the programme the first 0-19 Family Hubs will be open in Plymouth by the end of June</p> <p>Targeted support business case approved and now in implementation, as planned.</p>	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time/Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG

2.3	Children’s early help assessments identify needs well and plans identify the right outcomes and levels of support needed for children (para 12 FDFV)	<p>Through the Targeted Support redesign and Family Hubs implementation, targeted support services will be differentiated from community services, necessitating revised guidance and standards re: Early Help assessment for different needs.</p> <p>Targeted support services to develop clear models of intervention, with relevant corresponding staff training and systems for evaluation and reporting of impact.</p> <p>Revised QA framework including distinct focus on EH and SEND in order to test and evidence impact.</p>	HOS Targeted Support / Programme Manager	Sept 23	<p>Children will benefit from an Early Help assessment and subsequent plan that is based on a comprehensive understanding of their needs and delivers the right level of support and improves outcomes.</p> <p>Children will experience and know that their voices have been heard.</p>	<p>Most assessments will be judged to be good by QA and audit processes.</p> <p>The timescales for Early Help assessment completion will be set and achieved according to the child’s needs.</p>	<p>Plymouth City Council has been confirmed as part of the Start for Life/ Family Hubs funded programme. As part of the programme the first 0-19 Family Hubs will be open in Plymouth by the end of June</p> <p>Targeted support re-design now in implantation as planned.</p> <p>Detailed, evidence-informed models with corresponding workforce development needs are in place for Edge of Care and AST and on track for implementation in April.</p> <p>QAF implemented and includes focus on EH and SEND.</p>	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	R A G

2.4	<p>Pace of change and improvement at the Front Door will be rapid. (para 5;15 FDFV)</p> <p>Leaders will be assured of progress through the mechanisms of the Front Door and overarching Improvement board and performance framework.</p>	<p>Front Door Improvement Board will be implemented and ensure delivery of Front Door Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Priority Action Plan and Front Door Improvement Plan will address the priority actions and findings of the Ofsted Front Door Focused Visit (Dec2022) with clear and measurable improvement priorities. Operational MASH group and Strategic MASH group will ensure close oversight of the quality of multiagency practice and decisions. An additional Team Manager in the MASH will support effective quality assurance.</p> <p>An Improvement Manager will provide temporary additional resource to support improvements, identify and embed new ways of working and implement the restructure to MASH/Gateway.</p>	SD/ HoS Front Door	March 23	Children and young people in need of help and protection will receive the right responses at the right time and services that are consistently good and lead to good outcomes.	<p>Progress against the Front Door improvement plan will be demonstrable</p> <p>Performance reporting will show stable and continuous improvement.</p>	<p>Front Door Improvement Board inaugural meeting on 23/2/23, chaired by SD. This has continued fortnightly</p> <p>Priority action plan is completed and submitted to Ofsted (24/2/23) with positive feedback at annual conversation with Ofsted.</p> <p>Operational MASH is reporting to the Strategic MASH group and Front Door improvement board. QA Lead has engaged with this group to support grip, confidence and delivery of the QA role.</p> <p>Additional Team Manager is in post.</p> <p>Improvement Manager is in post.</p>	E
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	R A G

2.5	Interface between EH and MASH is effective and robust.	<p>Front Door redesign will be implemented.</p> <p>Relaunch and embedding of the building support approach across the partnership.</p> <p>Practice Standards relating to communication with partners and families will be clear and adhered to regarding support and planning.</p> <p>Transitions Policy to be reviewed and updated.</p>	HOS Front Door / HOS Targeted Support	April 23	<p>Children and families will receive the right Help at right time.</p> <p>Children and families will benefit from seamless and coordinated transitions of support.</p>	<p>Data will evidence a reduction in referrals and assessments leading to no further action</p> <p>Data and Quality assurance activity will demonstrate prevention of escalation in need and requirement for higher tariff interventions.</p>	<p>The Front door redesign has been approved and is in implementation.</p> <p>Early Help Line launched. This included a further call to action for agencies to review their understanding of consent as set out in Building Support.</p> <p>Practice Standards approved at SMT and with Leading Practice groups – implementation on track for April 23.</p> <p>Transitions Policy currently under review (MA) and will be revised and in place by April 23.</p>	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time/Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG

<p>2.6</p>	<p>Thresholds for intervention are consistently understood and applied, including when to obtain or dispense with parental consent to ensure children are appropriately safeguarded. (PRIORITY ACTION and para 13; 16; 17 FDFV)</p>	<p>All Gateway and MASH staff receive clear direction that work in MASH is clearly undertaken with parental consent or under section 47.</p> <p>Updated MASH manual to clarify practice standards and processes</p> <p>Increased team management capacity within MASH</p> <p>Re-alignment of staff to ensure work is triaged by advanced practitioners/practice managers and quality assured by a team manager.</p> <p>The PSCP Case resolution protocol will form the basis of a 'Rapid Resolution Protocol' specifically for the MASH work will be undertaken across the partnership to support understanding of consent and thresholds.</p>	<p>Improvement Team Manager/ Team Managers MASH/ HOS Front Door</p>	<p>March 23</p>	<p>Children and families' rights to family life and data protection will be upheld. Families that do not reach threshold for statutory services will be appropriately and effectively signposted to other services.</p>	<p>Quality assurance activity through the MASH Operational group will demonstrate 100% audit samples show consent has been obtained or a Strategy discussion has taken place and that practice relating to obtaining consent including by multi-agency partners is understood, clear and leads to positive practice with families.</p>	<p>Clear Guidance has been provided through team and service meetings/briefings since December.</p> <p>QA shows a mixed picture in relation to consent which has led us to conclude that we still do not have a consistent understanding yet in spite of self-reporting confidence. Further service-wide development session took place on 4th April. Consent guidance will also be clear in the MASH manual pending approval at SMT on 24th April and</p> <p>All dip samples from February and March include consideration of consent being appropriately obtained or dispensed with.</p> <p>MASH Manual is now drafted, approved by Operational MASH group and due for approval at SMT on 17 April 2023</p> <p>A triage template in operation and all contacts receive an initial RAG to</p>	<p>E</p>
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							<p>assist prioritisation and timeliness.</p> <p>Realignment of staff to ensure triage and QA at the right level has been in place since December.</p> <p>A rapid resolution protocol was agreed by the Strategic MASH Group and is now in place.</p> <p>A tracker is now in place with regard to rapid resolutions and reported to the Operational and Strategic MASH groups.</p> <p>No PSCP Case Resolution processes have been identified.</p> <p>Partnership engagement in the improvement work is strong and consistent.</p>	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time/Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG

2.6	Thresholds for intervention are consistently understood and applied, including when to obtain or dispense with parental consent to ensure children are appropriate safeguarded. (PRIORITY ACTION and para 13; 16; 17 FDFV)	Front Door Redesign to be concluded to result in a single 'front door' for safeguarding – MASH (removal of Gateway). This also secures the increased establishment in MASH and the second team manager.	Improvement Team Manager/ Team Managers MASH/ HOS Front Door	March 23		Single 'front door' for safeguarding will be in place. Updated MASH and OOH manuals will be in place in place Second MASH Team Manager is in post. QA activity will demonstrate that all work is triaged by advanced practitioners/practice managers and quality assured by a team manager.	The Front Door Redesign consultation is concluded and begins on 17 th April. A new interim Team Manager has been in place since 09 January 2023 increasing the team management oversight capacity from one to two. The front door re-design secures this as a permanent additional position.	E
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time/Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	R A G

<p>2.6</p>	<p>Thresholds for intervention are consistently understood and applied, including when to obtain or dispense with parental consent to ensure children are appropriate safeguarded. (PRIORITY ACTION and para 13; 16; 17 FDFV)</p>	<p>Operational MASH Group will undertake 20 dip samples per fortnight re: Referral to NFA; re-referrals; threshold decisions; consent and repeat contacts. Monthly report will be provided to the Front Door Improvement Board and Strategic MASH Group. Revised supervision format to be introduced in MASH that focuses on quality or practice and decision making relevant to the unique role of a MASH worker.</p>	<p>Improvement Team Manager/ Team Managers MASH/ HOS Front Door</p>	<p>March 23</p>		<p>Supervision frequency will be 100% and QA activity will demonstrate that supervision is restorative, reflective, high quality and leads to improved practice and outcomes for children 80% samples will indicate practice is good or better. Front Door Improvement Board and Strategic MASH Group will see progress against KPI's.</p>	<p>Operational group continues to meet fortnightly. Multi-agency dip sampling commenced in February 2023 and has exceeded the minimum target set of 10 a week. 73 dip samples have been undertaken through March with actions and themes reported to the Front Door Improvement Board and multi-agency learning taken forward by the operational group. A schedule of dip sample themes for the coming weeks and months has been in place since end February and include OOHs. Strategic MASH groups are held monthly. The CYPFS QA Lead continues to work with this group to strengthen quality assurance. Revised supervision format is in place and data shows improved supervision levels from 71.8% Feb to 85.1% March</p>	<p>E</p>
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Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time/Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
2.7	Children in need of immediate protection and/or experiencing the impact of cumulative harm, are identified and timely action is taken to reduce risk (para 11;14; 16 FDFV) Urgent response line will be in place	Families and partner agencies will be able to easily make contact with MASH where they have safeguarding concerns about a child not open to social care, including an urgent response line.	HOS Front Door	March 23	Children that require immediate protection will receive prompt action to reduce risk.	Performance data and quality assurance activity will demonstrate timely responses and accurate assessment and responses to need and risk.	The current system ensures an immediate response through the duty line in MASH where Gateway calls are routed in urgent circumstances. Following the Front Door redesign, an urgent response in will line be in place in the MASH. All contacts are now being triaged (Feb 2023) with a RAG rating. Work is underway to ensure reporting is available of the number of strategy meetings taking place out of hours.	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time/Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
2.7	Children in need of immediate protection and/or experiencing the	Increased management capacity and oversight in the MASH will enable effective quality assurance of outcome	HOS Front Door	March	Children that require immediate protection will receive prompt	Operational MASH Group QA samples will indicate 80% practice is good or better.	OOH have a clear understanding that Strategy meetings need to happen out of hours, where there is a need for safety planning and a	

	<p>impact of cumulative harm, are identified and timely action is taken to reduce risk (para 11;14; 16 FDFV) Urgent response line will be in place</p>	<p>decisions and actions including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When children are identified as at risk of significant harm, strategy meetings will take place in a timely way. - Children re-referrals to the MASH will be identified and responded to effectively. - Decisions of NFA will be overseen to ensure appropriate decision-making and support. <p>Strategy meetings will be attended by all appropriate partners, including specialist agencies such as domestic abuse, drug use, SARC etc.</p>			<p>action to reduce risk.</p>	<p>QA will show 90% attendance by each partner agency at Strategy meetings. Front Door Improvement Board and Strategic MASH Group will see progress against KPI's.</p>	<p>threshold is met of reasonable cause to suspect significant harm. Where children are supported to stay outside the family home or without their usual parent(s), even if this is undertaken by partner agencies, OOH colleagues are ensuring a viability and risk assessment is undertaken and agreed by an AP or TM. An OOH manual will be in place during April to reflect commonalities with MASH process and outline the different approaches needed outside usual working hours.</p>	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time/Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
2.8	Quality, effectiveness and impact of multi-Agency	Quality and timeliness of information sharing will be effective and lead to timely action to reduce risk.	HOS Front Door/ Operational	May	Children will benefit from a holistic	Audit activity will demonstrate	Refer to s 2.6 The Front Door Improvement Board is	

	<p>working at the Front Door is consistent (para 16;17;18 FDFV)</p>	<p>Management oversight of decision-making and Operational MASH group will ensure full multi-agency participation including specialist, targeted and adult services involved where warranted.</p> <p>The PSCP Case resolution protocol will form the basis of a 'Rapid Resolution Protocol' specifically for the MASH.</p> <p>Availability of police colleagues out of hours to be resolved to ensure timely strategy discussions. Return to co-location of MASH colleagues in a physical space in Ballard House.</p>	<p>and Strategic MASH groups</p>		<p>understanding of their needs informing effective plans and timely responses to escalating concerns.</p> <p>When children are at risk of significant harm, prompt action will be taken to ensure their safety including outside working hours.</p>	<p>that responses for children and young people are joined-up, compliant with statutory requirements, policies and procedures and lead to appropriate safeguarding action in 80% cases.</p>	<p>providing oversight of operational multi-agency functioning and improvement work. Partnership attendance and engagement is strong and consistent. We have resolved the gap in Education representation.</p> <p>Early Help Call Back was soft launched on 23 January 2023 and then more widely publicised in February 2023. Volume of calls has increased month on month from 19 in January to 46 February and 103 March.</p> <p>A new approach to police availability OOH through the duty PPU team has been established and is reported to be working well.</p>	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time/Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG

2.8	Quality, effectiveness and impact of multi-Agency working at the Front Door is consistent (para 16;17;18 FDFV)		HOS Front Door/ Operational and Strategic MASH groups	May			<p>Additional DASV expert focus located within the MASH on 27 February and daily triage takes place with IDVA oversight of DASV referrals.</p> <p>Further exploration of increased co-location of partner agencies and expert services has taken place and a task and an innovation group has been agreed for May to review viability of a joint-agency daily triage and high risk response at the Front Door.</p>	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG

2.9	Capacity specifically in the MASH, including multi-agency representation, as well as expert practitioners e.g.re domestic abuse is sufficient to ensure a safe and effective service (para 17 FDFV)	<p>Front Door redesign will be implemented to ensure an effective operating model.</p> <p>The establishment of an additional team manager capacity will support consistent decision-making at the Front Door, allowing improved stability of volume and flow. Delivery of recruitment and retention strategy priorities and TOM.</p> <p>Review of multi-agency working, increased co-location and collaborative working will be explored with partner agencies and commissioned services including with regard to DASV.</p> <p>Multi-agency MASH group will be effective in oversight and quality assurance of MASH performance.</p>	HOS Front Door	31 st March 2023		Audit activity will demonstrate that responses for children and young people are joined-up, compliant with statutory requirements, policies and procedures and lead to appropriate safeguarding action.	<p>The Front door redesign has been approved implementation begins 17th April. This will increase capacity in the MASH with the creation of 7 new FSW roles now in place.</p> <p>Additional team manager and improvement manager is in place. New TOM will establish these posts. Implementation by July.</p> <p>Recruitment and Retention Strategy is in final discussions with the Unions (w/c 17/4/23).</p> <p>Operational group has markedly increased the volume and quality of its activity and is currently meeting weekly, reporting fortnightly to the Front Door Improvement Board. Strategic MASH Group meetings held monthly.</p>	E
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time/Date	What difference will it make to	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG

					children (impact)			
2.10	Domestic abuse practice and risk analysis, including recognition of the impact of repeated incidents, at the Front Door is robust and effective, including Triage of Domestic Abuse. (para 9 and 18 FDFV)	<p>Domestic abuse referrals to the MASH will be triaged and recorded utilising a standardised domestic abuse tool –This will include the consideration of the impact of repeated incidents of domestic abuse.</p> <p>Review of commissioned expert domestic abuse service to include co-location potential within the MASH.</p> <p>Commissioning of new domestic abuse service linked to new statutory duties</p>	<p>HOS Front Door and Team Managers MASH</p> <p>SD/ Commissioning</p> <p>SC Manager</p>	<p>Immediately</p> <p>New service in place for Dec 2023</p>	<p>Children will benefit from social work practice that reduces the impact of domestic abuse on them and their family.</p> <p>Children will be better protected from the impact of domestic abuse.</p>	<p>Audit and quality assurance will demonstrate high quality, purposeful and timely intervention to improve safety and sustain change.</p>	<p>DASV oversight has been strengthened by the inclusion of an IDVA to DASV triage from 27th February.</p> <p>Also see 2.8 above</p> <p>Procurement activity has begun regarding the commissioned DASV service following Plymouth VAWG commission review and findings in 2021. This will include enhance co-location and co-working opportunities. This is due to conclude by December 23.</p> <p>Refreshed Domestic Abuse Training and Toolkit has been developed and delivered for Social Workers and Family Support Workers and a training schedule has begun. Feedback re: impact on practice is being collated by Professional Development for reporting to Learning and Impact board.</p>	E

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Priority 3 – Robust and effective social work practice

Social work practice is of consistently high quality and assessments and plans for children ensure that purposeful work takes place to ensure children are safe and drift is prevented.

Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
3.1	Practice standards, Policies and procedures are embedded in practice, fully understood by all staff and are evaluated for effectiveness within the performance and quality assurance frameworks.	<p>A new suite of Practice Standards will be developed in consultation with social workers, in alignment with the Plymouth practice model and implemented.</p> <p>A wholesale review and updating of policies and procedures, including TriX, will be completed. Updates and new requirements will to be notified to all staff through Leading Practice groups, PIL staff briefings and six weekly whole service practice events.</p>	PIL, Service and Team managers.	May 23	Children will benefit from Social Workers fully understanding and discharging the duties required of them and their ability to apply policies and procedures in timely ways to the benefit of children.	<p>Case records will demonstrate an understanding and appropriate application of policies and procedures.</p> <p>Staff will report effective dissemination of new and revised policies and procedures. Audit activity will demonstrate that responses for children and young people are compliant with statutory requirements, policies and procedures.</p>	<p>Practice Standards review has been undertaken and draft standards now approved by SMT and Leading Practice Group. Implementation April 23 and staff are fully engaged through this and wider whole service events.</p> <p>Full policy and procedure review will follow in April.</p> <p>The new TOM will provide a policy officer role to ensure a sustained capacity and continuous improvement.</p>	R

Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	R A G
3.2	<p>A clearly articulated and coherent practice approach will underpin the quality and consistency of practice and inform restorative, strengths-based and trauma-informed work with children young people and families.</p> <p>The practice approach will be embedded by an effective social work academy and aligned to the Quality Assurance Framework.</p>	<p>Plymouth Practice Approach will be developed in consultation with staff and key stakeholders.</p> <p>The practice approach will be implemented and embedded systemically through a clear implementation plan. The Social Work Academy’s scope and professional development offer and progression pathway for professionals working directly with children, young people and families will be revised to ensure it is aligned with our practice approach and priorities</p>	PIL, QA Lead, PSW	April 23	Children, young people and families will receive support that is empowering, skilful, purposeful and leads to positive and sustained change.	<p>Practice Approach will be implemented including workforce development.</p> <p>Staff will demonstrate describe an intentional and coherent approach to practice with children and families.</p> <p>Audit and quality assurance activity will demonstrate that practice is purposeful and effective and leading to improved outcomes for children, young people and families.</p> <p>A reduction in volume, including reduction of children in care.</p>	<p>Practice Approach is finalised and approved by SMT and Leading Practice Groups. Implementation plan in place to begin March 23 including significant and holistic workforce development programme.</p> <p>Whole service Mark Finnis Restorative training rolled out starting March 23.</p> <p>Alignment with the wider partnership approach will take place through the PSCP Board and Partnership Launch event on 26th April.</p> <p>The workforce development offer and curriculum is under review and a draft proposal under consideration by SD. A new curriculum aligned to our improvement priorities and recruitment and retention goals will be launched by April 23.</p>	

Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
3.3	<p>Strategy meetings and initial children protection conferences are convened in a timely way when significant risks are evident for children. (PRIORITY ACTION and para 14;16;23 FDFV)</p> <p>Thresholds and decisions regarding intervention for children previously subject to child protection plans are appropriate and based on high quality assessment and analysis. (para 16; 23 FDFV)</p>	<p>Strategy meetings required for unopen children take place only in the MASH by Team Managers.</p> <p>All contacts to be triaged upon entry to MASH, with a RAG rating to identify and respond to children at risk of significant harm</p> <p>Development work with the Out of Hours team to ensure there is a shared understanding of when strategy meetings are needed.</p> <p>Clear protocols in place regarding access to and availability of police colleagues to enable strategy meetings out of hours.</p>	<p>HOS Front Door</p> <p>SM QAS</p>	<p>March 23</p>	<p>Children at risk of significant harm are identified and responded to effectively without delay.</p> <p>Children will be prevented from experiencing the adverse impacts of repeated exposure to trauma.</p>	<p>Timeframes for Strategy meetings and initial children protection conferences will show compliance with statutory timeframes and quality assurance activity will demonstrate avoidance of delay.</p>	<p>All Strategy meetings required for unopen children now take place only in the MASH by Team Managers.</p> <p>All contacts are now being triaged (Feb 2023) with a RAG rating.</p> <p>Team development and clear direction has been provided as planned</p> <p>Work is underway and due for completion May 2023 to ensure reporting is available of the number of strategy meetings taking place out of hours.</p> <p>A new approach to police availability OOH through the duty PPU team has been established and is reported to be working well.</p>	E

Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
3.3	<p>Strategy meetings and initial children protection conferences are convened in a timely way when significant risks are evident for children. (PRIORITY ACTION and para 14;16;23 FDFV)</p> <p>Thresholds and decisions regarding intervention for children previously subject to child protection plans are appropriate and based on high quality assessment and analysis. (para 16; 23 FDFV)</p>	<p>Statutory timeframes for ICPC's for all children at risk of significant harm will be complied with.</p> <p>Operating model review of QAS service will be undertaken to ensure operational sufficiency for ICPC's and RCPC's. any adjustments take place</p> <p>Independent Chairs, will provide pre-conference discussions to reflect on level of need, application of threshold and exploring care planning issues with Social Workers and Team Managers. Review of Independent Chair Consultation role to ensure it is impactful for children.</p>	<p>HOS Front Door</p> <p>SM QAS</p>	<p>March 23</p>			<p>Continuing a rapid upward improvement from December 2022, Statutory timeframes are now being consistently met. 100% for March.</p> <p>Operating model review has been concluded and integrated into TOM proposals.</p> <p>Quality Assurance and Safeguarding Service is now benefitting from a new leadership approach, service level improvement plan and Independent chairs are receiving the right challenge and support to ensure effective practice for children. Resolution and escalation work needs to increase and be more effective and this is the focus of development work within the QAS and wider service.</p>	E

Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
3.3	<p>Strategy meetings and initial children protection conferences are convened in a timely way when significant risks are evident for children. (PRIORITY ACTION and para 14;16;23 FDFV)</p> <p>Thresholds and decisions regarding intervention for children previously subject to child protection plans are appropriate and based on high quality assessment and analysis. (para 16; 23 FDFV)</p>	<p>Chairs will continue challenge and support the child’s record being up to date with Strategy and s.47 clearly recorded at point of request for an ICPC</p> <p>QA, Audit and Team Management development work to be provided by Steve Hart, independent improvement consultant and the QA Lead to build the knowledge, skills and confidence of our Team Managers.</p>	<p>HOS Front Door</p> <p>SM QAS</p>	<p>March 23</p>			<p>QA, Audit and Team Management development work has continued with Steve Hart and QA Lead Fran Giblin provided 1:1 audit development work and live group auditing sessions.</p> <p>The Leaders for Excellence pathway for Team Managers and Independent Chairs is providing an intensive weekly development programme in alignment with our 7 practice obsessions and focus on building knowledge, skills and confidence.</p> <p>The restorative training provided by Mark Finnis supports this work and provides a necessary restorative frame for these roles.</p> <p>Developmental work continues with chairs and the Leaders for Excellence group by the Service</p>	E

							Manager for QAS during March to ensure consistent application of thresholds and strengths based restorative assessment and planning.	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
3.3	<p>Strategy meetings and initial children protection conferences are convened in a timely way when significant risks are evident for children. (PRIORITY ACTION and para 14;16;23 FDFV)</p> <p>Thresholds and decisions regarding intervention for children previously subject to child protection plans are appropriate</p>	<p>A new performance framework will be implemented across the service as part of the new QAF to ensure a performance focused culture is embedded and performance ‘owned’ at all levels of the organisation and driving learning and improvement at the individual, team, service and system levels.</p> <p>Practice Review to be undertaken to identify themes and drivers for repeat CP planning.</p> <p>All outcomes from Strategy leading to request for CP Plan for children previously</p>	<p>HOS Front Door SM QAS</p>	March			<p>New performance framework is in place and demonstrably improving the grip and narrative around performance through the organisation. There is still work to do however to improve confidence and consistency.</p> <p>Revisions to Practice Guidance, bite-size and Refresher guides regarding expectations in relation to the Child Protection Pathway to embed practice improvement have been developed and delivered during March.</p> <p>Practice reviews with regarding to thresholds and repeat planning have been undertaken and provided to SMT and DMT February.</p>	E

	and based on high quality assessment and analysis. (para 16; 23 FDFV)	subject to plans will be QA's by SM for CSW and QAS.					Learning has been shared and embedded in all service meetings during March assessment and planning. Revision and development of reporting of QAS Management Information and development of the Score Card has been completed as part of the wider performance framework development. This will include improved management oversight and improvement of resolution and escalation activity.	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
3.4	Public Law Outline (PLO) and pre-proceedings work is effective and timely. Thresholds are understood, case decisions are tracked and reviewed and unnecessary delays are avoided.	Review the tracking and monitoring of all children's cases that meet the threshold for PLO process (including the pre-proceedings process) and produce performance data to SMT on a monthly basis team level data. Ensure the swift initiation of the legal process, for children that	Service Manager CSW	May	Children who are subject to PLO pre proceedings will benefit from timely, focussed and targeted responses to ensure that plans safeguard them and consider their permanent long-term options.	All children in the pre-proceedings process will demonstrably meet the threshold and will be subject to a clear plan. The rate of progression through PLO and the pre-proceedings	PLO and proceedings tracker now in place and monthly performance reports provided. This is providing visibility of timeliness for children and families and further work is underway by the case progression officer to ensure this improves.	

	Good practice and effective management oversight mean that proceedings are issued when necessary and without delay.	need it and which are supported by good assessments and effective managerial oversight and support.			Children will not spend prolonged period of times in the pre-proceedings process and there will be robust responses to their needs.	process is commensurate with the 16-week maximum timescale. An increased proportion of children step down successfully to CP reflecting effective pre-proceedings intervention.		
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	R A G
3.5	Management oversight is robust, timely and evident, including from senior managers (para 4; 22; 24 FDFV) Supervision is restorative, timely, reflective, high quality and leads to improved practice and outcomes for	A new development pathway: Leaders for Excellence will be implemented for all team managers, CP Chairs and IROs' to strengthen practice, management, leadership and quality assurance skills. Team managers will set C-SMART actions with a clear rationale and review at an early stage of planning and at regular intervals.	PIL and QA Lead Service Managers and Team Managers,	Immediate	Children will benefit from skilled workers who have been afforded opportunity to refresh and reflect upon their approach to their work. Children will experience work that is more structured and focused and will be assured	Records will show effective management case direction, advice, decisions and that actions required to safeguard and support children are in place and actively monitored. Audit and quality assurance will demonstrate the avoidance of drift and delay and	A weekly "Leader for Excellence" Pathway programme commenced on the 2nd February to support these key staff members and to date have focused on understanding children's levels of need, assessment analysis, outcome focused children's plans, making best use of performance data to improve practice, reflective supervision. These have continued to take place on a weekly basis and are supporting culture and	E

	<p>children. (para 4; 22; 24 FDFV)</p>	<p>Supervision will take place as mandated within the Supervision Policy.</p> <p>Team managers will ensure that plans are progressed in a timely way and where not, they will take remedial action. Team managers will ensure that actions set through audit are completed in a timely way.</p> <p>Team managers and social workers will prioritise protected time within which they are tasked, guided, advised, challenged and supported through supervision to deliver good outcomes for children through progressing work effectively and in a timely way.</p> <p>Supervision takes place and is recorded at regular levels in accordance with the supervision policy and at intervals reflective of the experience and capability of the worker.</p>			<p>that oversight of their plans will prevent drift and/or ineffective practice.</p>	<p>evidence of effective social work intervention to improve outcomes.</p> <p>QA mechanisms and performance reports will indicate the timeliness of robustness of supervision and frequency of management oversight.</p> <p>Audit will show 80% children have timely and effective management oversight and supervision recorded on their record.</p>	<p>practice change through the system.</p> <p>Team management confidence and effectiveness continues to be a strong area of developmental focus through the Leaders for Excellent weekly development pathway.</p> <p>Supervision performance across the system has improved during March in terms of timeliness.</p>	
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		Management oversight is recorded on each child's file at prescribed intervals, or more frequently when necessary, and demonstrates management 'grip' and understanding of the child's needs and how the plan will meet them. This includes management oversight of senior leaders during ad out of working hours.						
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
3.6	Effective case management will support practitioners to achieve manageable workloads and consistently good practice (para 7;24 FDFV)	Team and Service Managers will use performance management information and supervision to understand and take action to manage the complexities of individual social workers workloads. The allocation of work by Managers to	Team and Service Managers	March 23	Children will benefit from a timely and relationship-based service from Social Workers that ensures the right help at the right time.	Social Workers will report that workloads are mostly manageable and managers understand and respond to their pressures. Quality assurance and audit activity will demonstrate quality of assessment and	Caseloads continue to be monitored daily by senior leaders and reviewed continuously by team managers and within SMT and DMT monthly. The QAF and Performance Reporting Frameworks now in place are supporting a performance-focused culture, consistent approach, stronger grip and	E

		<p>Practitioners will be timely and effective management direction will be given.</p> <p>Any slippage from required standards will be recognised, understood and managed to prevent any risk to the safety of children or drift and delay.</p>				<p>impact of plans will be consistently good and informed by management oversight.</p> <p>Allocation data will show timeliness.</p> <p>Drift and delay will be avoided.</p> <p>Performance targets within the performance framework will show 80% achievement in all teams.</p>	<p>golden thread through the system including oversight of volume and flow.</p> <p>The Supervision Policy has been updated in conjunction with the Leading Practice groups and launched to the service. This supports a stronger understanding of the meaning and impact of supervision for staff and children's outcomes.</p> <p>Leaders for Excellence groups have focused heavily on management oversight and supervision during March.</p>	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
3.7	<p>Assessments are timely, comprehensive, analytical, of high quality and lead to appropriately focused help. (para 21)</p> <p>Assessments incorporate the</p>	<p>Improve the quality of all assessments through revised training and framework.</p> <p>Implement a coherent practice approach to assessment to enable a good understanding of the diverse nature of families.</p>	<p>PIL</p> <p>HoS, Service Managers and Team Managers to oversee, social workers to deliver.</p>	<p>May 23</p>	<p>Children will benefit from an assessment and subsequent plan that is based on a comprehensive understanding of their needs and delivers effective and sustained</p>	<p>80% assessments will be judged to be good by QA and audit processes.</p> <p>The timescales for assessment completion will be set and achieved</p>	<p>The Leaders for Excellence programme has included a strong focus on assessment and analysis through March.</p> <p>The launch of the practice standards, practice approach and QAF will create the conditions for good practice to flourish.</p>	

	<p>meaning of historical factors and all relevant information, including ethnic and cultural issues, the knowledge held by all relevant partners, and contributions of all relevant family members.(para 21 FDFV)</p>	<p>Review current assessment model and tools. Assessment quality will be subject to continuous quality assurance and development by team managers and audit. All assessments will be updated whenever significant events occur in a child's life</p>			<p>safety and change. Decisions and actions for children will be based on up to date assessments of need. Children will experience and know that their voices have been heard.</p>	<p>according to the child's needs. The quality of assessments will be evident lead to corresponding improvement in care plans when audited.</p>	<p>The current assessment model (RVM) has now been reviewed and a new proposed model has been agreed at SMT. New training to support this is underway and on track to be implemented in May 23.</p>	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	R A G

3.7	The child's voice is evident, and the child's lived experience is understood (para 22 FDFV) Management oversight of assessments is consistently good, sows professional curiosity and ensures that guidance is given to ensure that children receive timely, skilled help and protection. (para 22 FDFV).		PIL HoS, Service Managers and Team Managers to oversee, social workers to deliver.	May 23				
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	R A G

3.8	<p>Children’s plans are developed and reviewed in a timely manner, comprehensive, specific with measurable outcomes (para 21; FDFV)</p> <p>Child in Need and Core group meetings include relevant professionals and are purposeful in ensuring that plans are implemented and effective (para 21 FDFV)</p>	<p>Provide targeted management development through the Leaders for Excellence pathway to ensure that all managers, CP Chairs and IRO’s have the necessary skills and understand their accountabilities in relation to the quality of plans.</p> <p>The quality of plans will be subject to continuous quality assurance and development by team managers and audit.</p>	PIL, QA Lead Team Managers, CP Chairs and IRO’s.	May	<p>Children will receive consistently good services as a result of having high quality assessments and plans which set out the requirements and timescales.</p> <p>Children will recognise that they are able to contribute to and influence their plans.</p>	<p>80% plans will be judged to be good by QA and audit processes.</p> <p>The timescales for plans to be completed and reviewed will be achieved.</p> <p>The quality of plans will be evident lead to corresponding improvement in outcomes when audited.</p>	<p>The Leaders for Excellence programme has focused on planning and plans during March.</p> <p>The practice approach and QAF will create the conditions for good practice to flourish.</p> <p>QAS has delivered training packages during February and March to Children’s Social Care and wider partnership with focus on threshold confidence, the child protection pathway and planning from Strategy, S47 and Conference expectations within a Strength-based Restorative Model. This will continue on a revolving schedule.</p>	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	R A G

3.9	Social Work Practice with families where domestic abuse is prevalent will be well-informed, confident and effective to ensure children are protected and victims supported to make the necessary changes in their lives (para 9; 18 FDFV)	Domestic abuse referrals to the MASH will be triaged and recorded utilising a standardised DASV risk tool. This will include the consideration of the impact of repeated incidents of domestic abuse. Review of PDAS commissioned expert domestic abuse service to include co-location potential within the MASH. Domestic Abuse Training and Toolkit will be developed and delivered for Social Workers and Family Support Workers All staff attending MARAC meetings will be fully cognoscente of the contemporary and historical circumstances of the child so that the meeting can properly understand the risks to which he/she is exposed.	Team Managers, MASH SD/ Commissioning PSW/ Academy	April 23	Children will benefit from social work practice that reduces the impact of domestic abuse on them and their family. Children will be better protected from the impact of domestic abuse.	Audit and quality assurance will demonstrate high quality, purposeful and timely intervention to improve safety and sustain change.	See 2.8 and 2.10	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	R A G

3.10	Social work practice will be well-informed and confident where neglect is a feature of concern, to ensure identification and effective responses. (para 14; 16;)	Implementation and embedding of the Graded Care Profile 2.	PSCP and Academy	June 23	<p>Children will benefit from social work practice that reduces the impact of cumulative harm and acute risks of neglect on them and their family.</p> <p>Children will be better protected from the cumulative harm and acute risks of neglect.</p>	Audit and quality assurance will demonstrate high quality, purposeful and timely intervention to improve safety and sustain change.	<p>Whilst an established training offer is in place within CYPFS, there is more to do in this space to ensure consistent and confidence practice both for social workers and partners.</p> <p>The PSCP have adopted the Graded Care Profile 2 and established an implementation and steering group. A single agency plan has been identifying leads and trainers in March with implementation plan in place.</p>	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
3.11	Extra-familial harm will be identified early	Daily risk meetings within the MASH, led by the Adolescent Safety	HOS Front Door and	August 23	Children will experience	The numbers of identified children	Daily risk meetings are in place in the MASH.	

	<p>and responded to effectively and coherently to reduce risks by social workers and multi-agency partners. Responses to children who go missing are effective with well-coordinated plans and actions to reduce risk (para 19 FDFV)</p>	<p>Hub will continue to drive timely and informed responses and ensure alignment to the statutory social work functions.</p> <p>A Safer Me assessment will be undertaken to inform planning in all cases where indicators of extra-familial and contextual harm are apparent. Adolescent Safety Framework training and practice development will be re-launched with an experienced operational lead to ensure workforce confidence, competence and integration with the wider safeguarding framework.</p>	<p>MASH / ASF Hub Team Managers</p>		<p>agencies working together more effectively and consistently to understand the patterns and trends associated with extra-familial harm and missing episodes. They will support prevention and disruptions activity that will reduce their vulnerabilities.</p>	<p>vulnerable to extra-familial harm is likely to increase initially as improvements are made in identifying children most at risk.</p>	<p>The Adolescent Safety Framework, has yet to achieve its potential in Plymouth, and quality assurance activity within CYPFS and the PSCP reveal there is a varied understanding of exploitation and contextual safeguarding issues, with professionals reliant on individual conventional safeguarding pathways to respond to extra familial and peer to peer harm.</p> <p>Following operational and strategic discussions between agencies, a task and finish group has been established, led by the Service Manager for QAS, to ensure an effective relaunch of the Adolescent Safety Framework, review of the approach and impact of the MACE.</p> <p>The Adolescent Safety Hub will be re-established in the MASH in April 2023 as part of the front door re-design.</p>	
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Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children and Young People	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
3.11	<p>Extra-familial harm will be identified early and responded to effectively and coherently to reduce risks by social workers and multi-agency partners. Responses to children who go missing are effective with well-coordinated plans and actions to reduce risk (para 19 FDFV)</p>	<p>A review of the alignment of the MACE will be undertaken to ensure effective city-wide work with partners, particularly police and Safer Plymouth, to understand the patterns, themes and trends pertinent to the demographic of Plymouth.</p> <p>Return home interviews will be completed within statutory timescales in order that children's voice can be heard at the earliest opportunity and effective responses can be made.</p>	<p>HOS Front Door and MASH / ASF Hub Team Managers</p>	<p>August 23</p>	<p>For those children vulnerable to extra-familial harm and/ or repeat missing episodes, effective plans will be in place.</p> <p>Children who are vulnerable to being targeted or who are already involved in exploitation will have a care plan that identifies how these vulnerabilities will be addressed and reduced.</p>	<p>Audit and quality assurance will demonstrate that the risks to children from outside their families, including reasons for being missing, are better understood, and responded to with targeted and effective plans.</p> <p>There will be a reduction in the numbers of repeat missing episodes.</p> <p>Children will receive a return home interview within 72 hours of being found.</p>		

Priority 4 – At risk of Care, Cared for and Care Experienced Children and Young People								
Ensure that children can remain cared for safely within their families and family network wherever possible and that where necessary, high quality alternative care meets their needs and provides them with permanence and belonging.								
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
4.1	<p>Children will only be brought into care when all other options have been exhausted, such as placements with connected people (para 21 FDFV)</p> <p>Unplanned placements will be avoided wherever possible.</p> <p>Unregistered care arrangements will be avoided wherever possible.</p>	<p>Any unplanned admission to care will be agreed only by the Service Director through the Authorisation to Accommodate request.</p> <p>A proposal for a new evidence-based Edge of Care (EOC) model including clear service specification and milestones will be provided and implemented. This will be a combination of new and re-developed existing resource include short-term registered provision in line with the evidence base.</p> <p>Edge of care services will be made available in planned and timely ways</p>	<p>All HOS/ SD</p> <p>HOS Targeted Support</p>	July 23	Children will feel safe, and their voice will be heard in decision making forums. Children will experience concerted efforts to enable them to continue living with their families wherever possible.	<p>Children will only be admitted to care when all other options have been considered.</p> <p>Placements will be available to children at the point of admission and unnecessary moves and/or periods of care in unregistered arrangements will reduce.</p>	<p>No unplanned admissions to care take place without Service Director approval.</p> <p>As a result of a strengthened procedure relating to children in unregistered arrangements including robust tracking and leadership oversight, the number of young people in unregistered settings have reduced from 10 in September 2022 to 4 in March and are on track to reduce to 2 by May.</p> <p>Edge of Care model has been developed and will be implemented in May. This will be a phased approach to include consideration of an evidence-based component ‘circuit-break’</p>	

Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
		<p>to all children vulnerable to a breakdown in their living arrangements.</p> <p>The new EOC team will be actively engaged in ensuring social workers and managers identify children at the edge of care and able to return home (reunification) at the earliest opportunity following referral or through the children in need and child protection processes.</p>					<p>residential children’s home element in phase 2 (plans in place by July)</p> <p>Revised panel arrangements to ensure service director line of sight and oversight of care entrants and placement changes are in progress and will be in place by end April.</p>	
4.2	<p>Children will be cared for in family-based placements unless their identified needs determine otherwise. (para 21; FDFV) Stability of care will improve.</p>	<p>The Special guardianship review will be concluded to ensure increased support and increase the number of children benefitting from this type of care.</p> <p>An Innovation Lead and team will be established to ensure a system of enhanced oversight and grip of all children; in unregistered and residential settings and need to ‘step-forward’; who are new unplanned entrants to</p>	SD HOS Permanence	May 23	<p>Children will benefit from stable family relationships, in their communities. The likelihood of placement disruption will be reduced.</p>	<p>More children will remain at home or be cared for in Special Guardianship and connected carer arrangements and fewer in approved foster and residential care. Placement stability will</p>	<p>Dip sample of viability assessments that did not progress to Reg 24 assessments has been completed indicating more assessments for connected persons could care for children.</p> <p>Paper for development of Family & Friends Support Team to be incorporated into the TOM or presented</p>	

		<p>care; assessed as viable for return home.</p> <p>The Innovation team will provide additional social work support to these cohorts to support pace and quality of work</p> <p>The Innovation Lead will identify new ways of working across the OS Permanence system including with EH, MASH, PRAS, CDT education, housing, CAHMS, Livewell, adult services and the voluntary sector to support practice and system change and improve I outcomes.</p> <p>Any new requests for residential placement will be agreed only by the Innovation Lead, whose role it is to provide a critical friend function.</p> <p>All children in existing residential care arrangements will be subject to regular review within the CPR panel to ensure their needs continue to be best met outside a family placement.</p>				<p>demonstrably improve.</p> <p>Fewer Special Guardianship and Connect Carer arrangements will break down due to increased visibility and support.</p>	<p>as business case by end April 23.</p> <p>Care Planning and Review Panel reviews all children and young people in residential settings and children and young people who needs will be met by a plan to 'step forward' to new care arrangements during 23/24.</p> <p>All new requests for residential care arrangements are currently agreed only be the Service Director.</p> <p>There is a need to strengthen these panel arrangements to ensure the avoidance of drift and delay for children and the timely delivery of MTFP objective.</p> <p>See 4.1 above to review of these panel arrangements.</p>	
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		Children whose needs have been identified as needing a 'step-forward' plan to foster care, family care or return home will be tracked and supported by the Innovation Lead and Team. Reporting on the progress of plans for these children will be provided on a monthly basis to DMT.						
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
4.3	An up to date sufficiency strategy will ensure a wide range and choice of placements available to meet the needs of all children in care. In-house foster care capacity will be increased.	Sufficiency strategy will be revised. The sufficiency statement will be based upon a detailed analysis of need of all children likely to be in the looked after system and will accommodate emerging trends of demand. Commercial manager role will be established through the TOM to support the recruitment of foster carers.	Strategic Commissioning Manager and Service Director SC Manager	May 23 Ongoing through the year	Children will benefit from choice of placement which will meet their needs and will avoid unnecessary changes of placement. The likelihood of placement disruption will be reduced. Where it is in the children's best interests, placements will	There will be a choice of accommodation which is accessible at the point of need for children who have to live away from their parents. At the point of entry into care, unnecessary moves will be avoided.	Sufficiency Strategy to be reviewed by May 2023 6 weekly meetings are in place with residential block contract providers to consider vacancy planning and to inform sufficiency/service development. Residential block contract procurement complete March 2023. New two bedded crisis residential home (block	

	Plans to increase local placement sufficiency will continue to progress in partnership with commissioned providers				be in the care of family or friends and/ or geographically located so as to support contact with their families and friends.	Short and long term stability will improve.	contract) to open August 2023. 12 bed Merrivale Road facility to open May/June 2023 for CYP aged 17 and care experienced 15+ residential children's home due to open May 2023 (3 beds) Specialist home for children with LA/ASC in consideration on site of former adult care home – with a focus on CDT cases currently sent out of area Emergency fostering offer to be developed via Peninsula fostering contract In House Fostering Team to develop and pilot a step-forward model (such as resilience fostering) for children stepping down from residential placements to be in place by May 2023.	
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG

					children (impact)			
4.4	Matching for those children already living in long-term fostering placements will be timely so that they benefit from the stability and emotional security that this will offer them.	Team managers will take action to review all children and young people in their foster placements for over six months where long term fostering is the child's final plan, and ensure that arrangements to secure their plan are in place.	HOS Permanence	July 23	Children and young people will benefit from early decisions to secure matched long-term plans.	More children will benefit from matched long-term placements with foster carers. Increased security and stability will reduce placement disruption.	Matching Panels are chaired by Head of Service on a monthly basis Children and Young People receive a certificate and letter to celebrate the match when agreed. Further review will take place by the Innovation Team during May to determine whether more children could be permanently matched.	E
4.5	The fostering service in Plymouth will be the agency of choice for existing local and aspiring foster carers.	National Minimum Standards will be complied with in full. Performance reporting will be provided on a monthly basis to DMT to ensure close oversight of compliance and service development. Commercial manager role will be established through the TOM to support the recruitment of foster carers and quality of marketing strategy and activity.	HoS Permanence and Fostering	August 23	Children and young people will receive consistently high quality, trauma-informed and skilful care.	Increased number of approved foster carers. Increased number of children placed in in-house, local foster placements.	An action Plan is in place to ensure compliance with the NMS. Update report to DMT in May. Monthly DMT reporting is in place. The support and retention offer is under further review.	

Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
4.6	Children in care and care leavers will achieve their full potential educationally, are supported to develop the skills for independence and successfully find training or employment The proportion of care experienced young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) will reduce.	<p>Seeking Education, Employment and Training (SEET) Strategy to be completed with a clear focus and actions to ensure progress for care experienced young people.</p> <p>Launch SEET pilot for intensive and incentivised support for care experienced young people.</p> <p>Increase co-construction and quality of PEPS: SMART target, SMART outcomes</p> <p>Through the establishment of regular performance reporting systems, identify attendance, reduced timetable and exclusions for children in care and take timely action to ensure their full attendance and access to education.</p>	HO Skills and Post 16/ Head of Permanence/ Head of VS	July 23	Children in Care and Care experienced young people will benefit from full access to high quality education that recognises and meets their needs and reach their full educational potential. Care Experienced Young people will benefit from positive opportunities for education, employment and training and not be disadvantaged by adverse early experiences.	Improvement of educational achievement of children in care at each key stage. Increase in number of Care Leavers in EET. Audit and quality assurance activity will demonstrate improved quality of PEP's.	<p>SEET Strategy is currently being updated and will be completed in May 23.</p> <p>Plymouth has joined the Care Leaver Covenant and has made a number of corporate commitments to improve the offer for and outcomes of Care Leavers. Proposal for SEET PA Pilot and incentive scheme has been agreed and PA recruitment process will take place in April 2023.</p> <p>Virtual School are preparing workshops for Foster Carers and Social Workers to develop knowledge and confidence in getting the best out of PEPs and EHCP reviews in May 23.</p> <p>The establishment of the QAF and Performance Reporting Framework in March 23 will ensure visibility and progress in relation to attendance, reduced timetable and exclusions for children in care.</p>	

Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
4.7	<p>The physical and psychological health of children coming into care, Children in Care and Care Experienced young people will be improved and maintained.</p>	<p>All Children coming into care have a timely IHA which is regularly reviewed in line with statutory requirements.</p> <p>Children in Care will receive appropriate dental treatment and a minimum of annual dental check-ups.</p> <p>Care Experienced Young people will have access to their health history through their health passport and access to informal health advice through the Children in Care health team and universal services.</p> <p>The children in care CAHMS team will provide advice, support and guidance for children in care and their carers as needed and in addition to that available through universal services.</p>	All HOS	April 23	Children’s health and wellbeing needs will be understood, responded to and improved as a result of regular and dedicated health care.	<p>Performance data related to initial and review health assessment, dental review and SDQ scores will demonstrate improvement.</p> <p>Audit and quality assurance will indicate that children’s health and wellbeing needs are fully understood and responded to in a way that leads to improved outcomes for them.</p> <p>Children and young people will report improvements in their health and wellbeing through their LAC reviews and annual surveys.</p>	<p>Health Data for Children in Care is actively addressed through CPOMG (monthly).</p> <p>Monthly meetings between Health and children’s social care take place to improve the process and recording issues for health KPIs. While February data indicated an improving performance position, there has been a slight reduction in the March data across all areas. A detailed review of this performance is being undertaken and appears to be linked to the focus on improved recording of SDQ data in March. Staffing absence re: coordination of RHA’s is also a driver in March performance. This will have affected the RHA, dental and optical data available. More needs to be achieved in this space which will be a priority focus through April and onwards.</p>	RAG

Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
4.7	The physical and psychological health of children coming into care, Children in Care and Care Experienced young people will be improved and maintained.	Children in Care will contribute to and shape the plans for them and the delivery of wider services. Mind of My Own will be implemented.				90% Children and young people will participate in their reviews. Mind of My Own data will be implemented and demonstrate that children are able to participate in planning and decision-making and connect with trust professionals in a timely way.	The children in care CAHMS team are well-established and co-located at Ballard House. Mind of My Own has been purchased and is now in pilot implementation. Train the Trainer sessions are scheduled for May 23 which will then support the wider roll out of MOMO.	

Priority 5 – Quality Assurance and Audit								
Ensure a robust Quality Assurance Framework is in place that provides a clear picture of performance and leads to strong grip, practice improvement and embedded learning.								
Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
5.0	The quality assurance framework will ensure that performance information is collated for all service areas, enables the evaluation of impact of improvement work and, where weaknesses are identified, ensures they are addressed urgently by managers at all levels. (para 25;FDFV)	<p>An annual programme of outcome focused audit activity, including deep dive and thematic audits and dip sampling to be introduced to measure the effectiveness and impact of the improvement journey and the benefits to, and outcomes for children of the improvement actions.</p> <p>Train and develop a pool of auditors and moderators to include senior managers.</p>	HoS for QA and Safeguarding and QA Lead	May 23	Children will benefit from having a systematic effectiveness, impact and compliance check on services that are provided to them.	<p>Improved compliance with requirements, a greater focus on outcomes and improved quality assessment, planning and intervention which reflects the needs and views of children.</p> <p>Improved performance data across the range of measures.</p> <p>Most audits will be at least good or and all re-audits will be RI or better.</p>	<p>New Quality Assurance Framework has now been launched.</p> <p>Quality assurance and audit activity has increased in frequency and our quality is improving through the QA and Audit training and workshops provided by Steve Hart. 16 Independent Chairs and Team Managers have been provided with 1:1 development sessions through March before becoming ‘approved’ auditors.</p> <p>Monthly audit and moderation cycle has now resumed and will be supported by the QA Lead</p>	

Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
5.1	<p>Identified learning will be evaluated and disseminated to all staff. (para 27 FDFV)</p> <p>Actions identified from audit will be undertaken in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Formalise the tracking of audit outcomes and recommendations to ensure that individual cases are improved and learning from audits is captured and supports policy and practice development.</p>		July 23	<p>Children will benefit from the knowledge that audit and dip sample recommendations will be followed up to ensure that the required action has been taken.</p>	<p>Improved performance data across the range of measures. Most audits will be at least good or and all re-audits will be RI or better.</p>	<p>The TOM will establish two new permanent auditor roles.</p> <p>QAF and Performance Framework is finalised and implemented (1/3/23)</p> <p>Identified learning is provided to SMT where actions are approved and sewn into improvement plans and workstreams.</p> <p>The QAF will embed this further through monthly Quality Impact Board, the first of which will take place in April.</p> <p>Whole service meetings include a 'Learning from QA' interactive workshop.</p>	RAG

Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
5.2	High quality data and performance management arrangements will enable tracking and improvement of practice and improved line of sight to practice by senior managers. (para 25; FDFV)	<p>A review of the performance management and reporting pathway will be undertaken to support more effective monitoring and identification of performance pressure points and emerging trends.</p> <p>Child level data will be available to ensure timely corrective action for individual children.</p>	SD	March 23	Children will benefit from the ability of managers and staff to be able to monitor their work. This will enable individual, team and service performance to be identified and action taken to respond to pressures and concerns.	<p>Child level data accessibility and reporting will result in improved case related performance.</p> <p>Team and service performance will improve in response to scrutiny and support with performance pressures and emerging demands.</p>	A review has been undertaken and a new Performance reporting Framework has now been established. This includes team, service level performance scorecards and review forms, monthly performance surgeries led by the Service Director and monthly performance reporting to SMT, DMT and the Portfolio Holder.	E

Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
5.3	<p>Child Protection Chairs will have effective oversight of cases, challenge and escalate where necessary to ensure outcomes are improved. (para 23; 24 FDFV)</p>	<p>Initial and Review Child Protection Conferences will take place within required statutory timescales.</p> <p>Child protection chairs will be fully conversant with the details of the child's needs and plan always record concerns and the actions that are required.</p> <p>Actions are monitored according to required timescales.</p> <p>Child protection chairs will use the 'resolution and escalation' process whenever they find poor practice or failure to implement the plan in full.</p>	SM QAS/ Child Protection Chairs	Immediately	<p>Children at risk of significant harm will experience improved safety and oversight as a result of timely multi-agency child protection planning. Children will benefit from the regular oversight and knowledge of Child Protection Chairs which will reduce the likelihood of them remaining in circumstances where they were likely to suffer significant harm. Where practice is of not good enough standard for children, improvements will be made using the dispute resolution process.</p>	<p>ICPC and RCPC timeliness will improve. Children will be subject to child protection plans for shorter periods. Plans will demonstrably be fully implemented. There will be a reduction in the numbers of children with second or further plans.</p>	<p>See 3.3</p> <p>Initial and Review Child Protection Conferences now take place within required statutory timescales with 100% .</p> <p>QAS has drafted and shared with Heads of Service Managers the Practice Guidance and Expectations for Child Protection Case Conferences, so that Team Managers and Social Workers are clear about the expectations of the Conferencing Model. This has been disseminated to all staff and a 'rebrand' launch at a Whole Service Event in May 23.</p>	E

Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
5.3	Child Protection Chairs will have effective oversight of cases, challenge and escalate where necessary to ensure outcomes are improved. (para 23; 24 FDFV)	<p>Chairs will undertake active 'mid-point' and needs-led review of all children who are subject to CP plans and ensure that the plan is effective and relevant to the circumstances of the child.</p> <p>Periodic dip samples are scheduled in the quality assurance timetable to ensure compliance with the actions set out above.</p> <p>Monthly reports to be reviewed by the Head of Service for QA & safeguarding.</p>	SM QAS/ Child Protection Chairs	Immediately			<p>Independent Chairs undertake Pre-conference consultations re: threshold and quality and Preparation for Conference Discussions with Social Workers to focus on preparedness for conference to ensure reports are completed, advocacy identified and additional needs identified and responded too.</p> <p>Mid-point and needs led reviews are expected and in place.</p> <p>Revision and development of reporting with QAS Management Information has been undertaken including development of the Score Card including for LADO and Individual IRO trackers to monitor performance are now in place.</p>	E

Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
5.4	Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs) will contribute to improved practice through their challenges and escalations particularly to reduce drift and delay and achieve permanence in a timely way.	<p>IRO's will use the formal 'resolution and escalation' process to ensure timely and effective children's care plans.</p> <p>IRO's will consistently track actions and oversee progress between reviews to ensure care planning is timely, focussed and achieves permanence for children.</p>	IROs	Immediately	Children will benefit from focused social work intervention and robust care planning decisions to support their long-term needs. Children will experience better quality services as a result of IROs ensuring good practice and outcomes. Decisions for children in relation to permanency planning will be timely.	There will be an increase in Resolution and Escalation alerts and responses to these alerts will be timely and lead to improved decisions and outcomes for children and young people.	<p>Formal resolution and escalation process is in place and is the subject of increased performance management oversight to ensure effective and timely use within a restorative framework by the service manager.</p> <p>Continue focus in this area is needed to ensure positive impact for children.</p> <p>See 3.3</p>	E

Priority 6 – A Stable and Able workforce

Ensure that strategic arrangements regarding workforce development and the organisational environment maximises staff recruitment and retention so that staff have the capacity and support to carry out effective social work practice.

Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	R A G
6.1	An effective workforce strategy will ensure a qualified and skilled permanent workforce that reduces reliance on agency staff and ensures capacity is sufficient to enable effective casework and management oversight. (para 7 FDFV)	The recruitment and retention strategy and action plan will be implemented to deliver immediate measures to support retention and reduce reliance on agency staffing including; new assistant social worker roles, a Market factor supplement for hard to fill social work posts.	SD/ All HOS	Sept 23	<p>Children will have fewer changes of social worker.</p> <p>Children will experience social workers who are knowledgeable and skilled.</p> <p>Children will be able to build meaningful and consistent relationships with social workers and not have to re-tell' their story.</p>	<p>Improved vacancy and turnover rates. Improvements to the quality of service provided to children as a result of stable long- term relationships with social workers will be evident through quality assurance and audit.</p> <p>Workforce will report higher levels of satisfaction and wellbeing.</p>	<p>Recruitment and Retention Strategy is in final discussions within Unions (17/4/23) and will be approved this week.</p> <p>Leaders for Practice group task are engaged with the development of the action plan. This was introduced in March 23 though some key elements have been delivered including;</p> <p>Final agreement for a retention payment for hard to fill social work posts; the creation of a new Assistant Social work role in the Children's Social Work service will happen 17/4/23.</p> <p>Recruitment of International social workers, 6 of whom have started working for Plymouth and a further 9 joining in May.</p>	

Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
6.1	The organisational and leadership culture will be consistent, restorative, inclusive and promote retention and staff wellbeing. (para 7; 27 FDFV)	<p>International Social Work programme will recruit 16 social workers by May 2023 and review need for second recruitment round beginning in October 2024. Leading Practice Groups with representation from all roles and service-areas will be implemented and provide a forum for meaningful inclusion in change and innovation.</p> <p>Restorative training will be delivered across the organisation, beginning with senior leaders and members and aligned with the partnership priorities</p>					<p>Restorative training has begun across the service as is a key element of cementing our organisational and leadership culture.</p> <p>New commercial roles have been proposed within the TOM that will support a modernised and improved recruitment approach and digital platform.</p>	

Ref No.	Desired Outcome for Children	Actions	Lead	Time scale/ Date	What difference will it make to children (impact)	How will we measure the difference to children?	Evidence of Progress	RAG
6.2	The professional development strategy will be aligned with the identified priorities and need of the service and workforce. (para 27 FDFV)	<p>Develop the Academy’s scope and professional development offer and progression pathway for professionals working directly with children, young people and families to ensure it is aligned with our priorities and their learning needs. Staff attendance at training events will be supported and ensured.</p> <p>Learning objectives from training will be set out in event prospectuses and made clear to supervisors and line managers who will give their staff opportunities to practice and develop their new skills.</p> <p>Refresh and relaunch induction arrangements for new starters so they receive a comprehensive Plymouth welcome,</p>	PIL/ PSW/ SD	April 23	Children will experience improved services delivered by a stable, able and motivated workforce. Children will benefit from work that is better planned and delivered. Their social workers will develop a greater range of skills and techniques that can be used according to need.	<p>The workforce will report improved levels of satisfaction and access to professional development.</p> <p>Quality assurance and audit will demonstrate the use of knowledge, research, evidence and skills in practice.</p>	<p>The workforce development offer and curriculum will be aligned to our improvement priorities and recruitment and retention goals and implemented by end April.</p> <p>The proposals within the TOM strengthen the capacity within the Professional Development space to ensure future growth of internal pipelines to social work and the development opportunities for all staff.</p> <p>Meetings scheduled for DCS , SD with University Plymouth and Plymouth Marjon University</p>	RAG

		<p>orientation and introduction our practice priorities and ways of working with local children, young people and families.</p> <p>Strengthen links and social work training and recruitment pathways with University Plymouth and Plymouth Marjon University</p>							
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Improvement Notice

To: Plymouth City Council ('the council')
Department for Children's Services
Ballard House
West Hoe Road
Plymouth
PL1 3BJ

This Improvement Notice is issued to Plymouth City Council on 19 May 2023 following the judgement that children's services have areas of priority action, as identified in the Ofsted Focused Visit report published on 30 January 2023.

1. This Notice is given to address all the areas for improvement identified in the report of the focused visit dated 30 January 2023.

To comply with this Notice, the following actions are required of the council, working with its partner agencies ("partners") as identified by the Children Act 2004 (Section 11).

Adviser arrangements

2. The Secretary of State has chosen to appoint an adviser to provide advice to the Department and the council. The council will work with the adviser until some such time that the Secretary of State is satisfied that this is no longer required.

Improvement plan

3. The council's improvement plan will deliver appropriate and sustainable improvement. The plan should cover the areas identified in the Ofsted report of 30 January 2023 as well as recommendations made by the adviser appointed by the Department.
4. To ensure there is clear evidence of progression:
 - a. the content of the improvement plan and a record of progress against it must be kept up to date;
 - b. the council must ensure it establishes and maintains an improvement board, which the council will be responsible for. The improvement board is to have an independent chair in place who will oversee the implementation of the improvement plan and report to the improvement board on progress against the objectives in the plan, to a timetable agreed with the Department. It can commission updates from partners in order to do this;
 - c. reports to the improvement board should include data, analysis and recommendations supported by evidence of impact of improvements on the quality of services for children in need of help and protection;

- d. the council should highlight those objectives which are slow to progress and highlight where contributions need to be strengthened;
- e. the views of frontline staff and of children and young people will be taken into consideration in the development of practice and standards.

Department for Education reviews

- 5. Officials or advisers from the Department will undertake reviews of progress against the improvement agenda at least every six months or more regularly where appropriate.
- 6. These reviews may cover, but are not exclusive to: culture; performance; leadership, management and governance; workforce and management oversight; early help; and multi-agency arrangements.
- 7. From time to time, the adviser may require that a diagnostic review or assessment of performance in a specific service area is undertaken by a local authority or other party agreed with the Department.
- 8. For any review or assessment, the council must provide the person(s) conducting it with:
 - a. access to, and time with, staff and leadership;
 - b. accurate and up to date data on performance and quality;
 - c. facilities to carry out the reviews;
 - d. access to case files, minutes of meetings, supervision records or any other relevant information.
- 9. Prior to any reviews, the council should provide its own assessment of improvement. This may reflect, but is not limited to:
 - a. progress against the improvement plan objectives;
 - b. involvement of safeguarding partners and the Improvement Board;
 - c. staff surveys;
 - d. staff supervision and the quality of feedback.
- 10. Taking account of the measures set out in this improvement notice and the adviser's feedback, the council should aim for actions included in the improvement plan to be delivered by the end of December 2023 (within 12 months of the Ofsted inspection) or sooner, where appropriate.

Improvement against the above measures will be assessed as follows:

- 11. The Department will be represented at the council's monthly Improvement Board.
- 12. The adviser will provide to the Department regular reports of progress or

concern against the areas set out in this notice; improvement against the Ofsted requirements; and any other such information relevant to the improvement journey.

Failure to comply with this Improvement Notice by the assessment dates or poor progress:

13. Should the council be unwilling or unable to comply with this improvement notice, or should ministers not be satisfied with the council's progress at any stage, ministers may choose to invoke their statutory powers of intervention (s497A Education Act 1996) to direct the council to enter into an appropriate arrangement to secure the improvements required in children's services.

Signed:

Date: 19 May 2023

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'LL', written over a faint, illegible stamp or watermark.

Lucy Livings
Senior Civil Servant in Department for Education

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Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting:	18 July 2023
Title of Report:	Contextual Safeguarding, Exploitation and Extra-Familial Harm
Lead Member:	Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader, and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture, Events and Communications)
Lead Strategic Director:	Sharon Muldoon (Director for Childrens Services)
Author:	Martine Aquilina/ Jane Anstis
Contact Email:	martine.aquilina@plymouth.gov.uk
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

The report provides a detailed account of our city's efforts in addressing and combatting child exploitation within the context of a wider extra-familial harm definition, including the progress made in implementing a contextual safeguarding approach, through the Adolescent Safety Framework.

Recommendations and Reasons

To note the report.

Alternative options considered and rejected

n/a

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

Report has relevance for delivery of 'a Bright Future' as the Children and Young People's Plan for Plymouth.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

N/A

Financial Risks

N/A

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

N/A

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.

Appendices

*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Briefing report title							
B	Equalities Impact Assessment (if applicable)							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin		Leg		Mon Off		HR		Asset s		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Jane Anstis (Service Director for Children, Young People and Families)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 10/07/2023											

1. Introduction

At the request of the Scrutiny Panel, this briefing report has been prepared to offer an informative update on the issue of Child Exploitation in Plymouth. For convenience and reference, appended are the definitions of Child Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation. The report presents; a detailed account of our city's efforts in addressing and combatting child exploitation within the context of a wider extra-familial harm definition, including the progress made in implementing a contextual safeguarding approach, through the Adolescent Safety Framework. The report also includes an overview of the various approaches adopted by agencies in responding to missing children.

'Extra-familial harm' refers to a broad category of harm types, including peer-on-peer harm, sexual and criminal exploitation and bullying. Often, these different harm types share overlapping drivers, methods and consequences for young people.

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

Children's social care practitioners, child protection systems and wider safeguarding partnerships have developed new ways to engage with individuals and sectors who do have influence over/within extra-familial contexts, and recognise that assessment of, and intervention with, these spaces are a critical part of safeguarding practices. Contextual Safeguarding, therefore, expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse beyond their front doors. Our holistic framework for this approach in Plymouth is called the Adolescent Safety Framework.

2. What we know about extra-familial harm in Plymouth

For many safeguarding partnerships, including Plymouth, the development of a comprehensive data system that is able to quantify the type, range and distribution of extra-familial harm across the City, remains a challenge. The development of the Adolescent Safety Framework (below) will address this. This will allow better visibility of data and these at the strategic level and make possible a 'helicopter view' of the City in a way that is currently not possible.

County Lines

County lines is a form of criminal exploitation where urban gangs persuade, coerce or force children and young people to store drugs and money and/or transport them to suburban areas, market towns and coastal towns (Home Office, 2018).

It can happen in any part of the UK and is against the law and a form of child abuse. County lines gangs are highly organised criminal networks that use sophisticated, frequently evolving techniques to groom young people and evade capture by the police.

Perpetrators use children and young people to maximise profits and distance themselves from the criminal act of physically dealing drugs (National Crime agency, 2019). Young people do the majority of the work and take the most risk.

Dedicated mobile phone lines or “deal lines” are used to help facilitate county lines drug deals. Phones are usually cheap, disposable and old fashioned, because they are changed frequently to avoid detection by the police.

We have seen an increase in active county lines investigations with one Operation, Op Fitter, designed to break up a county line in the city which had been identified at the Operational MACE. Whilst successfully identify 2 adults responsible for exploitation, who are now both in custody, the exploitation of the children continued. Therefore, we have followed a previous intervention (Op Hypural) by using a network of services, including the youth service, youth justice Impact Project (diversion programme) and Children's Social Care to offer support to the children identified. This has provided effective preventative and supportive interventions with young people and families to reduce the risk of harm or entry into the youth justice system. This work is ongoing and reviewed with the Community Safety Team to ensure system join up approach to prevent any escalation of concerns or issues. We believe there is at least 2 active county lines in the city with children being coerced/ forced to collect, hold and deliver drugs. We are working closely with the Police to disrupt these activities and share intelligence.

Knife Crime

There have been some concerns that the number of young people involved in knife crime is escalating. In the last quarter, April to June 2023, the Youth Justice Service have worked with 2 young people arrested for knife crimes with a further 6 young people stopped / arrested in the same period. These young people will be offered evidence based interventions approved by the Youth Justice Board.

Children coming through the prevention / early help pathway are being supported with relationship based approaches, specific programme work completed around knife crime via the knife crime programme we use.

3. Adolescent Safety Framework

Plymouth's Adolescent Safety Framework has been fully operational since January 2022. The Adolescent Safety Framework sets out a coherent contextual safeguarding multi-agency response to extra-familial harm, at practice, operational and strategic levels. The Strategic Missing and Child Exploitation Group continues to lead the development of the Adolescent Safety Framework.

Plymouth has adopted and adapted the approach initially developed in Devon County Council to support regional consistency and its commitment to evidence-informed practice models. The ASF has a strong evidence base and was developed in consultation with Research in Practice and the Contextual Safeguarding Network/ Bedfordshire University.

The ASF offers a single and holistic approach to assessing and responding to; individual children; peer groups; neighbourhood, location or person/ people of concern. The underpinning assessment tool, the 'Safer Me' assessment identifies risks, protective factors and supports corresponding responses through a range of pathways including at the individual level through Safer Me and Safer Me Plus (Child Protection) meetings designed to ensure a strong focus on contextual / extra-familial risks, maximise the participation of the young person and focus on collaboration with them to cultivate safety; peer Group, Neighbourhood (Location) and School Context conferences. These conferences provide a mechanism to coordinate interventions and improve safety in the context of concern.

Work is needed to develop confidence, understanding and confidence within Children's Social Care and within the wider partnership of both the ASF and responses to exploitation and strong leadership and direction was applied during June through the setup of a task and finish group and series of partnership training initiatives, and this work is on-going. The task and finish group will also address the data and intelligence reporting capabilities of the SMCE and MACE

The Strategic Missing & Child Exploitation (SMCE) Sub-group has been established by the Plymouth Safeguarding Children Partnership (PSCP) to:

- Provide strategic oversight, scrutiny, and challenge of the multi-agency response to extra-familial risk.
- Understand how agencies are working together to identify, respond and prevent extra-familial risk.
- Agree and monitor the effectiveness of the Partnership extra-familial risk strategies, policies, and groups, ensuring national requirements and developments are considered and, where appropriate, incorporated.

The Terms of Reference and chairing arrangements for the Operational MACE groups has been recently reviewed and updated with the Chair of the MACE meetings shared between a CSC Service Manager and a Police Inspector. The terms of reference for the Strategic MACE partnership have also been reviewed and this group is now chaired by a Police Chief Inspector.

The MACE meeting focus on offering and seeking assurance that the right children and groups are being supported, and follows a format used in the London Metropolitan area known as VOLT – Victims (children) Offenders (Adults exploiting children) Locations and Themes. This new process has been running for 6 months and at a recent review (January 2023) was praised by the partnership. During the review, it was suggested we widen the VOLT format to include gangs, and this will be implemented in March 2023.

4. How we respond to children who go missing in the city

REACH (Reducing Exploitation and Absence from Care and Home) is a dedicated team providing support to children in Plymouth who are reported missing or at risk of exploitation. The team consists of 1 Senior Professional Youth Worker, 3 Professional Youth Workers, and 3 Family Support Workers.

When a child is reported missing, the team receives information logs from the police. They also receive updates when the child is found. The assigned worker then contacts the child, their parent, caregiver, or social worker to offer and arrange a Return Home Interview (RHI) within 72 hours.

If a child is missing for over 24 hours or on three occasions in a rolling four week period, REACH must notify the allocated social worker and their Team Manager so that a Strategy Discussion can be considered. The child's missing period begins from when they were last seen, not when they were reported as missing to the police.

During the RHI, the team arranges a time and place that is convenient for the child. The purpose is to understand why they went missing, the circumstances surrounding their absence (such as their whereabouts, companions, and substance use), and whether they experienced any harm during their absence. The worker also assesses the child's perception of potential risks and identifies any necessary support from REACH or other teams to prevent future missing incidents. Ongoing risk of exploitation is considered, and the Safer Me assessment is utilised as a tool to support identification and action needed in respect of related concerns. REACH actively participates in city-wide initiatives targeting exploitation, including OpMACE and Daily Intelligence Briefings (DIB).

Since May, we have experienced a reduction in staff with 2 full-time workers leaving. However, there has been an increase in missing incidents, rising from 67 in May to 94 in June. Nevertheless, overall performance has either remained steady or improved. Notably, there has been a significant improvement in meeting our core key performance indicator (RHIs within 72 hours with the child present) for our Children in Care during June.

Indicator	April 23	May 23	June 23
Missing Children (Overall)	33	59	61
Missing Episodes (Overall)	67	90	94
Average missing episodes per child (Overall)	2	1.5	1.5
Missing Children (Children in Care)	14	23	23
Missing Episodes (Children in Care)	40	40	39
Average missing episodes per child (Children in Care)	2.8	1.7	1.7
First Contact made within 72 hours (Overall)	97.7%	95.6%	98.9%
First Contact made within 72 hours (Children in Care)	100%	96.6%	100%
% of return home interviews booked (Overall)	85.5%	83.3%	87.2%
% declined return home interviews (Overall)	4.3%	3.3%	11.7%
% where the RHI is within 72 hours (date of RHI) (Overall)	71%	70%	70.2%
Number where the RHI is within 72 hours (date of RHI) (Overall)	49	63	66
% of return home interviews held within 72 hours where YP attended (Overall)	55.1%	51.1%	57.4%
Number of return home interviews held within 72 hours where YP attended (Overall)	38	46	54

For the last quarter, April 2023 to June 2023 there were 251 missing episodes that related to 153 children (children often have multiple missing episodes in any period). 36 of these children were open on Child in Need plans, 8 open on a Child Protection Plan and 60 were Children in Care.

Over the last 12 months REACH team has also developed an offer for children presenting with Harmful Sexual Behaviours (HSB). This has been pertinent given the overlap in our cohorts of children with HSB accessing support through REACH and Youth Justice Service. We have been able to deliver assessment and intervention for children presenting with peer-on-peer HSB, a risk indicator of children who are exploited or are at risk of exploitation.

During Q1 we identified 28 children as being at medium risk of exploitation, and 10 as being at high risk.

Daily Intelligence Briefings

A Daily Intelligence Briefing (DIB) has recently been introduced attended by the Police, REACH, Adolescent Support Team, Youth Justice Service as well as partners from Education and Health. The DIB looks at children reported missing in the last 24 hours, children still missing over 24 hours (i.e., from previous days), children arrested, and any MACE consultation requests deemed urgent. Partners have praised this response as it ensures that we are proactive in our response to the most vulnerable children in the city.

Conclusion and next steps

Partnership expertise in the City is strong. There is more to do to ensure consistent understanding at the practice and response level across agencies.

The re-energising of the Adolescent Safety Framework and investment in embedding this with confidence and clarity will enable greater consistency of practice and intervention as well as improved visibility of child and thematic information from which improved strategic oversight and operational deployment can follow.

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Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting:	18 July 2023
Title of Report:	Q4 2022/23 Performance Report
Lead Member:	Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader, and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture, Events and Communications)
Lead Strategic Director:	Sharon Muldoon (Director for Childrens Services)
Author:	Paul Stephens
Contact Email:	paul.stephens@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	PSCSS-2022/23(Q4)
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

To share key performance data information related to Children Services (Children, Young People and Family Services and Education, Participation and Skills)

Recommendations and Reasons

To note the attached briefing paper for information and discussion

Alternative options considered and rejected

Not applicable

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

Not applicable

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

For information

Financial Risks

Not applicable

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

Not applicable

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.

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Appendices

*Add rows as required to box below

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		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Briefing report title							
B	Equalities Impact Assessment (if applicable)							

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	CH 0707 23 1042	Leg	LS/0 0001 075/ AC/7 /7/23	Mon Off	Click here to enter text.	HR	Click here to enter text.	Asset s	Click here to enter text.	Strat Proc	Click here to enter text.
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Sharon Muldoon											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 06/07/2023											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Jemima Laing and Councillor Sally Cresswell by email											
Date approved: 07/07/2023											

Q4 2022/23 PERFORMANCE REPORT

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and
Scrutiny Committee

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I. CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILY SERVICES

I.1. Referrals & Re-Referrals

I.1. Referrals & Re-Referrals				Previous Year & Benchmarking			Current Period
Ref	Indicator Name	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Actual	England	Statistical Neighbours	Q4 2022/23
1	Number of referrals received within the last 12 months	3,164	3,616	3,285	537.7 (2021/22)	713.4 (2021/22)	2,351
	Referrals received within the last 12 months - Rate per 10,000 children	598.1	678.5	616.4			441.2
2	Number of re-referrals within 12 months (last 12 months)	772	861	743	21.5% (2021/22)	23.1% (2021/22)	457
	% of re-referrals within 12 months (last 12 months)	24.4%	23.8%	22.6%			19.4%

In the 12 months to the end of quarter four, the Initial Response Teams received 2,351 referrals, this is 934 less than the 12 months to March 2022 and 1,265 less than the 12 months to March 2021. At a rate per 10,000 children (enabling comparisons against other authorities) Plymouth is reporting at 441.2 at the end of quarter four. This is lower than Plymouth's published position for 2021/22 (616.4), lower than statistical neighbours and is currently lower than the England average of 537.7.

The proportion of re-referrals received (where a referral had been received for the same child in the 12 months prior) has seen further improvements. The end of quarter four position was reported at 19.4%, down 3.2 percentage points from Plymouth's published 2021/22. Plymouth is currently at a level lower than the 2021/22 published level for its statistical neighbours and the England average.

The recent Ofsted report (published 30 January 2023) identified two priority actions for the 'Front Door' and these are being progressed through a detailed action plan for this part of the service. We continue our partnership work to support partner agencies to think about the different types of support available in our city whilst monitoring the reduction in referrals to ensure we're providing the right support, at the right time.

I.2. CHILDREN IN NEED

I.2. CHILDREN IN NEED				Previous Year & Benchmarking			Current Period
Ref	Indicator Name	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Actual	England	Statistical Neighbours	Q4 2022/23
3	Number of children subject to a Child In Need Plan (snapshot)	841	1,121	965	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	944
	Children subject to a Child In Need Plan - Rate per 10,000 children	159.0	210.4	181.1	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	177.1

As the table above shows Plymouth's 'Child in Need' caseload (which does not include children subject to Children Protection Plans or Looked after Children) has remained reasonably stable over the last 12 months. The net number of children subject to a Child in Need Plan is currently higher than the level prior to the pandemic but has seen a reduction of 21 children when compared to the end of 2021/22 position.

The number of children subject to a Child In Need Plan is reducing, but there continues to be some pressures including timeliness of assessments which is currently being addressed. The service continues to review all children in need to ensure the right support at the right time for families. The additional resource within the Initial Response Teams to provide early intervention for families has not yet proven to reduce the number of children transferring to the Children Social Work service.

Through its recent quality assurance work, the service has identified seven areas of practice improvement and is currently working on structured plans to support practice development and Team Manager over sight in the Initial Response Team and in Children Social Work to ensure robust, timely care planning for children. The seven areas of practice improvement are:

1. Assessment
2. Plans
3. Supervision
4. Management Oversight
5. Lived experience and voice of the child
6. Domestic Abuse
7. Neglect

1.3. CHILDREN SUBJECT TO A CHILD PROTECTION PLAN

1.3. CHILDREN SUBJECT TO A CHILD PROTECTION PLAN				Previous Year & Benchmarking		Current Period	
Ref	Indicator Name	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Actual	England	Statistical Neighbours	Q4 2022/23
4	Number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan (Snapshot)	310	333	326	42.1 (2021/22)	53.1 (2021/22)	233
	Children subject to a Child Protection Plan - Rate per 10,000 children	58.6	62.5	61.2			43.7
5	Category of abuse for current Child Protection Plan: Neglect	53.2% (165)	50.2% (167)	51.5% (168)	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	45.9% (107)
	Category of abuse for current Child Protection Plan: Physical Abuse	8.7% (27)	7.8% (26)	7.7% (25)	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	6.4% (15)
	Category of abuse for current Child Protection Plan: Sexual Abuse	3.9% (12)	5.1% (17)	3.7% (12)	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	4.3% (10)
	Category of abuse for current Child Protection Plan: Emotional Abuse	34.2% (106)	36.9% (123)	37.1% (121)	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	43.3% (101)
6	% of children subject to multiple child protection plans - Within lifetime of the child (new plans starting in last 12 months)	28.8% (96)	27.4% (90)	27.5% (103)	23.3% (2021/22)	22.9% (2021/22)	25.7% (65)

At the end of quarter four (31 March 2023) there were 233 children who were subject to a Child Protection Plan. This is a rate of 43.7 children per 10,000 children, which is lower than the published 2021/22 rate of 61.2. The rate per 10,000 children is 1.6 above the England average and remains lower than our Statistical Neighbour average.

The proportion of children who became subject to a Child Protection Plan within the 12 months up to quarter four (April 2022 to March 2023), who have been on a previous Child Protection Plan in their lifetime was reported at 25.7%.

This is the lowest level reported since for the last four year end positions but we wish to improve further. During the last 12 months, 65 children/young people have started repeated Child Protection Plans (within their lifetime), this is an improvement on the 103 reported for the reporting year of 2021/22. The current percentage is higher than statistical neighbours and the England average. All local authorities experience repeat child protection planning processes for children.

There is a strong focus on requests for repeat Child Protection Plans with greater oversight by both the Safeguarding Service Manager and the requesting social workers' Service Manager. This provides more consistency and further opportunity to have reflective discussions to ensure that the care plan is right for these children, or whether we can work differently with the family.

This area for improvement is included within the remit of our ongoing Sector Led Improvement Partnership (SLIP) work with Dorset and is the subject of a Practice Learning review by the new service manager.

The service is working with the Plymouth Safeguarding Partnership Board to roll out the 'NSPCC Neglect Graded Care Profile 2 Assessment Tool' to support all staff and volunteers working across the system to identify and improve support for children and young people who may experience neglect.

1.4. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (ALSO REFERRED TO AS CHILDREN IN CARE)

Ref	Indicator Name	Previous Year & Benchmarking			Current Period		
		2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Actual	England	Statistical Neighbours	Q4 2022/23
7	Number of children subject to a Care Plan - Looked After Children (Snapshot)	434	485	490	70.0 (2021/22)	94.5 (2021/22)	501
	Children subject to a Care Plan - Looked After Children - Rate per 10,000 children	82.0	91.0	91.9			94.0
8	% of Looked After Children placed outside of the city of Plymouth (i.e., the placement is not within PL1 to PL7 or PL9)	34.9%	39.0%	38.0%	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	39.9%
9	Placement Type: Family Placement (fostering or connected carers)	326	336	325	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	339

Placement Type: Children's Homes & Residential Care	36	53	56	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	57
Placement Type: Hostels & other Supportive accommodation	23	31	33	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	48
Placement Type: Lodgings or Independent living (16+)	18	12	16	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	x
Placement Type: Other Placement	x	x	x	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	5
Placement Type: Placed for Adoption	12	25	24	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	18
Placement Type: Placed with Parents	13	25	28	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	32
Placement Type: Other accommodation - NHS, Family Centres, Parent & Child	5	6	7	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	x
Placement Type: Secure Units	x	x	x	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	x

On the 31 March 2023, there were 501 children/young people who are children in care. This is an increase of 11 children on the published figure for 2021/22 and 16 more children than the end of 2020/21 position. Unlike the levels of children subject to a Child in Need Plan and Child Protection Plan that have seen reductions, the net number of children in care has plateaued at around 490 to 500.

301 (60.1%) of children in care are placed within the city, the remaining 200 children (39.9%) placed outside of the city. This measure is simply based on the postcode of the child's placement address. Those not within PL1 to PL7 or PL9 are considered outside of the city. For example, PL12 refers to Saltash in Cornwall (potentially be less than a mile from a child's home address), but it is outside of Plymouth. Using information being developed, approximately 73.5% of children in care are placed within 20 miles of their home address.

We're strongly focused on ensuring that children and young people at risk of care are provided with a supportive response so they can remain with their families if possible. We know that this is not working well enough and as such is under review for further development. This work sits alongside the progression of offering intensive support for children to be reunited with their immediate or extended family network where this is in their best interest. We are developing our services so children can benefit from placement choice and reduce our use of residential care, keeping children in family homes wherever possible.

Please note: where the number of children is below five, the actual figure is suppressed and shows 'x'.

1.5. CARE EXPERIENCED (ALSO REFERRED TO AS CARE LEAVERS)

Ref	Indicator Name	Previous Year & Benchmarking					Current Period
		2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	2021/22 Actual	England	Statistical Neighbours	Q4 2022/23
10	% of Care Experienced young people in Unsuitable Accommodation (Statutory Service (aged 18 to 20))	Not available	9.6% (17/178)	6.1% (11/181)	12.0% (2021/22)	11.6% (2021/22)	4.1% (8/192)
11	% of Care Experienced young people in Education, Employment and Training (Statutory Service (EET aged 18 to 20))	Not available	52.8% (94/178)	56.4% (102/181)	55.0% (2021/22)	55.7% (2021/22)	50.0% (96/192)

Plymouth's quarter four figure shows that the proportion of Care Experienced young people in unsuitable accommodation was at a lower level than the statistical neighbour and England averages (as published 2021/22).

Those in Education, Employment and Training were reported at a level circa 5.0 to 5.7 percentage points lower than our comparators.

In May 2023, PCC voted to treat care experience as a protected characteristic. This has built on the PCC Care Leaver Covenant signed in June 2022 and strengthened the expectation on each directorate to create or increase opportunities for care experienced individuals to access work experience, apprenticeships or employment where their care experience may have impacted educational outcomes.

The increase in Personal Advisors in the service is supporting this work and the plan to increase social worker capacity in the permanence service along with a stronger practice focus, will support earlier stability and better education outcomes for all children in care.

Our hypothesis is that intensive and sustained support, motivation and reward will increase the preparedness of young people to find their pathway back into education, training or employment and to sustain this in the longer term. To test this hypothesis, we have designed a 'Seeking Education, Employment and Training' (SEET) pilot incentive scheme for Care Leavers which will be piloted in the autumn of 2023.

Children's Services are in the process finalising the city wide 'NEET' strategy called 'Unlocking the Plymouth's potential', with the aim of moving young people from 'NEET' to 'SEET' through to EET'.

The directorate is working closely with the Skills for Plymouth and SEND partners response to ensure all care experienced young people have the opportunity to engage in education, training and employment. A SEND Employability Fast Track Residential scheme has been developed in response to young people's feedback and will be piloted in July/August 2023 with a cohort of 10 care leavers (aged 19-24).

2. EDUCATION, PARTICIPATION AND SKILLS

2.1. OFSTED OUTCOMES

Ref	Indicator Name	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Previous Year & Benchmarking			Current Period
				2021/22 Actual	England	Statistical Neighbours	Q4 2022/23
1	% of all schools judged by Ofsted as good or outstanding	Inspections paused due to COVID	Inspections paused due to COVID	76.0%	89.0% (December 2022)	84.6% (December 2022)	76.5%
2	% of pupils attending Plymouth schools judged by Ofsted as good or outstanding	Inspections paused due to COVID	Inspections paused due to COVID	77.1%	Not benchmarked	Not benchmarked	81.0%

There are 98 state-funded schools in Plymouth and at the end of quarter four, 81.0% of pupils are attending a school judged as good or outstanding in our city; this is an increase of 2.2 percentage points on the previous quarter. When we break this figure down in to the rate of pupils attending primary or secondary schools, we can see that 85.0% of pupils are attending primary schools rated as good or better (compared to 84.3% at the end of quarter three) and 74.0% of pupils are attending secondary schools that are rated as good or better (compared to 73.8% at the end of quarter three).

The phase improvement partnerships, including Early Years, Primary/Special, and Plymouth Strategic (Secondary) Education Group, continue to provide momentum for the place based approach for school improvements, reporting directly to the Plymouth Education Board and the Regional Director Overall the proportion of actual schools rated good or better by Ofsted has increased to 76.5% by March 2023 (end of Q4 2022/23).

2.2. ABSENCE MONITORING

Ref	Indicator Name	2019/20 Actual	2020/21 Actual	Previous Year & Benchmarking			Current Period
				2021/22 Actual	England	Statistical Neighbours	2021/22
3	% of overall absence in all schools	Not reported	4.9%	8.8%	7.6%	-	8.8%
4	% of persistent absence (less than 90% attendance) in all schools	Not reported	12.9%	28.1%	22.5%	-	28.1%
5	% of persistent absence (less than 90% attendance) of pupils with Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs)	Not reported	38.8%	45.0%	36.9%	-	45.0%

Previously, the information provided in this report was from the "Attendance in education settings during the COVID-19 pandemic" national survey. The survey was introduced at speed to obtain attendance data in response to the pandemic and replaced the school absence reporting pre-COVID. This survey is now requested fortnightly and is not mandatory. Schools are now re-focused back to school absence reporting.

The information provided above is provided from the Department for Education "Absence rates" collection. This is a statutory return completed on a termly basis. The latest available report is for the 2021/22 full academic year.

Local unvalidated data shows that the overall absence rate at the end of quarter four has reduced to 8.2%; persistent absence rate of all pupils has reduced to 24.4% and the persistent absence rate for pupils with an EHCP reduced to 41.0%. The indication is that this will have a positive impact on our end of 2022/23 academic year performance.

The strengthened education improvement partnership between the local authority, trusts and schools continues to provide momentum for the place based school improvement approach reporting directly to the Plymouth Education Board and the Regional Director.

The new national Attendance expectations for local authorities, multi academy trusts and schools is reshaping the work done by each of these partners with regard to attendance. Plymouth City Council are working with schools to implement this for September 2023. The new duties focus the work of school and families towards direct engagement with their families and focuses the work of the local authority towards strategic oversight, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups and children with SEND.

There is a city wide campaign set up for the start of the Autumn term 2023 which will promote strong attendance. Attendance is a key focus for all schools. Multi agency work to support those pupils who are severely absent is a focus for the locality work.

2.3. EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

2.3. EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING				Previous Year & Benchmarking			Current Period
Ref	Indicator Name	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	England	Statistical Neighbours	Q4 2022/23
6	% of 16 and 17 year olds in Education, Employment and Training	92.1%	92.1%	91.1%	92.5% (Q4 2022/23)	Not benchmarked	89.8%
7	% of 16 and 17 year olds with SEND in Education, Employment and Training	87.7%	83.1%	83.2%	88.7% (Q4 2022/23)	Not benchmarked	84.8%

At the end of quarter four 2022/23, 92.5% of 16 and 17 year olds were participating in Education, Employment, and/or Training (EET). This is 1.1 percentage points higher than the EET figures at the end of quarter four in 2021/22 (91.4%).

At the end of quarter four 2022/23, 84.8% of young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities are in education, training and/or employment. This is 1.9 percentage points above the EET figures reported at the end of 2021/22 (82.9%).

This is an area of focus for the Participation and Skills areas of EPS in Plymouth City Council. A number of initiatives are under way to extend the options available to 16-25 year olds with EHCPs which includes growing the number of Supported Internships, Supported Apprenticeships, paid and

unpaid volunteering placements and the newly developed 'Your Future' 5 Work readiness programme which includes a one week residential delivered by On Course South West.

2.4. KEY STAGE 4 OUTCOMES

Ref	Indicator Name	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	Previous Year & Benchmarking			Current Period
				2021 Actual	England	Statistical Neighbours	2022 Actual
8	Key Stage 4 - % of pupils achieving 5+ in English and Maths	37.6%	47.1%	51.9%	46.6% (2022)	47.7% (2022)	45.9%
9	Key Stage 4 - Average Attainment 8 score	43.7 points	48.5 points	50.5 Points	47.1 points (2022)	47.7 points (2022)	47.5 points

The 2021/22 academic year saw the return of the summer exam series, after they had been cancelled in 2020 and 2021 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of the transition back to the summer exam series, adaptations were made to the exams (including advance information) and the approach to grading for 2022 exams broadly reflected a midpoint between results in 2019 and 2021. In 2021/22, 45.9% of pupils achieved the 'basics' (5+ in English and Maths). This sits below the national (46.6%), statistical neighbour (47.7%) and regional (49.2%) averages published by the Department for Education. The average Attainment 8 Score was 47.5 points this is above the national average of 47.1 points but below the statistical neighbour (47.7 points) and regional (48.7 points) averages. The strengthened education improvement partnerships continue to provide momentum for the place based approach for secondary school improvements, reporting directly to the Plymouth Education Board and the Regional Director.

3. ANNEX 1: INDICATOR DEFINITIONS

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILY SERVICES
<p>Referrals & Re-Referrals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where concerns about a child have been raised to Children, Young People and Family Services, once the initial contact has been screened by our multi-agency hub, if appropriate, referrals will be accepted. The rate of referrals per 10,000 children is based on the number of referrals received in the 12 month period divided by the number of children aged 0 to 17 in the city (ONS estimate this at 53,291 for Mid-2021) multiplied by 10,000. This gives a rate that can be benchmarked against other authorities. A re-referral is where we receive a new referral for a child within 12 months of a previous referral. The indicator is based on a rolling 12 month period (e.g., 01 December to 30 November).
<p>Children In Need - CIN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the purposes of this report, the number of children within the CIN cohort are those that have been assessed as being in need (but not CP or LAC) and the number of children who are in the process of being assessed to understand their level of need. The rate of CIN per 10,000 children is based on the number of CIN at the end of the period divided by the number of children aged 0 to 17 in the city (ONS estimate this at 53,291 for Mid-2021) multiplied by 10,000. This gives a rate that can be benchmarked against other authorities.
<p>Children subject to a Child Protection Plan - CP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Child Protection Plan should assess the likelihood of the child suffering harm and look at ways that the child can be protected. It should decide upon short and long term aims to reduce the likelihood of harm to the child and to protect the child's welfare, clarify people's responsibilities and actions to be taken; and outline ways of monitoring and evaluating progress. The rate of CP per 10,000 children is based on the number of CP at the end of the period divided by the number of children aged 0 to 17 in the city (ONS estimate this at 53,291 for Mid-2021) multiplied by 10,000. This gives a rate that can be benchmarked against other authorities. There are four categories for a Child Protection Plan; Neglect, Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse and Emotional Abuse. The table shows the number and proportion under each category. The % of children subject to multiple child protection plans is the proportion of new Child Protection Plan starting within the period, that are for a child who has had a previous Child Protection Plan at any time in the child's lifetime. The indicator is based on a rolling 12 month period (e.g., the proportion of new Child Protection Plans that started in 01 December to 30 November).
<p>Looked After Children (also referred to as Children In Care) - LAC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The table shows the number of Looked After Children at the end of the reporting period. The rate of LAC per 10,000 children is based on the number of LAC at the end of the period divided by the number of children aged 0 to 17 in the city (ONS estimate this at 53,291 for Mid-2021) multiplied by 10,000. This gives a rate that can be benchmarked against other authorities. The proportion of placements outside of the city is simply based on the postcode of the child's placement address. Those not within PL1 to PL7 or PL9 are considered outside of the city. For example, PL12 refers to Saltash in Cornwall, which could potentially be less than a mile from a child's home address, but it is outside of Plymouth. The figures provided for the placement types follow the Department for Education and Ofsted definitions, grouping multiple types into nine groups (for example, Family Placements contains six different placement types).
<p>Care Experienced (also referred to as Care Leavers)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is deemed as 'Unsuitable' accommodation has been defined by the Department for Education. The following are examples of unsuitable accommodation: Bed and Breakfast / Emergency Accommodation, Prison, Temporary/No fixed abode/Street Homeless, Unknown/Not in Touch. The proportion of Care Experienced young people in Education, Employment and Training is based on our statutory service and therefore covers those young people ages 18 to 20. Whilst we work with Care Experienced young people aged 21 to 24, support is optional for the young person. Please note: The figures are likely to be different to the published Department for Education figures as they look at the age of the young person during the year at the period around their birthday and not at a specific snapshot.

EDUCATION, PARTICIPATION AND SKILLS**Ofsted Outcomes**

Ofsted is responsible for inspecting schools and other social care services for children. There are four possible Ofsted ratings that a school can receive; Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement or Inadequate. These Ofsted grades are based on inspectors' judgements across four Ofsted categories – quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development of pupils, leadership and management as set out under the [Ofsted framework 2019](#).

Absence Monitoring

It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and therefore at all stages of improving attendance, schools and partners should work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers to attendance as set out in [Working together to improve school attendance](#).

Education, Employment or Training

The law requires all young people in England to continue in education or training until at least their 18th birthday, although in practice the vast majority of young people continue until the end of the academic year in which they turn 18. The responsibility and accountability for young people not in education, employment and training (NEET) lies with the local authority and is set out in [Participation Statutory Guidance](#). The Department for Education (DfE) monitors the performance of local authorities in delivering their duties, and specifically in their tracking and supporting of 16 and 17 year olds.

Key Stage Four Outcomes

Key Stage 4 (KS4) is the legal term for the two years of school education which incorporate GCSEs (General Certificate of Secondary Education). During this time, pupils must follow relevant programmes of study from the National Curriculum. At the end of this stage, pupils are entered for a range of external examinations. Following a phased introduction since 2017, GCSEs taken in 2020 and 2021 are all reformed GCSEs graded on a 9-1 scale. Two particular measures are commonly reported on at key stage four:

- percentage pupils achieving 5-9s at English and Maths GCSE in the city, and
- average Attainment 8 scores achieved by schools across the city.

Attainment 8 is calculated by adding together pupils' highest scores across eight government approved school subjects. While these numbers are not made publicly available on a pupil-by-pupil basis, scores taken from across a school year group are averaged to produce a school's overall score. The eight subjects are divided into three categories, called "buckets":

- Bucket 1 - English and maths, which are worth double marks, but English will only count for double marks if both English literature and English (i.e., English language) are taken. The higher grade of the two is used;
- Bucket 2 – The top three scores from the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects taken, i.e. sciences, computer science, history, geography and languages;
- Bucket 3 – The top three scores from remaining EBacc subjects or other government approved qualifications (e.g., other GCSEs or Level 2 Certificates in some technical subjects).

The grades are converted into points, put through a formula and finally out comes the school's Attainment 8 score.

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Audit and Governance Committee



Date of meeting:	20 March 2023
Title of Report:	Risk Management Monitoring Report / Scrutiny Update – March 2023
Lead Member:	Councillor Mark Shayer (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Economy)
Lead Strategic Director:	Giles Perritt (Assistant Chief Executive)
Author:	Ross Jago, Head of Governance Performance and Risk
Contact Email:	Ross.jago@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	RS/RMMar22
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

The attached report provides an update on the Strategic register for the organisation.

Strategic Risk Register

The total number of strategic risks being managed is 22. Six risks have a rating of Red; these relate to responding to Council expenditure, the growing volume and complexity of demand on the Children, Young People and Families Service, IT supply chain constraints, cyber-attacks, lack of adult social care workforce, accounting methods concerning a pension transaction and the Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Approval Body.

Risk number 17 “Risk of failure to deliver the range of housing to meet Plymouth’s need” has had its risk score decreased to 9 and is now green.

Risk number 6 “Risk to vulnerable children and young people in the care system” has been reported as green at the last two reviews and now is considered sufficiently mitigated and has been moved to the Operational Register.

Risk @ Scrutiny

The Performance Finance and Customer Focus, Education and Children’s Social Care, Health and Adult Care and the Growth and Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee Overview all considered risks pertinent to the committee’s terms or reference in the most recent cycle of meetings. The risk register also formed part of budget scrutiny recommendations. There were no specific recommendations resulting as initial reviews of the risk register have resulted in items scheduled for future meetings.

Recommendations and Reasons

The Audit and Governance Committee is recommended to note the current position with regard to the Strategic Risk Register.

Reason: As part of the Committee's responsibility for monitoring the implementation and ongoing processes for identifying and managing key risks of the authority.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Effective risk management processes are an essential element of internal control and as such are an important element of good corporate governance. For this reason alternative options are not applicable.

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The Strategic Risk and Opportunity Register includes links to the Corporate Plan priorities – monitoring of control action for strategic risks therefore contributes to the delivery of the council's core objectives.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

None arising specifically from this report but control measures identified in Directorate Operational Risk and Opportunity Registers could have financial or resource implications.

Financial Risks

None arising specifically from this report but control measures identified in Directorate Operational Risk and Opportunity Registers could have financial or resource implications.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

Failure to deliver against actions in the Climate Emergency Action Plan and Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan are included on risk registers.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

** When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

The risk registers specifically supports the council's overall governance arrangements.

Appendices

**Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Risk Monitoring Report							

Background papers:

**Add rows as required to box below*

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
	If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	pl.22. 23.3 72	Leg	EJ/11 23/14 .3.23(1)	Mon Off		HR		Assets		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Giles Perritt											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 15/03/2023											
Cabinet Member approval - Councillor Mark Shayer											
Date agreed: 15/03/2023											

APPENDIX A - RISK MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT

March 2023



Introduction

This report provides the position with regard to the strategic and operational risk registers.

The next formal review of the strategic risk and opportunity register will take place in June 2023, the operational risk register will also be reviewed at this time. Risk registers are however a live document and will be regularly discussed at Directorate Management Teams.

Strategic Risk Register – Monitoring Summary

The updated strategic risk register is summarised below. The register offers additional information including detail on Key Controls and Sources of Assurance and how progress against mitigation will be measured.

Strategic Risk Register

During this review of the strategic risk register there has been three new risks added, bringing the total strategic risks managed to 22. The new risk relates to funding and governance issues in relation to the Peninsula Sub-National Transport Body and the creation of a Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDs) Approval body. In addition “Response to Ofsted Focused Visit to the Front Door does not result in required improvements” has been added to the register. It is currently reported as amber and will remain on the strategic register until further visits by OFSTED, anticipated to be within the next twelve months.

In total there are six red risks. These are shown below;

1	The Council's expenditure exceeds the resources available to meet that expenditure within the medium term financial plan period (2022/23-2025/26).
2	Failure to meet statutory duties due to growing volume and complexity of demand for children's social care services
3	A Cyber-attack renders all of the Council's IT inaccessible for an extended period of time therefore impacting on the Council's ability to deliver services.
4	IT supply chain constraints results in increased costs and extended lead times for equipment.
5	Lack of adult social care workforce and growing fragility of Adult Social Care Market leading to inability of Authority to meet statutory duties and meet eligible need.
20	Lawful Accounting Treatments in Respect of the Pensions Fund
21	The Government intends to implement Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act in 2024 and put in place a Suds Approval Body (SAB). Schedule 3 provides a This is highly likely to be introduced from 2024 and will be a risk for the local authority from 2024/2025. No provision has yet been made in the MTFP (which is under review).

Risk Register No.	Description	Mitigation	Previous risk rating	Current risk rating	Risk Owner
1	The Council's expenditure exceeds the resources available to meet that expenditure within the medium term financial plan period (2022/23-2025/26).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council has also taken the following steps to adopt a 5 year MTFP and has adopted a system of monthly financial reporting to Directorate Management Teams, Corporate Management Team, and Cabinet and Quarterly to Full Council, with monthly consideration of directorate level financial issues at each Scrutiny Committee. The Council has introduced a system of detailed monitoring of the delivery of savings targets so that a view is published monthly in Cabinet reports. This will also include any significant issues which emerge from the cost of living crisis. The Council also holds an annual review of fees and charges and has annual and ongoing programmes of work to identify and understand potential savings opportunities. The governance system of the Council - as unpacked in the Annual Governance Statement comprise a rigorous system of financial control. It was of critical importance to the Council and City that CMT and Cabinet found mitigations to reduce the costs of the Council to fully mitigate the forecast budget shortfalls in future years. The Deputy leader/PFH for Finance is meeting each week with S151 Officer and Strategic Director for Customer & Corporate Services to review the 2022/23 Monitoring position. In year, at Month 10 the forecast overspend has reduced to £1.318m. At the Full Council meeting 27 February 2023, the revenue and capital budget 2023/24 was approved, including setting the Council Tax charge for 	25	25	David Northey

		the financial year. The S151 Officer is now ensuring the 2023/24 budget allocations and resource assumptions are incorporated into the 5 year MTFP. Further refinement of the Capital Programme and reports are being reviewed.			
2	Failure to meet statutory duties due to growing volume and complexity of demand for children's social care services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional social work capacity agreed to support effectively delivery of casework. Recruitment is ongoing to some of these posts on a permanent basis. • Fostering Project Delivery Plan in place to increase foster carer resource to reduce costs. • High cost placement review takes place on a frequent basis each month to ensure all costs closely monitored and reduced. • Ongoing rigour in decision making to manage demand via Placement Panel which takes place weekly and overseen by a dedicated service manager with responsibility for reducing costs of individual placements and ensuring timely step down. • Ensuring action plan milestones are reached via monthly monitoring at Programme Board/Finance DMT. • Service redesign is occurring to ensure an operating model that supports much earlier intervention and prevention of children coming into care wherever possible. 	20	20	Sharon Muldoon
3	A Cyber-attack renders all of the Council's IT inaccessible for an extended period of time therefore impacting on the Councils ability to deliver services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGA Cyber 360 review completed in March - review findings and recommendations due in April. • Cyber 360 recommendations will be included in the Cyber improvements plan overseen by the Cyber Governance Board and Optimising our Assets Programme Board • Cyber security briefing for SLT planned in April to raise awareness further of the threat and requirements of staff to reduce the risk of attack. Hackney Council are due to speak about their experience recovering from a major ransomware attack • Cyber security awareness week planned for May 23, including a business continuity exercise, Member awareness training and staff briefings 	20	20	Andy Ralphs

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance, Customer and Performance Scrutiny Panel reviewed PCC cyber security and readiness in February and have requested a further update (date TBC) IT Health check (previously PSN certification) testing to take place in March, remediation to be included into the Cyber improvements plan 			
4	IT supply chain constraints results in increased costs and extended lead times for equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PCC to pre plan as far ahead as possible on any purchases of technical goods or services, notifying Delt during the planning phase of such work. Delt have been provided with the Capital plan for 2022/23 Delt engagement with current suppliers and escalation of any changes to current prices / lead times Assessment of alternative suppliers 	20	20	Andy Ralphs
5	Lack of adult social care workforce and growing fragility of Adult Social Care Market leading to inability of Authority to meet statutory duties and meet eligible need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health & ASC Winter Plan which will bring in additional elements of contingency planning Establishment of Community Capacity Command Centre to provide greater oversight of market and capacity Local Authority has set up a Care Company to ensure continuity of provision in the event of market failure Care Home liaison work being undertaken by Livewell Southwest, to increase levels of support to Residential and Nursing care marker Risk to be continued to be monitored through contract monitoring and market intelligence Supporting market wide workforce recruitment / retention across residential and domiciliary sector Remodelled bed bureau launched to support Care Homes to manage complex discharge cases Incentive payments to workforce. Managing risks for the domiciliary care market 	20	20	Anna Coles

6	Insufficient economic performance to sustain the City's economy and growth plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are seeking to maximise all opportunities to secure additional funding for economic initiatives including focussing on creating new jobs in the Blue and green economy. • The initiatives include: The Plymouth and South Devon Freeport, National Marine Park. • We will continue to maximise all funding opportunities for our city region. 	16	16	Anthony Payne
7	Ongoing COVID-19 rates (with potential for further peaks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The key mitigation of vaccination has now reached around 85% (one or more doses) of those eligible. • There have been reductions in the mitigations (reduced testing, support payments and legal need for self-isolation) and this has created uncertainty around case rates and the risk of delayed detection of new variants. • The longstanding advice to the general public remains in place and is re-emphasised at regular intervals. 	16	16	Ruth Harrell
8	Failure to reduce Health Inequalities will mean our poorest residents continue to live shorter lives as well as more years in ill health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent action across the Council is required at many levels to tackle inequalities by addressing the wider detriments of health. • Failures of NHS England to provide required capital funding for the West End Health Hub (Cavell Centre) is likely to reinforce inequalities experienced within the City Centre area, the Council continues to lobby government in an attempt to resolve this issue. • The Public Health Team and partners continue to work with employers and schools to influence healthier lifestyles. • The team continues to embed and promote the national One You campaign across the city. • The 'five ways to wellbeing' has been adopted across the City as the single approach to improving mental wellbeing. The work that started in year five on 'people connecting through food' is ongoing with a number of new initiatives developed. • Subsequently, Thrive Plymouth Year seven was launched in May 2022 with a focus on Listening and Reconnecting. 	16	16	Ruth Harrell

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Local Care Partnership priorities are being refreshed and includes tackling inequalities. Both of these routes bring partners together to understand the issues and the steps needed to tackle health inequalities in the City. In addition to this, to support the work of the Council's cross-party Child Poverty Action Plan Working Group, a high level review of the evidence of the impacts of the pandemic on the mental wellbeing of children and young people has been carried out. As already stated, the primary role of the ODPH and the Public Health Team in particular is now to minimise the impact of COVID-19 in the city therefore protecting most deprived communities from further negative impacts. 			
9	Increased and sustained pressure on Adult Social Care budget due to increased costs of providing care, growing numbers of people and increased complexity of need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Real time management information Established Review Programme Commissioning Intentions and Commissioning Activity to develop new models of care Budget containment meetings in place Focus on reviews and reablement to right size packages of care including focused work on 18 to 64's Emergency Plan to cover need to prioritise critical services 	16	16	Anna Coles
10	Adult Social Care (ASC) Reforms - There are a number of reforms to ASC that have created significant financial uncertainty in terms of being able to accurately understand the cost, volume and funding that will be made available to deliver these reforms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This risk will continue to be monitored closely as the reform programme progresses. We will assess the impact of Charging reforms on 'trailblazer' local authorities who are early adopters of these reforms. We will continue cost of care exercises locally, including working with our local care market to better understand impact on finance and resources We will continue engagement with Local Government Agency and regional and national groups (such as ADASS) to determine approach to managing all reforms. We will continue to seek to understand impacts of all reforms through our established reform programmes, and will consider potential use of Offers and Asks due to cost of new burdens on the service. 	16	16	Anna Coles

11	The Council having insufficient workforce capacity and resilience to deliver the required range of services to meet statutory obligations and administration priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted support for Children Services – resourcing and capacity • Grading review • Review of People Strategy for 2024 • Recruiting to key chief officer roles • Reviewing Recruitment and retention strategy • Improving induction processes • Reviewing market factor supplements • Support for employee wellbeing 	15	15	Andy Ralphs
12	The Council not meeting its obligation to keep data secure by failing to adhere to Data Protection Act 2018 Regulations results in loss of trust in the Council and/or financial penalty from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued roll out staff awareness training to all staff. • Implement greater reporting consistency within directorates. • Implement improved incident analysis within the Service Desk. • Improved contract management with partners. • Improve Privacy notice templates and ensure all gaps are addressed • Standardised breach management processes distributed to key staff. • Reviewed policies to be communicated to all staff 	15	15	Andy Ralphs
13	Sustainability of School Improvement Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plymouth Education Board (PEB) (and sub groups) has been reviewed with the new Board started, strengthening education partnership. School Causing Concern procedure has been reviewed and strengthened. • These have lead to a partnership of distinct interventions to drive improvement and raise achievement. • Cause for concern meetings, Early Years Board, Primary and Special School Partnership, Inclusion Strategy Board have added strength to the work governed by PEB. • Proposed Inclusion Mark for the City to celebrate inclusion. • The Plymouth Standards Partnership Recovery & Improvement Plan: A key priority is work to support disadvantaged pupils. The work of the Plymouth Commission has been extended to focus on attainment for secondary aged pupils and school improvement. Schools have been offered a catch up premium of £80 per pupils for most schools, to assist with programmes of learning to support pupils who require additional support 	15	15	Sharon Muldoon

		following Covid. Schools have been sent a survey to confirm how this has been spent and the effectiveness of any programmes introduced. Summer 2021 GCSE, AS and A level were teacher assessed with the reintroduction of exams in 2022. Initial unvalidated indications are that 2022 examination outcomes are very positive and show an improving Plymouth picture against national benchmarks.			
14	The Council not meeting its legal obligations regarding the health, safety and wellbeing of its workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing of risk assessments and DSE assessments to ensure compliance • Review of mandatory training to ensure compliance • Targeted audits across the council • IOSH for senior managers • Development at SLT and Team Plymouth 	15	15	Andy Ralphs
15	Risk of financial impact of delivering proposed changes to Waste Services as set out in the Government's Draft Environment Bill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council have partnered with the Waste Industry body WRAP to jointly commission external support to assess the likely impacts and opportunities of the Environment Act. The funding for this work has been wholly met by DEFRA. The initial report was completed with broadly inconclusive findings. The scope of ongoing work is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To understand the implications of, and ensure the Council meets, the government's requirements as proposed in the Resources & Waste Strategy ○ To help inform the future design of the Council's household waste collection service and understand the implications in terms of reprocessing infrastructure ○ To understand the likely impact that changes to the current household waste collection service will have on the Council's recycling performance ○ To consider where operational efficiencies can be achieved whilst still delivering a service that meets the needs of its residents and allows the Council to maintain high levels of customer satisfaction ○ To appraise whether existing waste management infrastructure and assets in Plymouth, and the surrounding area, are likely to be sufficient for future 	12	12	Anthony Payne

		requirements; and if they are deemed not to be then to provide options to inform the Council's waste strategy and spatial planning.			
16	Risk of failing to meet carbon reduction targets to reach net zero by 2030.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 1, 2 and 3 CCRPs and CEAPs have been prepared to date, covering the period 2020-2022. The focus of the CCRP is on the things in the direct control of the City Council; the focus of the CEAP is on the wider things the Council is able to influence as well as some of the climate actions of City partners. The Climate Emergency strategy and action plan process is currently under review, with a view to making revisions from 2023, providing a more strategic approach. Growth and Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive 6 monthly performance updates 	12	12	Anthony Payne
17	Risk of failing to deliver the range of housing to meet Plymouth's need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic Land Review completed and released 50 housing sites to the market. Established Housing Investment Fund in Plan for Homes 3 to support interventions to unlock housing delivery. Working with Homes England to develop a Placed Based Strategic Partnership to unlock and deliver a pipeline of housing sites, support City Centre renaissance and to help align Government funding with housing site opportunities. Proposal to establish a tripartite partnership between DLUHC, HE and PCC/S&WD with the vision to transform the pace and quality of housing provision to fully meet housing need including the 35% urban uplift. Work with Homes England has led to agreed solutions and Deeds of Variations on four legacy sites to unlock delivery. Launched the Plymouth Eco-Homes Programme to support building a pipeline of over 250 low-carbon and net-zero homes across Plymouth. Embarking on our Direct Delivery of new homes to drive up good design, quality and sustainable living, and identifying a pipeline of future sites to support our direct delivery ambitions. 	12	9	Anthony Payne

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed two Housing Partnership Agreements with key Housing Association Partners to maximise their investment and delivery in the city. Considering site acquisitions and provided funding to help unlock stalled JLP sites. Reviews of JLP sites completed and monitored, with delivery strategies being implemented. Secured £2.2m Brownfield Land Release Funding to help unlock 325 affordable homes on PCC owned land. Ongoing innovation to improve the proactive and fast track approach to planning to deliver housing. Monitoring development activity in the construction sector to understand the effect of COVID-19 on housebuilding. We will manage the 5 year land supply position to ensure that decisions on sites are taken using a balanced and objective assessment of market conditions. We will work with DLUHC and Homes England. Continuing to bring long term empty homes back into use. 			
18	Risk to vulnerable children and young people in the care system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to drive forward change across the partnership in relation to whole family working, engagement with the Early Help Assessment Tool process, data exchange and achieving the outcomes required within the Troubled Families Outcomes Plan. 	6	6	Moved to operational register.
19	Viability of commercial bus operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council continues to pay concession fare reimbursement above actual level of travel, although this is reducing in line with Government guidance by 5% every 2 months until such time it is less than reimbursement based on actual trips. To address loss of commercial services from 4th September, a virement from concession fares reimbursement budget to non-commercial services budget of £557K in 23/24 to pay for non-commercial services secured through competitive tender and enable all areas of Plymouth to continue to have a bus service, at least on Mondays to Fridays. To make the budget go as far as possible, routes have been redesigned where possible to be able to use developer 	15	15	Anthony Payne

		<p>contributions to part or wholly fund some non-commercial routes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schemes continue to delivered through the Transport Capital Programme to encourage patronage returning to pre-Pandemic levels as soon as possible. Increased commitment to non-commercial services is up until March 2024. Tenders will be sought late in 2023 when it is envisaged that commercial viability on a number of routes will have improved. 			
20	Lawful Accounting Treatments in Respect of the Pensions Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigations are limited to different legal accounting methods 	N/A	25	David Northey
21	The Government intends to implement Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act in 2024 and put in place a Suds Approval Body (SAB). Schedule 3 provides a This is highly likely to be introduced from 2024 and will be a risk for the local authority from 2024/2025. No provision has yet been made in the MTFP (which is under review).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is proposal and would not be implemented until 2024. Previously when the LLFA's were established, ring fenced government funding was provided for the first 3 years on a reducing basis. Consultation likely in 2023 and therefore responses need to reflect the need for funding to take on this function. The key considerations will be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy requirements; national standards and guidance requirements; cost and funding; future working with partners; skills and capability of local authority to take on this function. 	NEW	20	Anthony Payne
22	The Department for Transport (DfT) has set out expectations of the Peninsula Transport Body (STB) for a core team of staff representing a single point of contact between the STB and the DfT and perform a wider strategic role supporting individual Local Transport Authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DfT has restated their commitment to ensure that the host authority for these positions will not be liable for all costs relating to these posts and any redundancies should they be required. A meeting between the STB, DfT and PCC will take place to understand whether DfT are able to honour their commitment to cover cost of salaries and underwrite cost of redundancies before commencing recruitment. 	NEW	8	Anthony Payne

	<p>Currently the DfT is unable to confirm funding to cover 23/24 salary costs.</p>				
23	<p>Response to Ofsted Focused Visit to the Front Door does not result in required improvements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new Improvement Board is in place for the Children’s Services across the Plymouth (March 2023). • Service Director chairs a fortnightly Improvement Board for the Front Door which has partner engagement (Feb 23). • Improved capacity in management structures has been in place since January 2023. • Review of processes and focus on performance improvement in place. • Key metrics are reviewed alongside Audit activity to test quality of decision making. 	NEW	9	Sharon Muldoon

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Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting:	18 July 2023
Title of Report:	Children's Services Finance Report
Lead Member:	Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader, and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture, Events and Communications)
Lead Strategic Director:	Sharon Muldoon (Director for Childrens Services)
Author:	Matthew Fulton & Louise Jenkins
Contact Email:	Matthew.fulton@plymouth.gov.uk – Louise.jenkins@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	CHIFIN0723
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to inform members around the budget for Children's Services for 2023/24 and the outturn for the 2022/23 financial year.

Recommendations and Reasons

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the Children's Services Finance report.

Alternative options considered and rejected

N/A

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

This finance report links to the following Corporate Plan priorities; Working with the NHS to provide better access to health, care and dentistry, and Keeping children, adults and communities safe.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

Provides information about budgets set in line with the Medium Term Financial Plan

Financial Risks

N/A information only

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

N/A

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.

N/A

Appendices

*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Children's Finance – Scrutiny July 2023							
B								

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

Fin	CH 06.07. 23 1556	Leg		Mon Off		HR		Asset s		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Sharon Muldoon											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 10/07/2023											
Cabinet Member approval: Yes											
Date approved via email – 06/07/2023											

CHILDRENS DIRECTORATE FINANCE

Outturn 2022/23 and Budget 2023/24



- The Childrens Budget for 2022/23 was £51.381m and the final outturn was £55.793m, an overspend of £4.412m, due to Increased Cost & Volume within Independent Sector Placements (£4.095m) & unachieved Delivery Plans (£0.707m) – these were offset by savings in different areas within the service

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES - Spend by Year					
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Budget	35.437	37.277	42.515	43.106	51.381
Outturn / Forecast	39.452	38.312	47.298	52.908	55.793
Adverse / (Favourable) Variation	4.015	1.035	4.783	9.802	4.412

The Education, Participation and Skills Budget for 2022/23 was £10.749m and the final outturn was £12.353, an overspend of £1.604, mainly due to a pressures within Home to School Transport (£1.273m and SEND Short Breaks £0.293m)

EDUCATION, PARTICIPATION AND SKILLS - Spend by Year					
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Budget	10.106	9.658	10.546	10.462	10.749
Outturn / Forecast	10.106	9.658	10.571	10.424	12.353
Adverse / (Favourable) Variation	0	0	0.025	(0.038)	1.604

- In 2022/23 the main pressures within the Children, Young People & Families Budget was placements and care packages, especially around Residential, Supported Living & Bespoke settings.

	2022/23 Budget £m	2022/23 Outturn £m	Adverse / (Favourable) Variance £m
Unregistered/Bespoke	1.529	5.245	3.716
Residential	16.722	18.027	1.305
Supported Living - 16+	2.334	3.247	0.913
Independent Fostering	7.779	7.676	(0.104)
In-House Fostering	3.550	3.304	(0.246)
Other Placement Settings	4.962	3.473	(1.488)
Grand Total	36.876	40.971	4.095

- The Children, Young People & Families service was given a budget uplift of £3.053m in 2023/24 to allow for expected cost & volume pressures within Placements, resulting from increases to National Living Wage, Cost of Living & Inflation. However additional Medium Term Financial Planning targets were also identified by the service of £4.575m, to give a net budget decrease of £1.732m.

2023/24 Budgetary Changes	£m
Additional Cost & Volume	3.053
Reduce the use of residential care, increase the use of foster care and work to ensure children in care can return to their families or a connected person in their lives	(2.275)
Work with families to keep more children at home	(1.627)
Service & Budget Realignment	(0.673)
	(1.732)

- Education, Participation and Skills were given a budget uplift of £1.370m in 2023/24 to allow for the additional pressures within Home to School Transport and SEND Short Breaks.
- The below table breaks down the delivery plan savings targets identified for 2023/24.

2023/24 Delivery Plans	£m
Identify more appropriate placement settings for those in high cost packages	1.400
Reunify Looked After Children back to a family environment	0.500
Increase our In-House Fostering sufficiency	0.450
Utilising Grant Funding to maximise revenue funds available to the Authority	0.650
CYPF Management - In Year Savings through Budget Monitoring	0.225
EPS Management - In Year Savings through Budget Monitoring	0.717
	3.942

Children, Young People & Families 2023/24 Budget

Budget Areas	2023/24 Approved Budget Expenditure £m	2023/24 Approved Budget Income £m	2023/24 Approved Net Budget £m
Independent and Internal Sector Placements	34.262	(0.301)	33.961
Permanency	3.952	(0.161)	3.791
Childrens Social Work	3.668	0.000	3.668
Targeted	5.263	(2.296)	2.967
Plymouth Referral and Assmnt	3.296	(0.486)	2.810
CYPF Central Costs	1.950	(0.010)	1.940
QA Safeguarding and Bus Suppt	1.810	(0.048)	1.762
Adoption	1.160	0.000	1.160
CAMHS Specialist Services	0.657	(0.048)	0.609
Virtual School	1.160	(0.811)	0.349
CYPF Delivery Plans	(3.225)	0.000	(3.225)
Total	53.953	(4.161)	49.793

Education, Participation and Skills 2023/24 Budget

Budget Areas	2023/24 Approved Budget Expenditure £m	2023/24 Approved Budget Income £m	2023/24 Approved Net Budget £m
Educational Psychology	0.819	(0.184)	0.635
SEND	6.953	(3.353)	3.600
Early Years	0.838	(0.838)	0.000
Services for Schools	0.057	(0.112)	(0.055)
School Improvement	0.465	(0.107)	0.359
Centrally Managed Schools Exp	2.974	(1.740)	1.234
Management	0.346	(0.007)	0.339
Education Services Grant	0.000	(0.634)	(0.634)
Outdoor education	0.021	0.000	0.021
Skills and Post 16	0.823	(0.769)	0.054
On Course South West	2.553	(2.055)	0.498
Inclusion	0.601	(0.387)	0.214
EP&S Delivery Plans	(0.717)	0.000	(0.717)
Admissions	0.389	(0.389)	0.000
Organisation	0.430	(0.127)	0.303
Transport	6.263	(0.448)	5.815
PIAS & Parenting	0.427	0.000	0.427
Total	23.242	(11.151)	12.091

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Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Work Programme 2023-2024



Please note that the work programme is a 'live' document and subject to change at short notice. The information in this work programme is intended to be of strategic relevance.

For general enquiries relating to the Council's Scrutiny function, including this Committee's work programme, please contact Jake Metcalfe, Democratic Advisor on 01752 304963.

Date of meeting	Agenda item	Prioritisation Score	Reason for consideration	Responsible Cabinet Member / Officer
18 July 2023	<p>Unregistered placements – standing item</p> <p>Contextualised Safeguarding (Knife crime, county line, CE) -</p> <p>Improvement Plan – links to improvement notice and Board – scrutinise areas slow in progress - Standing item</p> <p>Finance Monitoring / Outturn report – CYPFS and EPS</p> <p>Performance Scorecard and Risk Register – Standing item- summative overview from CSC and Education – June quarter</p>		<p>Reports from the Improvement Board</p> <p>Reports from Improvement Board</p>	<p>Nigel Denning</p> <p>Nigel Denning</p> <p>Nigel Denning</p> <p>David Northey</p> <p>Paul Stephens/Ross Jago</p>
12 September 2023	<p>Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health – avoiding school</p> <p>VAWG Update</p>			

Date of meeting	Agenda item	Prioritisation Score	Reason for consideration	Responsible Cabinet Member / Officer
07 November 2023	Contextualised Safeguarding update (July) Improvement Scorecard			
13 February 2024	Review Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health – avoiding school			
Items to be scheduled				
Finance Monitoring				
Review report – Adopt South West				
Absence				
Child Exploitation in the City				
Plymouth Children Not in Education, Employment and Education				
EPS Annual Report – Feb				
SEND Update				

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Tracking Decisions 2023/24

Resolution	Target Date, Officer Responsible and Progress
<p>Jean Kelly to provide data to the Education and Children's Social Care OSC in response to Councillor Harrison's query on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many children have 'stepped up' from a Child in Need plan to a Child Protection plan? 2. How many children and young people have successfully 'stepped down' from a Child in Need plan to Universal services and have no longer required the services of Plymouth City Council's Children's Social Work Service (CSW). <p>This data is to be provided to Councillors before the next Scrutiny meeting and should also be reported within the next Performance report.</p>	<p>Date: 16 June 2022</p> <p>Progress: Action sent to Jean for progression.</p> <p>Date: January 2023</p> <p>Progress: Update from Paul Stephens (Performance Advisor): the <u>recording</u> of the activities, management, and outcomes for children are held within the Eclipse case management system (at a child level).</p> <p>However, meaningful <u>reporting</u> of historical movement, for example, transferring between services is not currently in place. This is a known reporting requirement on our 'reporting change log' and is awaiting the necessary developer resources to progress.</p>
<p>Sharon Muldoon to circulate the new Recruitment and Retention Strategy once implemented to the Committee. This would also be placed onto the work programme for the Committee's consideration.</p>	<p>Date: 03 July 2023</p> <p>Progress: Complete. Item has been input onto the work programme for the Committee's consideration.</p>
<p>Work to be undertaken with Youth Parliament to understand young people's views on exam readiness.</p>	<p>Date: 12 December 2022</p> <p>Progress: Jim Barnicott/Sharon Muldoon/Jenny Way</p>
<p>Sharon Muldoon to provide figures for children going down the route for an EHC. To provide figures of 6 week decision progress and 20 week production of the plan deadline.</p>	<p>Date: 15 February 2023</p> <p>Progress: Complete. Update was provided to the committee at the February Scrutiny session.</p>
<p>The Committee would be provided updates on all disadvantaged groups when the Department For Education provided final validated data. The Committee would also be</p>	<p>Date: 15 February 2022</p> <p>Progress: Complete. Heard at the February Scrutiny Committee.</p>

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Tracking Decisions 2023/24

<p>provided updates on KSI and end of KSI attainment and phonics as well as KS4.</p> <p>To also go onto the work programme for February's meeting,</p>	
<p>Sharon Muldoon to extend an invitation to the Regional Director for South West Hannah Woodhouse to attend an Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p>	<p>Date: 12 December 2022</p> <p>Progress: Complete. The DfE were being updated monthly through the Improvement Board.</p>
<p>Sharon Muldoon to provide data on Care Experienced young people that were in Education, Employment or Training and data on 18-20 Years old's that were not care experienced to allow for comparison. Councillor Tippetts to be provided an update with current strategies in place to reduce the number of care experienced young people that are NEET.</p>	<p>Date: 07/07/2023</p> <p>Progress: Complete.</p>
<p>David Northey to send the monitoring report monthly to the Committee. David would also provide a full detailed breakdown of the numbers within the Monthly Monitoring report at the next scrutiny committee.</p>	<p>Date: 12 December 2022</p> <p>Progress: Complete.</p>
<p>Recommendation: To share examples of best practice, including two to three case studies in relation to school uniform policy via the headteachers bulletin.</p>	<p>Date: 8 June 2023</p> <p>Progress: Complete. Best Practice shared within the Headteachers bulletin.</p>
<p>Recommendation: For the Education, Participation and Skills service to ensure students in Plymouth are aware of the accompanying entitlements when they receive free school meals to enable better outcomes for children and young people in the city. This information would also be disseminated in Family Hubs to ensure families are aware of their entitlements.</p>	<p>Date: 21 February 2023</p> <p>Progress: Sent via email to Annie/Jane for progression.</p>
<p>Recommendation: A letter to be sent to the relevant minister highlighting that the one-year support package for refugee and asylum-seeking families had not been enough and encouraged the government to review the support packages in place and extend those packages.</p>	<p>Date: 21 February 2023</p> <p>Progress: Complete. Letter sent to the relevant minister.</p>

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Tracking Decisions 2023/24

<p>Recommendation: A letter to be sent to the relevant minister highlighting the recruitment and retention pressures on the Early Help sector and requesting the implementation of a national strategy to address this. The letter would also ask that government recognise and value the importance of the early years sector and the staff working within it</p>	<p>Date: 21 February 2023</p> <p>Progress: Complete. Letter sent to the relevant Minister.</p>
<p>The Committee would receive a copy of Plymouth City Council's response to the OSFTED letter when submitted</p>	<p>Date: 21 February 2023</p> <p>Progress: Complete.</p>
<p>Cllr Cresswell asked what work had been done by schools in selecting texts which would better engage boys in reading. You advised that this was a key strand within the place-based plan and schools had stepped forward to deliver training and gender was a part of that. You advised that you would provide a written briefing around this;</p>	<p>Date: 21 February 2023</p> <p>Progress: Sent via email to Annie/Jane for progression.</p>
<p>Written response to Cllr Harrison for item 15 Early years - In relation to the graduate leadership scheme is the funding available to all settings or is the Council 'just' supporting through encouragement?</p>	<p>Date: 21 February 2023</p> <p>Progress: Complete. The NPQ in Early Years Leadership is available to all early years and childcare leaders who are qualified to at least level 3 with a full and relevant qualification who are, or are aspiring to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · managers of private, voluntary and independent nurseries · head teachers of school-based or maintained nurseries · childminders with leadership responsibilities <p>The qualification is advertised through the Early Years and Childcare Bulletin and through Early Years briefings. The qualification is also support through the facilitation of the student seminars by a Plymouth City Council Early Years Improvement Officer.</p>

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Tracking Decisions 2023/24

	<p>The first cohort started in November 2022. There are 16 students from Plymouth attending.</p> <p>The second cohort started in February 2023. There are 6 students from Plymouth attending.</p> <p>The qualification takes 18 months to complete, therefore we don't know how many students will qualify until the end of the programme.</p> <p>More courses are planned for the Autumn Term, the number of students registering are still being finalised. EPS Early Years Improvement Officers will continue to facilitate taught sessions, in partnership with facilitators from Devon and SWIFT.</p>
<p>Members requested an event/cup of tea in which they would meet the new social workers from overseas which could extend to all new social workers as a chance to welcome them to the city.</p>	<p>Date: 21 February 2023</p> <p>Progress: Complete. Event arranged.</p>