



**Oversight and Governance**

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**EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

Wednesday 17 November 2021

1.30 pm

Warspite Room, Council House

**Members:**

Councillor Laing, Chair

Councillor James, Vice Chair

Councillors Allen, Bingley, Carlyle, Cresswell, Goslin, Loveridge, Partridge and Vincent.

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf.

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**Tracey Lee**

Chief Executive

## **Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

### **1. Apologies**

To receive apologies for non-attendance submitted by Councillors.

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

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

### **3. Minutes (Pages 1 - 8)**

To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting held on

### **4. Chair's Urgent Business**

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

### **5. Policy Brief: (Pages 9 - 26)**

### **6. Finance Monitoring: (Pages 27 - 34)**

### **7. COVID Update - Verbal Update: (Verbal Report)**

### **8. Elective Home Education: (Pages 35 - 44)**

### **9. Inclusion Strategy Board: (Pages 45 - 50)**

### **10. REACH Academy - Verbal Report: (Verbal Report)**

### **11. Young Carers: (Pages 51 - 58)**

### **12. Innovate: (Pages 59 - 64)**

### **13. Work Programme: (Pages 65 - 68)**

**Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee****Wednesday 8 September 2021****PRESENT:**

Councillor Laing, in the Chair.

Councillor James, Vice Chair.

Councillors Allen, Bingley, Cresswell, Goslin, Partridge and Vincent.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Carlyle and Loveridge

Also in attendance: Jean Kelly and Jake Metcalfe (Democratic Advisor)

The meeting started at 1.30 pm and finished at 4.02 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.*

**53. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made in accordance with the code of conduct.

**54. Minutes**

Agreed that the minutes of the 7 July 2021 were confirmed.

**55. Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

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

Caroline Marr, Senior Policy Advisor presented this item to the committee and highlighted the following policy briefs:

- On the 25 August there had been an announcement from government for £50 million in additional funding for T-Level students and this would be invested into schools and colleges delivering T-Levels across England from next year. This funding would support six million students over the next three years.
- The back to school campaign set out rules and expectations relating to COVID-19.
- On the 2 September the government announced an expansion for tutoring over the next three years supporting six million students. Guidance had been issued to schools in order for schools to offer their

own teacher led tuition.

Members discussed:

- Policy brief 14, Plymouth had been working with Cornwall and other local authorities in the region and a bid for this funding would be submitted by the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2021.
- Councillor Laing requested that for the next Policy brief in the Scrutiny scheduled for November that there would be an update on Family hubs, tutoring and T-Level funding.
- Policy brief 10 - Members were advised that the £1 million in funding would be spread across the country. Although the funding is small, it had been hoped that it would unlock cross working local authority partnerships so education packages would follow Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and young people as they moved areas.
- Policy brief 3 – Members were updated that the Council had been exploring what Plymouth could access and how that would affect Plymouth through the regional network.
- Policy brief 11 – Members were updated that the Regional Adoption Agency would access this fund and an update in relation to progress would be provided to members.
- Policy brief 6 – Plymouth did not know if children would be required to spend more time in school to catch up with the education missed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The multi academy trusts in Plymouth had much more autonomy in how they had planned to deliver this for Plymouth's students.

The Committee noted the Policy Brief update.

#### 57. **Corporate Plan Performance Report, Quarter One 2021/22**

Hannah Daw, Performance Advisor and Paul Stephens, Performance Advisor presented this item to the committee and highlighted the following key points:

- 16 – 18 year olds in education, employment or training had received a RAG rating of Amber as it was just below the target of 92%. Skills Launchpad had been working closely with this cohort. There had been 25, 16 – 17 year olds claiming benefits which had reduced from 35 during COVID.
- School readiness had no longer been reported on but data was still being collected on those children in foundation. A key area of improvement required had been in relation to their communication and language.
- Repeat referrals to Children's Social Care reported an improving picture

with a decrease to 23.4%.

- Children in care (rate per 10,000) had decreased in the last quarter, however since the first lockdown Plymouth's children in care numbers had increased by 50.
- Children with a multiple Child Protection Plans showed an improving picture. The target had been 23% and the service showed a figure of 25.6%.

Members discussed:

- Members were updated that in relation to school readiness data and the implementation of the new framework, the Department for Education would not publish data until November 2022. In the meantime the service would establish an Early Years board before the end of the year to tackle the data deficit.
- Councillor Cresswell queried as to whether there would be any additional resources for SEND support or Speech and Language outreach? Ming Zhang, Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills advised that no additional funding had been sourced, but this would be taken back to the Schools forum to see if this could be enhanced.
- Jean Kelly provided an update to members for the increase in children coming into care during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the first phase of the lockdown two core groups came to the attention of the Children's service, which were very young children living in neglectful households due to alcohol and substance misuse issues. These additional referrals had come from Police colleagues who attended households from reports filed by neighbours working at home or being furloughed. The second group were older adolescents that were managing with support from the community and family support resources, however due to lockdown some of those resources ceased which escalated their home situations leading to an increase of those adolescents coming into the care of the local authority.
- Another factor leading to the increase had been due to a delay in family court hearings and the finalisation of those court proceedings. It had meant that children and young people were staying in the care of the local authority for longer whilst those decisions were.
- The Service had been increasing its preventative approach and had been looking at a specific child in need team to focus on supporting families.

The Committee noted the update on the Corporate Plan Performance Report, Quarter One 2021/22.

**58. Finance Monitoring**

David Northey, Head of Integrated Finance presented this item to the committee and highlighted the following key points:

- The Directorate had been keeping within the budget set and included an achievement in delivering £4 m saving for the year;
- The COVID impact on the budget was £7.914 m and this had been budgeted for.
- The full year cost of the new 2021/22 placements, already in the system for the quarter to date adds a further cost of £2.126m. Projecting this level of activity into residential placements based on the current trend added a further cost of £1.542m;
- To ease the pressure across the whole service of social worker caseloads, the directorate had recruited permanent social workers at an additional cost of £0.385m. This was identified and included in the budget. There was also £0.685m charged to the COVID Outbreak Management Fund to cover the cost of funding additional temporary Social Workers and Family Support Workers;
- Education, Participation and Skills were showing £0.022m lost income due to the Government's decision to cancel statutory assessments as a result of COVID-19.

Members discussed:

- £1.5 mil had been forecasted until the end of year for children coming into the care of the local authority, the current trend line was holding and was not under further pressure.
- Trend analysis had been taking place within the children's service for children that could require residential care as well as a general trend for children needing the care of the local authority. This had been holding steady and would be reviewed again in month six to ensure the trend is correct for the rest of the financial year.
- The number of children and young people coming in care had been stabilising and the service would look at whether it would reduce over time. The trend for children and young people requiring residential care continues to increase. The service had increased its preventative work to reduce the need for any statutory care.
- Members requested that a more thorough financial report with a detailed breakdown of how the budget is spent to be presented at the

next Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

- The vacancy rate for Social workers had been 1.7%, the issues facing Plymouth City Council had been retaining experienced social workers which is a national issue. Plymouth City Council had been reviewing its recruitment package to ensure it was competitive across the region. The Innovate team had been established and funded over a six month period of time to allow the service to respond to the 25% increase in demand for the service. An exit plan for the Innovate team had been scheduled for February 2022.
- Plymouth City Council had been looking into its recruitment package for experienced social workers.

The Committee noted the Finance Monitoring Report.

#### 59. **Skills4Plymouth and Kickstart Scheme**

Tina Brinkworth Head of skills and Post 16, presented three initiatives, Skills4Plymouth, Skills Launchpad and the Kickstart scheme to members.

Members discussed the following:

- The target would be to have 1000 Kickstart placements for young people, There had been 2700 young people who would qualify for a placement. There had been delays in starting the programme due to the DWP not having sufficient timescales to initiate and the COVID-19 pandemic impacted companies being able to offer a Kickstart placement. It is hoped that that central government would extend the programme for a further six months. Since May 2021 the programme had been able to offer over 300 placements to young people. The committee would like to have some data within a report for the next meeting which would provide data on how many young people had moved onto full time employment following the scheme and how many businesses in Plymouth were involved.
- Skills Launchpad began last year during COVID-19 and much of the funding for the programme had been secured externally from the Department for Work and Pensions. This had been able to fund a youth hub co-ordinator post, an adult hub co-ordinator post for two years, a Kickstarter post for a receptionist and two community leads to work with young people in the community who were long term unemployed. There were 8-10 people within the Skills Launchpad team opening four times a week.
- The Department for Work and Pensions had not been given enough time to mobilise the programme and this had resulted in there being more places for young people than young people ready. Work had been on-going with the DWP to ensure young people were accessing pre-employment workshops to enable them to be ready for a placement. The

Leader of Plymouth City Council had written to the Prime Minister to request the programme be extended.

- The DWP would be the organisation that deems young people ready for employment through the programme and this had been sighted as the reason for the bottleneck in young people not advancing through to an apprenticeship.
- The Committee unanimously agreed to the recommendation to write a letter to government requesting the continuation of the Kickstart programme.

The Committee note the Skills4Plymouth and Kickstart Scheme Report.

#### 60. **School's Catch Up**

Ming Zhang Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills presented this item to members.

- The distribution of CO2 monitors from the government would be rolled out to Special schools and alternative provisions in September 2021 and in October 2021 this would further be rolled out to mainstream schools;
- 80% of schools in Plymouth took up a funding offer from the Department for Education for summer schools which was targeted at Year 7 pupils;
- Plymouth had been selected as one of four local trailblazers for local improvement. £10 m from the Department for Education. The funding to be split between the four authorities but how amount Plymouth would receive not yet decided. The Department for Education would be taking the lead together with Plymouth City Council to steer this piece of work. An Education Strategy Board for Plymouth had been established and the Chair and Vice Chair of this Board to be decided. The Board would report to the Minister and Plymouth City Council.
- The Plymouth Education Board would be revising its Terms of Reference and had proposed a new work programme for the next academic year. The Board meets four times a year. It had been proposed that other Boards covering Post 16, Early Years, Special Educational Needs, Primary and Secondary schools would feed into the Plymouth Education Board. It had been requested that members receive a diagrammatic structure of the different boards and how they all feed into one another, with details of their remit;
- More resources would be put into English and Maths qualification attainments so that Plymouth students would be fully prepared when looking for university or college placements or alternatively within the workplace;



The Committee noted the School's Catch Up

61. **Covid 19 Legacy - Children, Young People and Families Service**

Jean Kelly introduced this item to members and referred to the submitted report.

Members discussed:

- There had been a small increase in the level of sickness for staff members across the Education and Children's Social Care Directorate and this had been closely monitored. Some staff had been on long term sickness due to issues relating to long COVID. Other members of staff had been on sick leave which had been stress related, this had always been an issue for the service due to the high pressure work environment. For those members of staff off from work due to stress this had been related to COVID and the increased pressures on the service during that time. Staff had been encouraged to take breaks, to access wellbeing services and to ensure that their workloads had been balanced to prevent an increase in stress related sickness.
- The Children's Social Care Service would not initially use agency staff to cover sickness and would only seek to do so if this became a chronic and longer term issue. Staff on sick leave would be monitored closely and would have regular catch up calls with their manager, be referred to Occupational Health with their permission and be supported to access internal wellbeing services.
- As part of the National Transfer scheme, Plymouth City Council agreed to take a percentage of its looked after population, to accept unaccompanied asylum seeking children into its Local Authority. Plymouth had spontaneous arrivals of unaccompanied asylum seekers through its port which impacted the number of children the Local Authority would accept as part of the National Transfer Scheme. The service would only offer to look after an Unaccompanied asylum seeking child if there had been a placement available.

The Committee noted the COVID Legacy Update.

62. **Fostering Sufficiency and Marketing**

Jane Anstis, Head of Service for Children, Young People and Families presented this item to members and highlighted the following key points:

- The target for new fostering placements for 2021 – 2022 was 36 placements;
- Plymouth City Council's fostering service was restructured last year with a focus on recruitment and assessment. Recognition was given to drive that part of the service as well as support and retention of current foster

carers;

- Plymouth's Children's Social Care had commissioned an external experienced, marketing provider for fostering to support and redevelop Plymouth's offer. This had been vital for Plymouth's looked after children to keep them local in their established communities and schools and to remain in their social networks. It was also vital to reduce the need for high cost placements;
- Plymouth City Council's fostering service exceeded its target of establishing 21 new placements last year but had suffered with higher than normal retirements of foster carers with an overall effect of nil increase on placements within the service.

Members discussed:

- The Chair, Councillor Laing on behalf of the committee thanked Plymouth's foster carers, special guardians and connected carers especially with the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic and the difficulties this had brought. It was highlighted to members to follow 'Foster for Plymouth' on social media and to share the content provided to get the information to Plymouth residents.
- For support of Plymouth foster carers a review had been undertaken to understand the support that had been offered to Connected Carers and to Special Guardians.

The Committee noted Fostering Sufficiency and Marketing Report.

### 63. **Work Programme**

The Committee discussed items for inclusion on the work programme. It was agreed to add the following items:

- Early Years Board
- Sufficiency strategy regarding placements
- Education improvements
- Plymouth Education Board and their work programme
- Children in care
- Fostering Sufficiency
- Changes to the Pupil Premium

Councillor Laing requested an appropriate mechanism or framework to be sought for inviting Multi Academy Trust CEO's to come to the Education and Children's Social Care Overview Scrutiny Committee.

# Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting:	17 November 2021
Title of Report:	<b>ECSC Policy Brief</b>
Lead Member:	Councillor David Downie (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Children and Young People)
Lead Strategic Director:	Alison Botham (Director for Children's Services)
Author:	Caroline Marr (Senior Policy Advisor)
Contact Email:	Caroline.Marr@Plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	ECSC PB 17112021
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

## Purpose of Report

To provide Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the latest national picture in respect of policy announcements and legislation affecting children and young people.

## Recommendations and Reasons

For Scrutiny to consider the information provided in regard to their role and future agenda items.

## Alternative options considered and rejected

N/A

## Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

Delivery of the Corporate Plan and Plymouth Plan needs to take account of emerging policy and the legislative picture.

## Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

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.*

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	ECSC Policy Brief – 17 November 2021							

**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	N/A	Leg	N/A	Mon Off	N/A	HR	N/A	Asset s	N/A	Strat Proc	N/A
Approved by: Giles Perritt, Assistance Chief Executive											
Date approved: 05 November 2021											

## POLICY BRIEF

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny

17 November 2021



***The information within this Brief is correct at the time of approval for publication and contains relevant announcements made by Government and its departments and regulators.***

### **Consultations and Calls for Evidence**

#### 1. [Reforming how local authority school improvement functions are funded](#)

The local authority role in school improvement has changed significantly in recent years, with the growth of school-led approaches, such as multi-academy trusts, putting school improvement in the hands of the strongest schools and school leaders.

In turn, the local authority role in school improvement in maintained schools is increasingly focused on helping their schools access the support they need from the school system. Given these changes in respective roles and responsibilities, the DfE believe now is the right time to revisit local authorities' school improvement functions and how they are funded.

Plymouth City Council will be responding to this consultation which closes on 26 November 2021.

#### 2. [Ofsted launches consultation for children's homes and residential holiday schemes](#)

Ofsted have launched a consultation on new arrangements for interim children's home inspections and inspections of residential holiday schemes for disabled children (RHSDCs). This consultation closes on 24 January 2022.

#### 3. [Ofqual seeks views on accessible assessments for students](#)

A [consultation](#) has been launched on draft guidance for awarding organisations. The proposed updated guidance will support awarding organisations to design and develop assessments that meet rules on accessibility. This consultation closes on 24 January 2022.

### **2021 Spending Review Headline announcements – 27 October 2021**

#### **Children and Young People**

SR21 announces £201 million in 2024-25 to transform Start for Life and family help services by creating a network of Family Hubs, investing in infant and parent mental health, breastfeeding support, parenting programmes, and expanding the Supporting Families programme, delivering on key recommendations from the Early Years Healthy Development Review. Some specifics include:

- An extra £200m investment in the Supporting Families Programme,
- £170 million by 2024-25 to increase the hourly rate to be paid to early years providers, to deliver the government's free hours offers. This builds on the £44 million increase confirmed at SR20.
- £250 million for Early Years training and development,
- £200 million a year until 2024/25 for the Holidays and Activities fund.
- £560 million new funding for youth services in England over the next three years, enough to fund 300 youth clubs.
- £18 million in 2024-25 to create a network of family hubs to improve access to services for families, and £20 million in 2024-25 for parenting support.
- Reaffirming £150 million over the SR21 period for training of early years staff to support children's learning and development, as part of the £1.4 billion announced in June 2021 to help children catch up on lost learning.
- SR21 provides £104m by 2024-25 for reforms to unregulated children's social care, and £7m by 2024-25 to improve access to services and support for adopted children and their families.
- SR21 also maintains and increases capacity in secure and open residential children's homes by making available £259m over the SR period.

## Education and Skills

- Government confirms an additional £4.7 billion by 2024-25 for the core schools' budget in England - equivalent to £1,500 per pupil and returning to 2010 real term spending levels, as well as £2.6 billion of capital funding for new school places for children with special educational needs and disabilities, and £1.8 billion of additional money for education recovery.
- SR21 provides a new package of £1.8 billion over the SR period for education recovery. This includes a £1 billion Recovery Premium for the next two academic years to help schools to deliver evidence-based approaches to support the most disadvantaged pupils. It also provides £324 million in 2024-25 for additional learning hours for 16-19 year-olds.
- Skills spending will increase by over £3.8 billion over the course of the parliament. £1.6 billion is dedicated over three years to rolling out T-levels for 16–19-year-olds - designed to provide additional classroom hours for up to 100,000 young people. £550m is being invested in adult skills through the Skills Fund by 2024-25. This fund offers short courses and so-called 'skills boot camps' for adults who have no qualifications beyond GCSE level.
- The new £560 million UK-wide Multiply programme, delivered by UKSPF, will support up to half a million adults improve their numeracy.
- £170 million has been set aside for apprenticeships and training - increasing funding in England to £2.7 billion in 2024-25.
- Funding confirmed for the Restart scheme in England and Wales - to provide intensive and tailored support to long-term unemployed people to help them find work.
- £90 million to extend the Job Entry Targeted Support Scheme to the end of September 2022 - helping those unemployed for between three and twelve months across Great Britain find work.

Date of publication	Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee
All relevant guidance relating to schools, early years and childcare providers, further education and colleges and Children's Social Care providers continues to be updated in line with the government's roadmap for easing of restrictions.	
Published 13 Sept 2021	<p>1. <a href="#">Young people aged 12 to 15 to be offered a COVID-19 vaccine</a></p> <p>People aged 12 to 15 in England will be offered one dose of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, following advice from the four UK Chief Medical Officers (CMOs), the Health and Social Care Secretary has announced today (Monday 13 September). In line with the recommendation of the independent Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), the government sought the views of the four UK CMOs on the wider issues that are relevant to the health of children.</p> <p>Parental, guardian or carer consent will be sought by vaccination healthcare staff prior to vaccination in line with existing school vaccination programmes. Healthy school-aged children aged 12 to 15 will primarily receive their COVID-19 vaccination in their school with alternative provision for those who are home schooled, in secure services or specialist mental health settings.</p> <p><b>Update:</b> 12 – 15yr old vaccination programme is managed by NHS England but we work closely with them to promote and ensure data accuracy. Take up rate before half term was around 7%, however half term walk in centres were made available and this has boosted the take up rate by 20%. Vaccination rate for 12 – 15yr olds is 27% as of 03 November. We are continuing to work with NHS England to promote the vaccination programme to young people and their parents.</p>

<p>Published 13 Sept 2021</p>	<p><b>2. <a href="#">Funding boost for councils as new Afghan resettlement plans set out</a></b>  Councils who support people through the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) or Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) scheme will receive £20,520 per person, over 3 years, for resettlement and integration costs. This is based on the previous Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, but over 3 rather than 5 years, with more money provided in the crucial early period to help people settle and become part of their new communities.</p> <p>The full package will cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £20,520 to cover the local authority welcome, integration offer and provision of services</li> <li>• Up to £4,500 per child to cover education provision, subject to their age (year one only)</li> <li>• £850 to cover English language provision, for adults requiring this support (year one only)</li> <li>• £2,600 to cover health provision (year one only)</li> </ul> <p><b>Update:</b> It has been agreed in principle that Plymouth City Council will support the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) and commit to resettling up to 60 people in the first year of the programme (September 2021 –September 2022).</p> <p>It has also been agreed in principle that Plymouth City Council will resettle up to 50 people per year for the duration of the Schemes to support the Home Office to meet its target of 20,000 Afghans across a 5 year period. This will be reviewed annually to ensure that we are not placing too greater pressure on the local housing market.</p> <p>The funding for children and young people is used to commission the refugee Integration Service (RIS) and through this we have been able to support ODILS Learning Foundation to provide women’s only English classes with a crèche for children below school age as sometimes the women are anxious to place their children in mainstream nursery provision. It has also built confidence and generated pathways for women to then place their children into mainstream provision once they are able to claim the free hours.</p> <p>Funding from previous refugee resettlement schemes has allowed us to begin the process of recruiting a mental health worker with specific experience of working with families and young people who have experienced trauma. This role will work across services to develop a culturally appropriate service.</p> <p>As in previous settlement/relocation schemes the Ethnic Minority Achievement (EMA) Team leader will liaise with colleagues in START and Admissions to support suitable, swift school placements for children and will be responsible for actioning funding to schools with Home Office guidance shared. The EMA Team will support children’s early learning and provide training for teachers in schools on inclusion, English as an Additional Language learning provision etc. and act as a point of contact for school leaders should concerns arise. Children’s progress will be tracked and summary reports provided.</p>
<p>Published 16 Sept 2021</p>	<p><b>3. <a href="#">New review investigates babies harmed by fathers and stepfathers</a></b>  A new report investigating the death or serious harm of 23 babies is calling for midwives, health visitors and social workers to provide more support to fathers.</p>

	<p>The independent Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel reviews serious child safeguarding cases – when a child dies or suffers serious harm, and abuse or neglect is known or suspected. The panel’s latest review looks at the lives of babies who were known or suspected to have been seriously harmed or killed by their father, step-father or male carer. The aim is to understand what led the perpetrators to harm their children, and what could be done to prevent similar incidents.</p>
<p>Published 21 Sept 2021</p>	<p>4. <a href="#">Training launched for mental health leads in schools and colleges</a>  Schools and colleges to benefit from a trained senior mental health lead for those who need support. Pupils in up to 7,800 schools and colleges will benefit from a <a href="#">trained senior mental health lead</a> tasked with identifying those who need support and improving access to specialist services.  Eligible schools and colleges will be able to apply for a grant of £1,200, which can be used to enable senior leaders to gain the knowledge and skills they need to roll out an effective ‘whole school or college approach’ to mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Backed by a total of £9.5 million, announced in May, this grant funding includes training on how to use existing mental health resources more effectively, identify students who need mental health support, and on how to improve working with local mental health services. The government remains committed to offering this training to all state schools and colleges by 2025.</p> <p><b>Update:</b> Two Local Authority practitioners have received training and have access to all resources required to deliver the courses.</p> <p>All courses are being held at the Jan Cutting Healthy Living Centre in Plymouth and are being delivered by PCC Educational Psychologists.</p> <p>Course dates are advertised on the <a href="http://www.mentalhealthlead.com">www.mentalhealthlead.com</a> website including all logistics for participants to book on the course and claim the appropriate grant from the DfE.</p> <p>Schools have received local and national advertising and have started booking on to courses which will run on various dates until July 2022 - 15 participants have booked so far. Courses are designed for Middle Leaders, Senior Leaders and Head Teachers.</p>
<p>Published 30 Sept 2021</p>	<p>5. <a href="#">Proposed changes to the assessment of GCSEs, AS and A levels in 2022</a>  A joint consultation published by Ofqual and the Department for Education on proposed changes to the assessment of GCSEs, AS and A levels in 2022. Outcome and analysis documents added to conclude this consultation. Students will sit GCSE, A and AS level exams next year with adaptations to recognise the disruption to their education.</p>
<p>Published 30 Sept 2021</p>	<p>6. <a href="#">Government launches £500m support for vulnerable households over winter</a>  The Government has announced the launch of the £500m Household Support Fund, which will support vulnerable households with essentials, such as food, clothing and utilities, over the coming months as the country continues its recovery from the pandemic. The new funding comes as the Job Retention Scheme ends. The Fund will support millions of households and will be</p>



	<p>distributed by councils in England. The money will be made available to councils in October.</p> <p><b>Update:</b> See attached Household Support Grant briefing.</p>
<p>Published 06 Oct 2021</p>	<p>7. <a href="#">Salary boosts for new maths, science and computing teachers</a>  Teachers in the early years of their careers will be able to get a salary boost of up to £3,000 tax-free to teach maths, physics, chemistry and computing. This will support recruitment and retention of specialist teachers in these subjects and in the schools and areas that need them most.</p> <p><b>Update:</b> New DfE arrangements for induction/support for Early Career Teachers (ECTs) in the Early Career Framework (ECF) has shifted responsibility away from LAs to private consultancies and teaching school hubs; this means that going forward we will not hold city wide information on ECTs. School leaders will now hold this information.</p> <p>However, the South West Institute for Teaching, who are the major provider in the South West, have convened a stakeholder group to which Plymouth, Torbay and Devon councils are members. Through this forum we will be able to ask questions about recruitment and retention of teachers in Plymouth.</p>
<p>Published 06 Oct 2021</p>	<p>8. <a href="#">Recovery premium funding</a>  Additional funding in the 2021 to 2022 academic year to support schools with education recovery following COVID-19. The link to the guidance has been added. This guidance is for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• school leaders and teachers</li> <li>• governors and academy trustees</li> <li>• virtual school heads</li> </ul> <p>It applies to local-authority-maintained schools, academies, non-maintained special schools and independent special schools.</p> <p><b>Update:</b> Academies received their first payment in October 2021. Plymouth maintained schools will receive payments via the Local Authority on their January 22 and July 22 Income Allocation Notifications.</p> <p>Schools should spend this premium on evidence-based approaches to support pupils. In line with the Education Endowment Foundation’s pupil premium guide, activities should include those that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support the quality of teaching, such as staff professional development</li> <li>• provide targeted academic support, such as tutoring</li> <li>• deal with non-academic barriers to success in school, such as attendance, behaviour and social and emotional support</li> </ul> <p>School level allocations and more information can be found below;  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-recovery-premium-funding-allocations">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-recovery-premium-funding-allocations</a></p>
<p>Published 06 Oct 2021</p>	<p>9. <a href="#">Implementing the early years foundation stage reforms</a>  Case study videos for practitioners assessing children’s development at the end of the early years foundation stage (EYFS).</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 1: curriculum and the EYFS Profile under the new EYFS - A summary of the reforms and the new expectations for early years curriculum and assessment.</li> <li>• Chapter 2: implementing the new EYFS as a school - School leaders from early adopter schools share their experiences of the EYFS reforms and how they implemented the reforms in their school.</li> <li>• Chapter 3: assessment under the new EYFS - Reception teachers from early adopter schools share how the reforms have impacted their assessment practices and what has been important in their assessments during the early adopter year.</li> </ul> <p><b>Update:</b> The reforms came into force on 01 September 2021. The Early Years Team, in conjunction with Ofsted HMIs have briefed the private and voluntary sector as well as schools on how the new reforms will impact on their delivery of the EYFS. The key message is that good early years practice remains the same however, expectations about assessment and curriculum design have changed.</p> <p>There is now a new assessment (reception baseline) and the council are no longer expected to moderate early year's foundation stage profile (EYFSP). The EYFSP from 2021 will be different from previous years and therefore not comparable.</p>
Published 14 Oct 2021	<p>10. <a href="#">Widening participation in higher education: 2021</a> Annual statistics on young people's participation in higher education, including their background characteristics.</p> <p>The publication includes geographic breakdowns to enable comparisons of HE progression rates between local authorities and regions by personal characteristics.</p>
Published 19 Oct 2021	<p>11. <a href="#">Condition Improvement Fund: 2021 to 2022 outcome</a> Information for academies, sixth-form colleges and voluntary aided schools about the outcome of the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) 2021 to 2022.</p> <p><b>Update:</b> A mix of 23 secondary and primary schools across Plymouth will receive funding to improve the condition of their schools - from refurbishing kitchen facilities to improving heating systems.</p>
Published 22 Oct 2021	<p>12. <a href="#">Care leavers and disadvantaged pupils to benefit from £126 million investment in new laptops and tablets</a> Care leavers, children with a social worker and children arriving from Afghanistan will receive devices to enable them to access education and support.</p>
Published 27 Oct 2021	<p>13. <a href="#">All schools and colleges to receive extra funding for catch up</a> Every school and college in England will have more money to support young people's recovery from the impact of the pandemic, as the government confirms billions of pounds of additional investment in education.</p> <p>This will give schools and colleges the tools they need to help get pupils back on track – from raising teachers' salaries, to recovery cash for schools, to increased learning time in colleges.</p>

	Schools will receive an additional £4.7 billion in core funding in 2024-25, including £1.6 billion in 2022-23 on top of already planned increases from the 2019 Spending Review, and meaning a total cash increase of £1,500 per pupil between 2019-20 and 2024-25.
Published 02 Nov 2021	14. <a href="#">Children's Minister address to National Centre for Family Hubs</a> Minister Will Quince speaks to family hubs conference to launch £12 million Transformation Fund.
<b>Ofsted Announcements</b>	
Published 14 Sept 2021	15. <a href="#">Ofsted launches updated guidance for summary evaluations of multi-academy trusts</a> Ofsted has launched <a href="#">updated guidance for summary evaluations of multi-academy trusts (MATs)</a> . Summary evaluations look at the extent to which a MAT is delivering high quality education and improving pupils' outcomes. The updates to this guidance ensure that summary evaluations will mirror the <a href="#">education inspection framework</a> , introduced in 2019, to focus on the quality of education as seen through the curriculum. It will also allow us to increase the volume of summary evaluations, and the breadth of MATs inspected, so that we gain better insight into the role of multi-academy trusts.
Published 22 Sept 2021	16. <a href="#">Ofsted to review two education catch-up reforms</a> Ofsted has been asked by the government to carry out an independent review of two key catch-up reforms: tutoring and teachers' professional development.  The reviews will investigate how the government's policies are working on the ground, through a mixture of research visits, evidence from our inspections and other methods. They will assess the progress and, where possible, the effectiveness of the government's education recovery plans.
Published 28 Oct 2021	17. <a href="#">Ofsted calls for stronger oversight of early years multiple providers and social care groups</a> Ofsted has published two research reports looking at early years multiple providers and providers that own more than one children's home.

### ECSC Scrutiny updates from previous meeting

Updates were requested in the previous meeting which was held on 08 September 2021 in respect of the following government announcements and how they translate for Plymouth.

#### [£50 million to deliver world-class facilities for T Level students](#)

- £50 million to be invested in colleges, schools and sixth forms delivering T levels across England from 2022.
- Funding is to improve and expand teaching spaces and facilities which will support up to six million pupils over the next three years.
- With the intention of transforming the provision of technical education to help fill local skills gaps and level up opportunities across the country.

**Update:** This is not information that the LA collects specifically, however feedback from schools and the MATs is that, as of yet they aren't offering the T-level option to their students. In Plymouth only

City College Plymouth are offering the T-level option. Local intelligence also suggests that there is a low level of take up in neighbouring authorities.

#### Tutoring revolution builds as students return to class

- Announcement in relation to the expansion of tutoring which is intended to support up to six million pupils over the next three years.
- New [guidance](#) has been published to support schools to offer their own teacher-led tuition.
- Academic mentors are being placed in selected schools across the country to work in small groups with over 250,000 students most in need of support this year.

**Update:** The number of schools participating or the impact that the programme is having is not information that the LA collects specifically, however feedback from schools and the MATs is that there has been very low take up of the national tutoring programme in Plymouth schools. Local intelligence also suggests that there is a low level of take up in neighbouring authorities.

We do know that some primary schools are planning to begin using the programme in the upcoming terms and we have had feedback from two primary schools who have taken advantage of the programme, both report a positive impact with a high level of progress for the pupils involved.

Testimony from one Plymouth primary school: *The NTP tutoring has enabled some of our most disadvantaged children to make accelerated progress in English and maths. All pupils have maintained and made expected progress, despite the disruption to their learning across the academic year 2020-2021. The data shows that NTP made a positive impact on maintaining and accelerating progress for each of our disadvantaged children in years 2-6.*

#### New recovery fund to tackle harms facing vulnerable children

£24 million regional fund for children's social care, including funding to support unaccompanied minors. The new fund will support projects tackling the issues facing the most vulnerable children in society in 2021-22, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) abuse, care for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, preventing adolescents from being caught up in harms outside the home such as gangs and reducing the pressure on the system by reducing court backlogs or improving technology.

Funding will be distributed through England's network of nine Regional Improvement and Innovation Alliances according to plans based on local priorities.

**Update:** Exploring what we can access for Plymouth via our Regional network. Awaiting update from the Regional group. Verbal update to be provided at the Committee if available.

#### Families across England to receive better support to adopt

Backed by a £48 million investment, the new National Adoption Strategy has been launched to improve adoption services in England. This will be done by putting in place better recruitment across the country and removing any unnecessary delays, providing more training for front line staff, improving approval processes, and funding for targeted recruitment campaigns.

**Update:** Plymouth are part of the Regional Adoption Agency for the South West – it is the agency that will be able to access this funding. Awaiting update for how much we can access and how we will use this locally. Verbal update to be provided at the Committee if available.

#### £20m to provide more early help for vulnerable families

Vulnerable or low-income families in England will benefit from a multi-million-pound investment to improve access to early education, health, and care services.

The £20 million, awarded from the Treasury's Shared Outcomes Fund, will include:

- £10 million for the Family Hubs 'Transformation Fund', which will support local authorities to open family hubs in approximately 10 new areas of England. Family Hubs are already operating in several areas of England, providing vital support services to vulnerable families; and

- £10 million to expand the 'Growing Up Well' digital project, designed to level up outcomes for vulnerable and disadvantaged families. This involves improving how information is shared between professionals working with families and children in these Hubs.

**Update:** Plymouth were unsuccessful in the bid for funding to support a 'Growing up Well' digital project – the grants were awarded to Salford City Council, Suffolk County Council and Tower Hamlets Council.

Cornwall has agreed to lead the Family Hub strand of Strand I of the Regional Recovery and Building Back Better Fund for the South West. Plymouth will be attending South West Family Hub workshop at the end of November led by Cornwall.

The Family Hubs Transformation Fund has opened – Plymouth will be bidding as it is highly relevant in relation to the timing and position of the work that we have been doing. The deadline for submissions is 17 December 2021. We are also at the evaluation stage of our Early Help Partnership tender which will drive our Family Hubs forward, with presentations from the bidders on the 15 November 2021 and contract award in December 2021.

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# HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND

Briefing Note – November 2021



## **Background**

On 06 October 2021 the DWP announced a fund of £421 million for local authorities to support those most in need over the winter 'during the final stages of economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic'. Plymouth's allocation of the Household Support Fund is £2,294,796.82

The DWP guidance states that Local Authorities have discretion on exactly how this funding is used within the scope set out in the guidance. The expectation is that it should primarily be used to support households in the most need with food, energy and water bills. It can also be used to support households with essential costs related to those items and with wider essential costs. In exceptional cases of genuine emergency it can additionally be used to support housing costs where existing housing support schemes do not meet this exceptional need

Authorities have the ability to deliver the scheme through a variety of routes including providing vouchers to households, making direct provision of food, or issuing grants to third parties.

The DWP guidance further advises:

- Rather than focus on one specific vulnerable group, Authorities should use the wide range of data and sources of information at their disposal to identify and provide support to a broad cross section of vulnerable households in their area.
- Funds should be spent or committed before 31 March 2022 and cannot be held over for future usage.
- At least 50% of the funding is for vulnerable households with children. The remainder of the funding (up to 50%) is available for vulnerable households without children (including individuals).

During the first phases of the COVID-19 pandemic, over the winter 2020/21, the government funded two similar programmes: the Emergency Food & Essential Supplies Grant and the Winter Grant. In addition, further funding was also received for holiday food for children at Easter and summer 2021.

The following is a summary of the outcomes from these programmes which will inform the implementation of the Household Support Fund:

### **Emergency Food & Essential Supplies Grant 2020/21**

- A food aid co-ordinator was funded and continues to be in place, linking food aid organisations to training, mapping food aid in the city, providing co-ordination of food supply and providing data to the Local Authority.
- The Aid Redistribution Centre (ARC) in Honicknowle was funded as a stop-gap venue for food surplus storage from supermarkets such as the Co-op and Sainsburys, while a FareShares depot is in the process of being set up by December 2021.
- 36 grants worth a total of £140,957 went to a range of smaller and grassroots organisations who distribute food to particularly vulnerable groups.
- Funding went to three projects to support people to increase their incomes and sustainable alternatives such as growing and cooking food: Advice Plymouth, Grow, Share, Cook and the Healthy Start take-up campaign.
- A report into future co-operative models of food supply is due to launch in November 2021.

### **Winter Grant 2020/21**

**School Holiday food:** PCC purchased and distributed eVoucher codes for schools, Early Years (EY) settings and entitled Further Education (FE) students either on the Free School

Meals Register or considered to be at risk of hardship and food poverty. For Christmas 2020, February half-term and Easter, eVoucher codes to the value of £15.00 per week for each child or young person could be redeemed at Sainsbury's, Tesco, Morrison's, Asda, M&S Food and Waitrose. At PCC request, Aldi was added to the portfolio of supermarkets from February half-term onwards

**Other vulnerable groups:**

- £8,723 allocated for white goods for the homeless via Community Connections.
- Community Connections and Caring for Carers distributed winter warmth packs to young and adult carers.
- Community Connections distributed food and essentials to Asylum Seekers and Refugees.
- A further £76k was distributed to food aid organisations via a small grants programme.

**Energy:** Plymouth Energy Community (PEC) distributed £290k worth of support for energy costs as follows:

- Grants for fuel bills
- Prepayment meter vouchers
- Boiler repairs/gas safety checks
- Winter warmth packs - blankets, oil filled radiators etc. for distribution and for partners like the Red Cross, Covid volunteers, Children's Centres.

**Impact of COVID and rationale for use of Grant**

In June 2021 Devon County Council commissioned some research into food insecurity which included a primary research survey of residents. The research demonstrated that COVID has had a negative impact on the food security status of many households. The main groups at risk are low income households with children, in particular single parents and those with higher numbers of children, and people with mental health issues. This is also the outcome of national research which suggests that this will also be the case in Plymouth. The research recommended that there are creative ways to reduce the feelings of shame associated with needing food aid such as:

- Combining food support with other activities such as a drop-in café
- Emphasize the waste reduction element of food redistribution
- Pre-emptively identifying families through schools before they reach crisis point
- Increasing the extent to which families can choose the contents of their own food parcels
- Encouraging community larders where people can pick up food surplus locally – a 'sharing' culture

We will use this above research in our grant making process as recommended below.

It is difficult to provide people with direct funding towards their water bills as South West Water provide their own support to vulnerable groups, such as reduced tariffs etc. However, it is likely that if people are supported with reducing their fuel bills then this will leave them with additional disposable income to pay for their water. Whilst the Household Support Grant cannot be used for debt advice, Advice Plymouth have been raising awareness within local food aid organisations about their benefits and debt advice services and they work closely with PEC. We can continue to promote these services during this winter for people in water debt.

As has been flagged in the media, there is likely to be a significant increase in energy bills over the next few months. This will particularly affect people when their winter bills arrive in February/March. It is therefore proposed to allocate a significant proportion of funding to this element of the programme.



**Household Support Grant Recommendations:**

Due to the upcoming October half-term and the urgent need to ensure families with children can access food, it has already been agreed to allocate funding for food vouchers via an Executive Decision signed by the Leader for delivery by Wonde Limited, to a maximum value of £1m for the school holidays. This will cover October half-term, Christmas, February half-term and Easter. The proposal is to purchase eVoucher codes for use in supermarkets to the value of £15 per week per child or young person. We are waiting for confirmation from the DWP that we can purchase eVoucher codes for Easter 2022 as this falls in April, outside of the timescales of the grant, however, indications from a conference call with the DWP are that this will be acceptable. The number of children expected to benefit each week is between 11,000 and 12,000. The food vouchers will be directed to those children on the Free School Meals register or considered to be at risk of hardship and food poverty. The new voucher company have a longer list of supermarkets than previously.

**Recommendation for use of Household Support Grant from October 2021 to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2022 in addition to school holiday food, as follows:**

The proposed budget is based on the expenditure from last winter, but with some increases in particular for energy costs. It is also proposed to hold back some funding as a 'contingency' which will enable the position to be reviewed in the New Year and also to respond to any emerging needs. This will also enable a decision to be made on whether or not to fund Community Meals based on the available budget.

- I. To open a grants scheme for Food and other Essential Supplies which will have the following aims:
  - (i) To encourage organisations to consider ways in which they can reduce the stigma that people feel in needing food aid as outlined above.
  - (ii) To increase the capacity of smaller and grassroots organisations to cope with likely increased demand for food aid during the winter as people face increases in the cost of living and fuel bills.
  - (iii) To provide funding to organisations who are able to reach particularly vulnerable groups of people including: the newly unemployed and those applying for Universal Credit, the homeless, frail older people, families with young children on low incomes, people with disabilities, mental health issues and long-term conditions, Refugees, Asylum Seekers with no recourse to public funds and the financially insecure. To also ensure that anchor organisations such as Wellbeing Hubs and Children's Centres can distribute food to local people and families who are struggling. All of this funding will be awarded with agreed outcomes, for example, to increase the opening hours of the food banks and the number of times that people can access support.
  - (iv) To support organisations which are developing self-help approaches to food, in particular growing and cooking food, food clubs, community larders etc.
  
2. To fund the administration costs of Food Plymouth to provide support to the food grant application process, in particular supporting smaller food aid organisations to apply and providing advice on sustainable models.
  
3. To fund Plymouth Energy Community to provide support as previously:
  - Grants for fuel bills
  - Prepayment meter vouchers
  - Boiler repairs/gas safety checks

- Winter warmth packs - blankets, oil filled radiators etc. for distribution and for partners like the Red Cross, Covid volunteers, Children's Centres.
4. Carers – Adults and Young Carers  
To fund winter warmth and essentials packs as a 'thank you' to adult and young carers and to keep their fuel bills down, to contain for example quilts, pillows, hot water bottles, clothing etc.
  5. Community Connections – Homeless and ASRs  
White goods and help with fuel debt to enable people to move on from B&B and temporary accommodation; help with emergency housing costs (rent) within the scope of the grant
  6. Housing costs – there is an element of the fund allocated to this and proposals will be worked up for how this will be used. It is unlikely that it can be used to top-up the Discretionary Housing Payments fund, but could be used for people who are not eligible to apply to that fund who have rent arrears.
  7. Community Meals – to be decided based on available budget

**Table 1. Household Support Grant - Breakdown of Funding**

**All of these budget figures are based on indicative costs and will be flexed up and down depending on emerging need**

Element	Funding / £
Purchase of eVouchers for school holiday periods	1,050,000
Food, Essentials, and Wider essentials Grants	208,000
Housing grants (not eligible for DHP)	60,000
Community Connections – care leavers, homeless and ASRs	20,000
Carers	30,000
Plymouth Energy Community	500,000
Community Meals	25,000
Contingency/unallocated	229,500
Administration at 7.5%	172,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,294,800</b>

## **Appendix I: Grants Scheme**

### **Eligibility**

Grants will only go to organisations not to individuals. Grants will be given to constituted groups, Charities and social enterprises who can provide food and essential items to individuals and families in need either through buying, storage or distribution; or who are providing sustainable approaches to food such as growing and cooking food

- a. Open to any organisation that can help to achieve the aims and objectives listed
- b. The organisation will need to be constituted, not for profit and have a bank account

**Delivery**

- a. Web-page on POD
- b. PCC Email address for information/help
  - i. FAQs
  - ii. Record keeping
- c. Use PCC Firmstep for Grant Application and distribution.
- d. Authorisation panel membership to be decided – will need to include a minimum of Food Plymouth, the Director for Public Health, Families and Children representative, Economic Development Representative to provide business support.

**Further information for grant applicants:**

- Maximum amount of grant awarded will be £10k, but most grants will be smaller than this.
- The money to be spent by March 2022.
- We expect applicants to demonstrate how this funding will provide additional support to those in need through an expanded service or an increase in numbers. The funding will not pay for current levels of activity.
- Successful applicants will need to keep records, detailing expenditure, evidence of impact and compliance against national grant conditions.

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# Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting:	17 November 2021
Title of Report:	<b>Finance Monitoring Report 2021</b>
Lead Member:	Councillor Nick Kelly (Leader)
Lead Strategic Director:	Brendan Arnold (Service Director for Finance)
Author:	David Northey - Head of Integrated Finance Hannah West – Finance Business Partner
Contact Email:	David.northey@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	Fin/djn/2021(05)
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

## Purpose of Report

This report sets out the revenue finance monitoring position of the Council to the end of the financial year 2021/22, as at the end of August 2021.

## Recommendations and Reasons

### The committee:

- I. Notes the current revenue monitoring position;

### Alternative options considered and rejected

None – our Financial Regulations require us to produce regular monitoring of our finance resources.

### Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The financial outturn report is fundamentally linked to delivering the priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan. Allocating limited resources to key priorities will maximise the benefits to the residents of Plymouth.

### Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

Robust and accurate financial monitoring underpins the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The Council's MTFP is updated regularly based on on-going monitoring information, both on a local and national context. Any adverse variations from the annual budget will place pressure on the MTFP going forward and require additional savings to be generated in future years.

### Financial Risks

The Council is a complex service organisation with a gross expenditure budget exceeding £500m in financial year 2021/22. The delivery of this budget within agreed financial parameters is of critical importance for the ongoing sustainability of the Council and the continued delivery of services to the City of Plymouth on a basis that is affordable.

**Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:**

No impacts directly arising from this report.

**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 reducing revenue and capital resources across the public sector has been identified as a key risk within our Strategic Risk register. The ability to deliver spending plans is paramount to ensuring the Council can achieve its objectives.

**Appendices**

\*Add rows as required to box below

Ref.	Title of Appendix	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

**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.21. 22.12 3	Leg	MS/0 4.10. 21	Mon Off		HR		Assets		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Brendan Arnold (Service Director for Finance)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 16/09/2021											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Nick Kelly (Leader)											
Date approved: 21/09/2021											

**SECTION A: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY****Table I: End of year revenue forecast**

	Budget £m	Net Forecast Outturn £m	Variance £m
<b>Total General Fund Budget</b>	<b>195.568</b>	<b>196.513</b>	<b>0.945</b>

The forecast revenue outturn after the application of Covid grants and council mitigating actions is currently estimated at £0.945m over budget, which is a variance of +0.5% against the net budget (+0.18% against the gross budget). This is a reduction of £0.501m over period 4.

This is the August monitoring report for 2021/22 and it should be noted that the financial position will fluctuate as we move through the year. Officers and Members will work closely to manage the finances towards a balanced position by the end of the year.

Within this position the following headline financial issues are reported:

1. The pandemic continues to have a major impact on our financial resources, with a potential drawdown of £16.315m against the currently available grants. The impact of COVID-19 will continue in this financial year but in this forecast the additional costs identified are offset by grant and so there is a nil impact on the forecast variance. A detailed review will be undertaken at Period 6.
2. Key budget pressures:
  - a) £1.185m reported within Customer & Corporate Services Directorate. This has improved by £0.313m in the last month owing to (a) management of staff vacancies and (b) a saving in the treasury area.
3. Key favourable variances:
  - a) Public Health is still reporting an underspend of £0.094m.
  - b) Place Directorate are now reporting an underspend of £0.139m. an improvement of £0.181m.

**SECTION B: Directorate Review****Table 2: End of year revenue forecast by Directorate**

Directorate	Budget £m	Forecast £m	COVID offset £m	Forecast Net Variance £m	Status
Executive Office	5.429	5.459	(0.037)	(0.007)	under
Customer and Corporate Services	44.031	46.078	(0.862)	1.185	over
Children's Directorate	53.074	60.988	(7.914)	0.000	on budget
People Directorate	89.441	93.018	(3.577)	0.000	on budget
Public Health	(0.537)	(0.572)	(0.059)	(0.094)	under
Place Directorate	24.976	28.703	(3.866)	(0.139)	under
Corporate Items	(20.846)	(37.161)	16.315	0.000	on budget
Total	195.568	196.513	0.000	0.945	over

**1. Executive Office**

1.1 The Executive Office is reporting a small underspend due to savings on salaries.

**2. Customer and Corporate Services Directorate**

2.1 The Customer and Corporate Services Directorate is forecasting an over spend of £1.185m. This has reduced from £1.498m last month. Work will continue to adopt mitigating actions and the position will continue to be closely monitored moving forward.

**3. Children's Directorate**

3.1 The directorate is forecasting a breakeven position for the year, after identifying COVID-19 related costs of £7.914m for the year, offset by applying equivalent grant.

**4. People Directorate**

4.1 The People Directorate is forecasting a breakeven position for the year.

**5. Office of the Director of Public Health (ODPH)**

5.1 Public Health is continuing to report an under spend of £0.094m as a result of continuing management reviews of all expenditure.

**6. Place Directorate**

6.1 The directorate is reporting an under spend of £0.139m which is an improved position from the month 3 over spend of £0.042m. This is due mainly to vacancy savings within Strategic Planning and Infrastructure.



6.2 COVID-19 related additional spend and income foregone totals £3.866m. The majority of this continues to relate to loss of car parking income. Although significant increased costs are still showing in Street Scene and Waste.

## 7. **Corporate Items**

7.1 The overall position shows a nil variation.

7.2 COVID-19 financial support continues to be held here, and is being used to offset pressures that have arisen across all Directorates as a result of the pandemic; currently these are forecast to a total of £16.315m. At Period 6 the Finance Department will be working with directorates to undertake an in depth review of these commitments.

**Appendix A 2021/22 Savings status (I) Summary**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Achieved savings</b>	<b>on track for delivery</b>	<b>Working on for delivery</b>	<b>Planned, internal/external actions required to deliver</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
Children's	<b>4.001</b>	1.644	1.179	1.178	0.000
People	<b>3.160</b>	0.300	2.680	0.180	0.000
ODPH	<b>0.028</b>	0.000	0.028	0.000	0.000
Customer & Corporate	<b>4.571</b>	0.000	2.266	0.040	2.265
Place	<b>1.035</b>	0.080	0.105	0.350	0.500
Corporate Items	<b>1.050</b>	1.015	0.000	0.000	0.035
<b>2021/22 Savings</b>	<b>13.845</b>	<b>3.039</b>	<b>6.258</b>	<b>1.748</b>	<b>2.800</b>

## Appendix A 2021/22 Savings status (2) Detail

Directorate / Plans	Target Savings	Achieved savings	Plans on track for delivery	Plans worked on for delivery	Planned, internal/external actions required to deliver
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
<b>Children</b>					
EPS step up	0.152			0.152	
Home to School Transport	0.179			0.179	
AST	0.500	0.100	0.292	0.108	
Fostering	0.670	0.189	0.242	0.239	
Troubled Families	0.650	0.317	0.333		
Placement Review	1.400	1.038	0.312	0.050	
Management Actions	0.450			0.450	
<b>Children - Savings</b>	<b>4.001</b>	<b>1.644</b>	<b>1.179</b>	<b>1.178</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>People</b>					
Care Package Reviews (SC)	0.775		0.775		
Direct Payment Reviews (SC)	0.250		0.250		
Increased FCP Income (SC)	0.100			0.100	
Commissioned Contracts (SC)	0.250		0.250		
Grant Maximisation (CC)	0.200	0.200			
Management Actions (CC)	0.050	0.050			
Income Targets (CC)	0.050	0.050			
One Off Savings 2020/21 (SC)	1.485		1.405	0.080	
<b>People - savings</b>	<b>3.160</b>	<b>0.300</b>	<b>2.680</b>	<b>0.180</b>	<b>0.000</b>

<b>ODPH</b>					
Additional Income	0.008		0.008		
Additional Income #2	0.020		0.020		
<b>ODPH - savings</b>	<b>0.028</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.028</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>
<b>Customer, Corporate Services and Executive Office</b>					
Efficiency	0.949				0.949
FM review	0.550				0.550
Business support	1.200		0.434		0.766
ICT	1.000		1.000		
CEX; Legal services	0.100		0.100		
Coroner	0.040			0.019	0.021
Training	0.153		0.153		
Capitalise Capital Team	0.050		0.050		
Internal Audit	0.016		0.016		
Departmental	0.513		0.513		
<b>Customer &amp; Corporate Services and Executive Office savings</b>	<b>4.571</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>2.266</b>	<b>0.019</b>	<b>2.286</b>
<b>Place</b>					
Regeneration Property Fund	0.500				0.500
Concessionary Fares	0.080	0.080			
Weston Mill, bulky & trade waste income	0.208			0.208	
Resident Parking	0.060		0.060		
On/Off parking	0.065			0.065	
Fees and charges including Mt. Edgcumbe	0.122		0.045	0.077	
<b>Place savings</b>	<b>1.035</b>	<b>0.080</b>	<b>0.105</b>	<b>0.350</b>	<b>0.500</b>
<b>Corporate</b>					
Schools PFI - adjustments	1.015	1.015			
Income target not allocated	0.035				0.035
<b>Corporate savings</b>	<b>1.050</b>	<b>1.015</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.035</b>
<b>Overall Total savings</b>	<b>13.845</b>	<b>3.039</b>	<b>6.258</b>	<b>1.748</b>	<b>2.800</b>

# Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting:	17 November 2021
Title of Report:	<b>Elective Home Education</b>
Lead Member:	Councillor David Downie (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills, Children and Young People)
Lead Strategic Director:	Alison Botham (Director for Childrens Services)
Author:	Isabelle Morgan
Contact Email:	<a href="mailto:Isabelle.morgan@plymouth.gov.uk">Isabelle.morgan@plymouth.gov.uk</a>
Your Reference:	AB.IM.20211117.3
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

## Purpose of Report

The Education and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee have requested information regarding the current position in Plymouth regarding Elective Home Education. The purpose of the report is to provide information in order to facilitate Committee discussions around this line of enquiry.

## Recommendations and Reasons

The Committee is asked to note the report.

## Alternative options considered and rejected

None this is a report only

## Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

This report supports the 'Caring for People and Communities' priority. It helps to make sure children and young people benefit from a suitable education in order to achieve; develop the necessary skills to be productive citizens who can make a sustained contribution to both the society and economy of the city. It will also help to reduce inequalities within the city.

This report supports the 'Unlocking the City's Potential' Priority. It helps to make sure children and young people benefit from a suitable education in order to achieve; develop the necessary skills to be productive citizens who can make a sustained contribution to both the society and economy of the city. It will also help to reduce inequalities within the city.

The work reflects our values of co-operation between partners and the recognition that as a society, we are responsible for each other.



**Background papers:**

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	djn.21. 22.15 0	Leg	LS/37 596/A C/5/1 1/21	Mon Off		HR		Assets		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Ming Zhang											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 04/11/2021											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor David Downie approved by email.											
Date approved: 05/11/2021											

## Elective Home Education (EHE)

The Home Education Service came back in-house on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019. The Inclusion Attendance and Welfare Service (IAWS) has responsibility for delivering the service. To date we have seen an increase in 27.9% across the same period last year, approximately 1.75% of the statutory school aged population in Plymouth was home educated during academic year 2020/21. There is a higher rate of increase nationally according to a BBC survey.

Through the use of a rigorous monitoring framework and the work of the Inclusion Strategy Board we are moving toward a more preventative model to prevent and reduce the number of inappropriate elective home education before it takes place.

### Vulnerability and risk

Having brought the Home Education Service back in-house we now understand the prevalence of statutory school aged children who are registered as home educated but who are in fact inappropriate and missing education. In academic year 2020-21 we therefore issued 38 School Attendance Orders, which is high in number and currently have 15 children for whom there is no evidence of suitable education and for whom we are following our enforcement processes. While we are moving to a preventative service model, we continue to identify children who need this level of statutory intervention.

In total 65.4% statutory school aged children were registered as home educated during academic year 2020/21, of those children 232 had been open Children's Social Care on a Child In Need Plan and 57 on a Child Protection Plan at some point across the same period. This clearly demonstrates a higher number of vulnerable children becoming EHE in Plymouth and indicates vulnerability of many children in the city who are home educated.

### Partnership

In August 2021 as a result of a Rapid Review, the IAWS and Children's Social Care completed a joint analysis of vulnerability for the 299 registered home educated children in the city. As a result 5 children were identified as **RED**, 15 as **AMBER** and the remainder as **GREEN** to guide the level of service inputs. 13 actions were agreed as the result of the audit and this work was undertaken by Education Welfare Officers.

### Elective Home Education Data

Numbers of statutory school aged children registered as EHE **at the end of each** academic year:

Academic Year	Number of registered EHE students*
2013/14	96
2014/15	122
2015/16	130
2016/17	164
2017/18	286
2018/19	342
2019/20	369
2020/21	375



Please note that this is locally held data. There is currently there is no requirement for data around Elective Home Education to be reported to DfE. This means that there is no ability to benchmark against national, regional or statistical neighbour averages at this time. We have contacted colleagues from the following authorities Portsmouth, Cornwall, North Somerset, Bristol, South Gloucester and Gloucestershire, from the conversation that we have had we understand that the percentage of children who are home educated in Plymouth is average when compared to the other authorities.

Academic Year end	% boys	% girls
2013/14	51%	49%
2014/15	52%	48%
2015/16	51%	49%
2016/17	52%	48%
2017/18	51%	49%
2018/19	50%	50%
2019/20	49%	51%
2020/21	50%	50%

Academic Year end	Number with statement / EHCP	% of EHE population
2013/14	11	11%
2014/15	16	13%
2015/16	12	9%
2016/17	17	10%
2017/18	29	10%
2018/19	33	9%
2019/20	38	10%
2020/21	33	8%

The figures below show the information for EHE students on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Number of EHE pupils registered	277
Number of girls	135
Number of boys	142
Number of EHE registered eligible for FSM	64
Number with EHCP	19*
Number who previously had SEN support	54
Number who are Children in Need	7
Of which are on a Child Protection Plan	2

\*This figure does not include post 16 children who have and EHCP and are registered as home educated. The post-16 cohort who are not in education are managed through Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) process, instead of EHE.

Registered EHE Pupils by Year Group

Year Group	Number
0	0
1	8
2	19
3	13
4	26
5	31
6	21
7	12
8	28
9	28
10	31
11	60

**Registered Pupils by Ethnicity**

Ethnicity	Registered
OOEG - Other Ethnic Group	2
Not Known	46
MOTH - Any Oth Mixed b'ground	8
WWEU - White Western Euro'n	4
WTUR - Turkish/Turkish Cypriot	0
MWBA - White and Black African	4
APKN – Pakistani	0
MWBC - White & Black Caribbean	0
CHKC - Hong Kong Chinese	0
NOBT - Info not yet obtained	9
WEEU - White Eastern Euro'n	3
WOTW - White Other	8
WBRI - White British	164
REFU – Refused	5
WENG - White English	17
WIRI - White Irish	3
WROO - Other Gypsy/Roma	0

Registered Pupils by Ethnicity	
Ethnicity	Registered
WROM - Gypsy/Roma	3
MWAS - White and Asian	1

Reason for EHE	All registered students
Dissatisfaction with the school environment	40
Lifestyle/Philosophical/Culture*	19
Attendance/Prosecution	0
Medical – Child	1
Medical – Parent	0
School refuser/phobic	13
Bullying	6
Emotional behavioural difficulties	0
Near Exclusion	3
Other	9
Dissatisfaction with SEN provision	0
Relationship issues	0
Not preferred school	5
No reason recorded	127
Not known (at time of recording on ONE)	10
Religious Beliefs	0
COVID-19 related	33
Parent failed to engage with service	7
Parent refused to complete paperwork	4

### **What does the 2020/21 academic year data tell us?**

The number of children home educated continued to rise in 2020/21, 573 children were registered for elective home education. There were 49 applications for children to return to primary school and 58 applications for secondary aged pupils across the same period.

Of the 573 children whose parents elected for them to be home educated, 363 were secondary school aged and 210 are primary school aged. 189 were in years 10 and 11 and 174 in years 7, 8 & 9. This reflects the concern nationally that schools might be “encouraging” families to remove their children to educate them at home. There is some evidence that a small number of schools have disproportionately high numbers of pupils leaving to be home educated.

An Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will conduct an initial home visit once a referral has been made to the IAWS regarding a parents intention to home educate. If the EWO in carrying out their duty receives information from the parents regarding off-rolling practice, the Headteacher will be challenged by the IAWS manager and advised to put the child(ren) back on roll.

### **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

There are currently 43 children and young people who are educated at home and who have an EHCP, 19 of these pupils are statutory school aged and are considered and managed through Elective Home Education (EHE) process. This number has increased in recent years and reflects the national trend. A deep dive analysis is being conducted to fully understand this increasing trend in Plymouth and this work is being fed back into to the work of the Inclusion Strategy Board. There is a need to ensure that families are making a positive choice to educate at home, supported around the options and have access to the information needed to make this successful for the child. There is information available on the council website and the [SEND Local Offer](#) to support families.

Key messages from the deep dive analysis so far:

- The 2020/21 monthly trend of the volume of EHE can be linked to the COVID-19 pandemic government restrictions;
- The majority of EHE pupils do not have an identified special education need. Understanding the reasons behind the EHE decision requires further analysis;
- There is an even gender split across the whole EHE population but more males are EHE with special Education needs;
- Most pupils become EHE in Key Stage three; and currently most EHE pupils are in Key Stage four. This could be linked to the rise in numbers of EHE through the pandemic leading up to key transition points, highlighting that post-16 support is essential for these pupils over the next few years;
- The majority of children and young people remain EHE for approximately one year (48 weeks for all EHE and SEN Support pupils). Children and young people who previously had an EHCP remain in EHE for almost two years (100 weeks);
- 70.8% of pupils (51) who registered as home educated across the period are registered as SEN support;
- 36% (12) of pupils who registered as home educated across the period have an EHCP; the majority of reasons provided relate to the school not meeting child’s needs and school anxiety not directly COVID-19 related (although not meeting needs through the pandemic and school anxiety could indirectly be related to the pandemic);

- The primary need type of all EHCP pupils (0-25) is Communication and Interaction (all of which identify Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) as the secondary need type). Very few identify SEMH as the primary need.

The most prevalent reasons for parents electing to home educate in 2020/21 are:

- Dissatisfaction with the school environment
- Lifestyle/Philosophical/Culture
- COVID-19 related
- School refuser/phobic
- No reason recorded

### **Safeguarding**

In order to be assured that we effectively safeguard children who are home educated we review the Child At Risk Alerts on a daily basis, they are then RAG rated for action. If we receive any evidence that the home environment is unsuitable or that there is a lack of parental supervision and control we follow this up with increased monitoring checks.

Where parents are considering home education and Children's Social Care are involved we are linking with the social worker to develop a joint plan to try prevent the parent from deregistering their child to home education.

We use the databases available to us to make checks regarding historical and current multi-agency involvement in order to ensure that cases can be RAG rated and prioritised for increased monitoring or a multi-agency approach.

We also have fortnightly home education team meetings and staff receive regular case supervision.

We have a CPOMS licence, which enables us to receive school safeguarding files when a child is registered as home educated, again this provides us with an extra level of oversight so that we can plan casework according to levels of risk.

We are working in partnership with schools to keep children on roll for a brief period of time (with the parents consent) so that Education Welfare Officers can meet with the family, seek the voice of the child and ensure that the parent is making a positive and informed choice. Where there is an opportunity for a child to return to school, the EWO will support the family with this. Where there is a suggestion of off-rolling practice this is followed up by an LAWS Manager.

### **Monitoring**

The work is intensive and requires over and above the FTE allocated to deliver the service. Plymouth City Council monitors the suitability of home education within the first 3 months of a pupil being registered as home educated and if the education is deemed as suitable, the monitoring activity is carried out on an annual basis. Home educators submit their evidence via email or post and children are not routinely seen as a part of the monitoring process. Home visits are conducted and prioritised on a case by case basis.

### **School Attendance Orders**

A great deal of work has been undertaken with school to increase their understanding of the monitoring work being undertaken for home education. Schools have been extremely supportive of being named on School Attendance Orders, as a result we have been able to support children to return to school quickly. In issuing school attendance orders we are actively seeking the preference of

the parent so that we can try and name a school on the Order which has space and is a school that they want. Inevitably a number of the children have had ACE named on their Order and this is because their needs are such that it is the only suitable provision available to them.

### **Transition**

12 months pilot funding has been secured through the High Needs Block for a Transition Practitioner to provide electively home educated children with the support that they need to return to mainstream education, this pilot project will be effective from January 2022. In addition, 6 months of funding, which will come out of the EP&S school improvement budget, has been secured to employ a qualified teacher to work with families and monitor the suitability of home education.

### **Development Plans**

On 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021 there were 277 children registered as home educated. Plymouth City Council's Rapid Improvement Board will consider how to develop policy and practice in relation to Elective Home Education, making recommendations regarding citywide arrangements and resourcing in Plymouth.

# Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting:	17 November 2021
Title of Report:	<b>Inclusion Strategy Board</b>
Lead Member:	Councillor David Downie (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills, Children and Young People)
Lead Strategic Director:	Alison Botham (Director for Childrens Services)
Author:	Ming Zhang
Contact Email:	Ming.zhang@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	AB/MZ.20211117.2
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

## **Purpose of Report**

The Education and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee have requested information regarding the work of the Inclusion Strategy Board.

## **Recommendations and Reasons**

The Committee is asked to note the report.

## **Alternative options considered and rejected**

None this is a report only

## **Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan**

The Plymouth Plan to improve the lives of children and young people:

The Board strive to ensure that all schools, academies, colleges and early years and childcare settings in Plymouth are able to provide high quality education, and to follow and commit to both the spirit and the letter of the law with inclusive values. A strong partnership working between education leaders and Plymouth City Council is pivotal to developing a city-wide approach to inclusive education, which encompasses the City-wide commitment to the trauma informed approach and framework.

## **Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:**

None this is a report only.

## **Financial Risks:**

None this is a report only.

## **Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:**

None this is a report only.

**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**

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

**Background papers:**

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	djn.21.2 2.149	Leg	LS/37 597/A C/5/1 1/21	Mon Off		HR		Assets		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Ming Zhang											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 29/10/2021											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor David Downie approved by email.											
Date approved: 05/11/2021											



## **Introducing Inclusion Strategy Board**

### **Background**

The Inclusion Strategy Board was established in February 2021 to provide a strategic forum to join up the city's education inclusion work in order to achieve better outcomes for all children. The Board work to:

1. Ensure that every child and young person including vulnerable and disadvantaged learners in Plymouth has an equal chance in accessing a good or outstanding school.
2. Ensure a strong and productive partnership between schools, local authority and other partners.
3. Promote and share the good practice of inclusive education among schools.
4. Develop the leadership role of successful inclusive schools with proven good capacity to expand system leadership across the City through sharing good practice and promoting school improvement partnership working.
5. Identify and collectively respond to inclusion priorities and opportunities across all schools in the City.
6. Secure a consistent approach to monitoring and evaluating the impact of all partners' inclusion work, including the commissioned inclusion projects.
7. Develop, apply and review a robust management information system which will be an enabler of evidence-based scrutiny and evaluation of the impacts and effectiveness of all inclusion initiatives and projects.
8. Monitor and review the implementation of SEND strategy, In Year Fair Access Protocol, Exclusion Reduction, Looked-after Children's education and Alternative Provision.
9. Where necessary, recommend the changes to the City's inclusion approaches, provision model, based on the evidence of their impacts and effectiveness.

This Board is accountable to Plymouth Education Board for a strong and positive partnership working in relation to the education outcomes of children and young people in the City.

### **Vision**

The Board strive to ensure that all schools, academies, colleges and early years and childcare settings in Plymouth are able to provide high quality education, and to follow and commit to both the spirit and the letter of the law with inclusive values. A strong partnership working between education leaders and Plymouth City Council is pivotal to developing a city-wide approach to inclusive education, which encompasses the City-wide commitment to the trauma informed approach and framework.

### **Current Focus**

Since its establishment in February 2021, the Inclusion Strategy Board acts as a partnership scrutiny and consultative body to enable schools, Local Authority, Regional School Commissioner (RSC), other partners and commissioned services to work together on strategic education inclusion priorities in Plymouth.

In the past 6 months, the Inclusion Board has worked to secure a consistent approach to monitoring and evaluating the impact of all LA and partners' inclusion work, including the commissioned inclusion projects. These co-ordinated interventions and actions include:

1. As a result, an Inclusion Scorecard has been developed to better understand the trend of inclusion in education provisions. This high level Inclusion indicators will also be used by the DfE

for the place-based programme and the city council to inform the elected members. The indicators of the score card include:

- Exclusion
  - Persistent Absence
  - Children Missing Education (CME)
  - Elective Home Education (EHE)
2. Guided by the Board, another strand of inclusion dataset with a wider range of school level inclusion data are being developed to inform schools' peer to peer challenge and support. Apart from the above-mentioned high level KPIs, the school level data will also include the data of pupil movement, the use of reduced time-table, admission of hard to place pupils and the use of alternative provision.
3. Currently, there are two key strands of inclusion work that are steered and monitored by the Board:

### **Secondary Inclusion Project**

As part of the Plymouth Commission Secondary Strategy to reduce pupil mobility across the city the board are looking to appoint to the following roles:

- Inclusion Support Centres Coordinator (1 post)
- Inclusion Support Centre Teachers (3 posts)
- Inclusion Support Centre Teaching Assistants (3 posts)

These exciting opportunities are initially available from 1 September 2021 until 31 August 2022. Secondment opportunities are available and applications are encouraged from staff already working in this field within their current setting. These posts will be funded by Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) agreed to by the Schools Forum.

Working closely with the Inclusion Support Centre Coordinator and Educational Psychologist, the teacher and teaching assistant will establish and evaluate the needs of pupils and ensure support programmes are in place, adapted and delivered to achieve the ultimate goal of successful reintegration within their home school. The teacher will be responsible for the day-to-day delivery of curriculum and specialised education within their Inclusion Cluster, supported by a teaching assistant. Pupils will also be supported by a dedicated keyworker from their home school with whom they will have regular contact. The Inclusion Support Centre Coordinator and Educational Psychologist will liaise with the staff in the centres and senior colleagues from the home school to ensure that each pupil receives a high-quality bespoke provision that supports a successful reintegration.

The pupils accessing the Inclusion Support Centres will be determined by the Cluster Inclusion Panels in liaison with the Educational Psychologist and Inclusion Support Centre Coordinator. They will be:

- in either Year 7 or 8 and;
- have exhibited challenging behaviour beyond that which can be easily accommodated at the home school, but;
- still considered as being able to be successful long-term in their home-school given a period of time in the Inclusion Support Centre

The current composition of the Plymouth Secondary Inclusion Clusters is as follows:

<b>Cluster</b>	<b>Schools</b>	<b>Cluster Lead</b>	<b>Inclusion Support Centre Likely to be located at</b>
A	DHSB, Notre Dame Plympton Academy, St Boniface's SDCC, Scott Medical and Torbridge High	Anita Frier (Principal, SDCC)	ASAP
B	ASAP, DHSG, Lipson, MAP and Sir John Hunt	Lee Sargeant (Headteacher, ASAP)	ASAP
C	Coombe Dean, Eggbuckland, Hele's, Millbay, Plymstock, PHSG and UTC	Richard Woodland (Director of Inclusion, WeST)	Eggbuckland

### **Primary Nature Group Inclusion Project**

Currently Discovery MAT and Plymouth CAST MAT are leading the two of three Nurture Provisions, which opened in September 2021 while a third one is being established and is expected to open in January 2022.

Each of the Nurture Provisions is to follow the successful model of The Edison Centre, based at Beechwood Primary Academy.

Referrals - Referral Process has been agreed and Leads of each unit will meet fortnightly to review referrals and agree placements. Referrals will not be made to an individual unit. Pupils will be placed based on need, geography, expertise and make up of cohorts.

Quality Assurance – Currently there is a set of KPIs to be agreed and used by the Inclusion Board for accountability. Regular monitoring by senior leaders in each of the Trusts and reporting to Trust Board. Local Authority Officers to monitor provision to provide support and challenge.

Next Steps for the Inclusion Board - Agree reporting cycle with Inclusion Board and review expressions of interest and agree to the third provision.

4. In the meantime, the Inclusion Strategy Board promotes the partnership approach in
  - Whole School SEND
  - Proposed Review of Alternative Provision

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# Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting:	17 November 2021
Title of Report:	<b>Young Carers</b>
Lead Member:	Councillor David Downie (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills, Children and Young People)
Lead Strategic Director:	Alison Botham (Director for Children's Services)
Author:	Michael House
Contact Email:	Michael.house.plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	AB.MZ.MH.20211117.1
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

## Purpose of Report

The Education and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee have requested information regarding the current position in Plymouth regarding Young Carers. The purpose of the report is to provide information in order to facilitate Committee discussions around this line of enquiry.

## Recommendations and Reasons

To note the contents of the report.

## Alternative options considered and rejected

None as the report is for noting only.

## Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

Caring for our communities' - to make sure children and young people benefit from a suitable education in order to achieve; develop the necessary skills to be productive citizens who can make a sustained contribution to both the society and economy of the city. As defined by Government, 'A young carer means a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person' and 'providing practical or emotional support' (Children and Families Act section 96 – 2014). Every young carer's situation is different. Some young carers will only be caring for a short time whilst others will be a young carer for all of their childhood; either may have an impact on the child's health, wellbeing and ability to engage with education.

The work reflects our values of co-operation between partners and the recognition that as a society, we are responsible for each other. Plymouth has a strong record of bringing together various organisations and individuals to meet the diverse needs of young carers. A wide range of activity delivered either through specific in-school nurturing provision, commissioned supporting services or intra-school workforce development is growing, however there is further work to do

**Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:**

None

**Financial Risks:**

None

**Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:**

None

**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**

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

**Background papers:**

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	djn.21. 22.14 4	Leg	LS/37 590/JP /0411 21	Mon Off	Click here to enter text.	HR		Assets		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Ming Zhang											

Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes

Date agreed: 29/10/2021

Cabinet Member approval: *[electronic signature (or typed name and statement of 'approved by*

*email/verbally']*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'V. [unclear]', written over a horizontal line.

Date approved: 05/11/2021

## **YOUNG CARERS UPDATE – EDUCATION SCRUTINY REPORT**

### **Michael House**

*Health and Wellbeing in Education Officer*

*Plymouth City Council*

### **Karlina Hall**

*Commissioning Officer*

*Plymouth City Council*

### **Emma Crowther**

*Strategic Commissioning Manager*

*Plymouth City Council*

## **INTRODUCTION AND PLYMOUTH CONTEXT**

As defined by Government, 'A young carer means a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person' and 'providing practical or emotional support' (*Children and Families Act section 96 – 2014*). Every young carer's situation is different. Some young carers will only be caring for a short time whilst others will be a young carer for all of their childhood; either may have an impact on the child's health, wellbeing and ability to engage with education.

Identification of young carers is the key to unlock support and develop understanding, ultimately improving life chances for young carers. Plymouth has a strong record of bringing together various organisations and individuals to meet the diverse needs of young carers. A wide range of activity delivered either through specific in-school nurturing provision, commissioned supporting services or intra-school workforce development is growing, however there is further work to do.

## **CURRENT NEEDS**

Following the most recent Plymouth Young Carers School Survey (November 2020), the Local Authority recorded the identification of 907 young carers within Plymouth's schools.

- 907 Young Carers in the city (431 Primary, 476 Secondary)
- F=19, Y1=28, Y2=45, Y3=56, Y4=70, Y5=103, Y6=110, Y7=46, Y8=87, Y9=84, Y10=96, Y11=96, Y12=40, Y13=27.
- YC with SEND = 224
- YC who are disadvantaged = 522
- YC from Service Families = 49
- YC who are BAME = 30
- YC with school attendance less than 90% due to caring responsibilities = 123

This number includes 92 children within Key Stage One (5 to 7 year olds). The 2011 National Census indicated a figure of 166,000 young carers between the age of 5 and 17 in England. This is widely believed to be an underrepresentation, with some estimates suggesting that as many as one in five schoolchildren are young carers (*University of Nottingham 2018*), with this number increasing during the COVID-19 pandemic.



The Children's Society 2013 report (which analysed the findings of the DfE's Longitudinal Study of Young People in England) found that approximately 1 in 20 young carers missed school because of their caring responsibilities. This is reflected within Plymouth with 13.5% of recorded young carers having a significant reduction on school attendance (less than 90% attendance).

The 2013 report also stated that young carers had significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level, the equivalent to nine grades lower overall than their peers. The recent Carer's Trust Survey (*Measuring the Impact of COVID-19 on Young Carers – Carers Trust – 2020* - <https://carers.org/news-and-media/news/post/51-steep-decline-in-mental-health-of-young-carers-and-young-adult-carers-following-coronavirus-outbreak>) found that 11% of young carers reported an increase of 30 hours or more in the amount of time they spend caring per week and that 56% of young carers say their education is suffering during the Covid 19 pandemic.

A range of complex factors hinder self-disclosure and the identification (be it from children and young people or their families) of young carers. These include, but are not limited to, stigma, fear of separation, lack of understanding and other influences. The Covid 19 pandemic has inevitably had a detrimental effect on young carers. Local partners had the top issues for young carers as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic to be financial, access to education, access to support and mental health.

## RECENT AND CURRENT ACTIVITY / HIGHLIGHTS

Within Plymouth the profile of young carers has been raised significantly between 2018 to 2021, with the introduction, development and maintenance of a wide range of activity including:

- **Young Carers Education Support Team (YCEST)** – sharing expertise and experience from three lead schools (Notre Dame School, Montpelier Primary School and Laira Green Primary School) and supporting Plymouth's network of Young Carer Leads.
- **Plymouth Online Directory (POD) Young Carers Support Hub** – this online information hub had been developed with young carers as a legacy of the Young Carers Support Hub which brought a range of partners together to identify and support young carers during the first lockdown and the transition back into school (March to September 2020). The hub provides information, advice and guidance for professional and non-professionals, families and young carers. Specific information is included regarding 'Young Carers Assessment', 'Health and wellbeing', 'Friendship and Socialising', 'Employment and Training', 'Growing up', 'How to get involved', 'Support' and 'Your Rights as a Carer'. This very informative hub of information also provides resources to help schools to identify young carers and, highlighting the challenges and potential supportive interventions that exist. Guidance is also provided regarding transition. This is a time of particular challenge as our young carers move into adulthood.
- **Young Carers Network / Newsletter** – A regular source of information, signposting and awareness raising for schools and settings. The monthly Young Carers Newsletter is circulated to the Young Carers Leads in schools, Plymouth Carers Strategic Partnership Board members and the Mind The Gap working group. The newsletters are all available on POD [here](#). A wider range of health and wellbeing related information and signposting is distributed to targeted school staff via the Health and Wellbeing in Education Briefings (also a monthly communication) and the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Steering Group.

- **Young Carers Champion** - Promoting inclusive and equitable provision within Plymouth schools through best practice sharing, workforce development, awareness building and education scrutiny. This activity forms part of the Carers Strategic Partnership Board Action Plan. A new workshop ('Removing Barriers To Learning For Young Carers') has been created and delivered to Plymouth Marjon University (student teachers) and is now available for schools to benefit from. Direct support to schools has included telephone support, resource sharing, sign-posting and Early Help Assessment Tool (EHAT) advice.
- **Intelligence Gathering** – The 'Young Carers Annual School Survey', now an online facility, seeks to understand how many young carers have been identified in each school. Last year as a result of the Mind The Gap project additional fields were added to identify young carers from minority ethnic, refugee and asylum seeker communities. The recent 'Young Carers in Lockdown' survey compiled by Plymouth Hype, identified that young carers have received support from their schools throughout the Covid 19 Pandemic (e.g. access to school nurses, self-help information, access to outside agencies, access to counsellors/mentors and regular teacher check-ins, laptops, food vouchers, flexible expectations regarding completion of school work and links to networks of support). The new online Young Carers Assessment and Transition Assessment forms (launched in Sept 2021 on the Professional Portal) will allow for reporting on the number and needs of young carers to have a better understanding in the future. The Early Help Assessment Tool (EHAT) is also able to identify young carers which can be reported on against other fields in the form such as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and age.
- **School Development and Scrutiny** - regarding support for young carers and additional needs has been developed to utilising the Healthy Child Quality Mark Programme, the Section 175/157 Audit, the SEND Audit and soon to be introduced, the Inclusion Charter Audit. These assisted self-review tools scrutinise various aspects of support, providing targeted developments in provision, procedure and policy and provide a broad source of intelligence to further target expertise and support.
- **Commissioned Services - Time 4 U** is Plymouth's young carer offer to children and young people; it is provided by Plymouth City Council Community Youth Services, Barnardo's and Hamoaze House:
  - **Hamoaze House** has been commissioned by Plymouth City Council to provide low level dedicated early intervention support to children and young people across Plymouth who may be experiencing Hidden Harm as a result of one or more of their parents or carers having alcohol and or substance misuse issues.
  - **Barnardo's Young Carers Service** has been commissioned to support those who look after an adult family member who has a serious illness or disability. They engage with educational services to reduce the risk of social exclusion or underachieving.
  - **Community Youth Services** work with young carers from the age of 8 upwards in their junior and senior weekly young carers group sessions. They have also supported a Plymouth young carer to become a Young Carers Health Champion as part of the NHSEI programme. The Health Champion participated in a national roundtable event with the Vaccine Minister to engage with young people about Covid 19 vaccine hesitancy.
- **Other Organisations or Departments** - that support young carers either directly or by addressing one or more of the diverse challenges faced by children and young people who provide care include: Kooth (online mental health support); Carers Emergency Response Service (CERS); Head Space Plymouth (drop-in service); Marbles Lost and Found (mental health support); Together For Devon; NHS England and more teams across the Local Authority.

- **Particular Therapeutic or Social Activities** - available include the Fun and Freedom Club (Friends and Families); Crossroads Fun and Friendship Centre; In-school Nurture Clubs/Activities and Equine therapeutic sessions at the Ivybridge Donkey Sanctuary (some of this activity is now beginning again, following a pause due to the Covid 19 Pandemic).
- **Procedural Developments** - include the refresh of the Early Help Assessment Tool to make it easier for young carers support to be identified/requested. The Young Carers Assessment Tool and Guidance is now on the Professional Portal. With requests for support for young carers and Young Carers Assessments now going directly to the new Time4U mailbox from September 2021.

## NEXT STEPS

Within the previous Education Scrutiny Report (September 2019), the next steps for development were expressed via the themes of Understand, Inform, Identify, Support and Listen. The profile of young carers within the City has improved, however inequalities remain a wider area of focus and inevitably young carers have been adversely impacted by the many challenges that the Covid 19 pandemic has presented. The NHSEI funded Mind The Gap project to engage with young carers and carers across the Plymouth and Torbay continues (with the inclusion of Devon) to aim to reduce inequalities for people from minority ethnic, asylum seeker and refugee communities. We will ensure that this work links into the wider work across the Devon CCG footprint and nationally.

Moving on there are three interconnected areas of activity that support and inform the many sources of support available within the City:

### I. USE INTELLIGENCE AND THE VOICE OF THE CHILD TO RAISE AWARENESS

We have a range of data to call upon, including the voices of the young carers themselves. Utilising this intelligence to raise awareness, not only among the education workforce, but all children, young people and their families is key to removing barriers, stigma and improving school's responses to the challenges face by our young carers. Matching educational and wellbeing related theory to the real life challenges reported by children and young people we can improve understanding, drive the development of high quality support and ultimately improve educational outcomes and raise aspiration.

#### HOW:

- Analysis, Presentation and Dissemination of Intelligence (Workforce, Schools Communities, Partners)
- Delivery of Workforce Upskilling (Awareness Building) Targeted Workshops & CPD,
- Plymouth Online Directory Young Carer Hub,
- Monthly HWiE Briefings,
- Young Carers Network Communication/Newsletters (National, regional and local updates).
- Multi-agency meetings such as Carers Strategic Partnership Board, Mind The Gap working group, Devon Carers Leads Development Group and EHWP Steering Group.

### 2. IMPROVE IDENTIFICATION

Without timely and robust identification, support cannot be targeted effectively and assessments of need cannot be initiated. Raising the competency and confidence for education professionals regarding identification of young carers is not just an exercise in looking for signs or surveying parents/carers etc, but is grounded in creating an ethos of understanding and openness. Schools which deliver best practice

in pastoral and academic provision allow young carers to understand what their role is, what support is available and how the school can support their needs.

**HOW:**

- Delivery of Workforce Upskilling (Awareness Building) Targeted Workshops & CPD,
- Targeted Advice & Guidance for School Support Staff and Family Support Advisers
- Dissemination of Guidance – Regarding the EHAT Process.
- Launch of new online Young Carers Assessment & Transition Assessment templates (Professional Portal Process).

**3. SCRUTINISE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDE GUIDANCE AND SHARE BEST PRACTICE**

Interrogation of school provision, focusing on the development and maintenance of an inclusive, open and equitable place of learning can drive improvement and increase positive outcomes for young carers and all children and young people. Examples of best practice certainly do exist within the City thus can be promoted and shared, not only from young carer related support but care and nurturing practice for other areas of additional need, for example, armed forces families and children.

**HOW:**

- Delivery of supported self-review tools (Healthy Child Quality Mark, Inclusion Charter, SEND Audit and Section 175/157 Audit) and holistic cross analysis to inform targeted support and development.
- Intelligence and best practice sharing through the Health and Wellbeing in Education Professional Community (4 CPD and consultation events per year (formerly the PSHE Hub)– partnership activity with the Plymouth Teachers and School Alliance) and other groups such as Carers Strategic Partnership Board, Mind The Gap working group, Devon Carers Leads Development Group and EHWPB Steering Group.
- Creation of the Health and Wellbeing in Education Hub, housed within the Plymouth Online Directory, to contain information, advice and guidance, expanding and integrating the current Young Carers Support Hub section and the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Directory.

# Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting:	17 November 2021
Title of Report:	<b>Innovate Team CYPFS</b>
Lead Member:	Councillor David Downie
Lead Strategic Director:	Alison Botham (Director for Childrens Services)
Author:	Jean Kelly
Contact Email:	Jean.kelly@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	InnovateJK01112021
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

## **Purpose of Report**

Information sharing for committee members

## **Recommendations and Reasons**

This is an information briefing report.

## **Alternative options considered and rejected**

This was an emergency solution and required action in a tight timescale to respond to demand issues in the service.

## **Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan**

[Click here to enter text.](#)

## **Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:**

If demand continues to outstrip established capacity to respond this must be considered as part of our medium term financial planning. Robust social work responses are essential to ensure appropriate response to families requiring statutory support and intervention.

## **Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:**

No direct implications

## **Introduction**

This report sets out information related to the use of a managed social work team solution to respond to increased demand in the service and the challenges faced in recruitment and retention of experienced social work staff. The report also sets out our current exit planning approach and contingency planning.

## **Workforce and Demand issues requiring a managed team approach**

The Children, Young People and Family Service has continued to experience a 25% increase in demand for social work services since late March 2020, when the first Covid-19 lockdown commenced. This includes an increase in new referrals as well as the number of children requiring an ongoing service due to safeguarding concerns. This demand has exceeded establishment capacity to respond and required additional social work resource.

Prior to the pandemic the ability of Plymouth City Council to recruit and retain social work staff has been positive, with the exception of the retention of experienced social workers in the Children's Social Work Teams (those social workers working with children subject to Child Protection Plans and care proceedings). Since March 2020, there have been increased difficulties in retaining social workers in these teams and turnover has been higher than we would ordinarily experience, with some staff naming the pressure of casework as one of the reasons for their decision to leave. We take this very seriously and need now to find a solution that supports retention of staff and supports their wellbeing at this challenging time, as well as enabling the service to continue to operate safely and support vulnerable children and families.

Our usual recruitment routes and strategies have not resulted in experienced social workers in the numbers or timescales needed. This includes both permanent and temporary social workers. We know that this is not an issue unique to Plymouth and represents a challenge in the south west region and nationally.

We are continuing to manage to successfully appoint sufficient numbers of newly qualified workers who can take on child in need cases only and in lower numbers than experienced workers can. These staff members cannot take on complex casework during their first year of practice and therefore we still have a significant gap in our capacity.

We sought funding to use an organisation who provide managed team solutions for local authorities. Since August 2021 we have had a team from Innovate working alongside other social work teams to provide the experienced social workers required.

## **Innovate CYPS – a managed team**

Innovate CYPS is a privately owned organisation. They are delivering a 6 month managed service project consisting of one team focusing on Safeguarding (Child in Need, Child Protection, Pre-Proceedings/Court).

The team consists of 1 Team Manager, 7 Social Workers, as well as leadership resource (Director, Head of Service, Head of Quality Assurance), and 1 Business Support. They are responsible for up to 140 children and young people.

The service will, at all times, adhere to key performance indicators in line with Plymouth City. The model also includes a robust additional quality assurance approach including both dip sample and full case audit of 10 % cases to ensure oversight of quality, impact and outcomes.

A benefit of this model is that the accountability structures are clear and, unlike standard models of 'whole team' provision, it does not place additional burdens on existing management and quality assurance systems. Weekly risks and issues meetings between CYPFS CSW Service Manager and Head of Service ensures a focused and robust response to key issues and a collegiate and integrated approach is key to ensure safe, high quality service delivery.

## **Evidence of impact**

### **Caseloads and performance**

Currently the team have 7 social workers with 133 children open in the team. They have capacity to support 140 children and new cases are due to be allocated. The contract includes their commitment to work with 140 children throughout the contract, but this will fluctuate at times.

The complex nature of the children and families they are supporting include children subject to care proceedings and child protection plans and these take time to resolve effectively.

The team are working with 22 children in pre-care proceedings, where they are working hard with families to prevent the need to commence care proceedings.

They are working with 20 children where care proceedings have commenced.

There are 19 Children in Care, 68 Children subject to Child Protection Plans and 46 Children in Need. The team have closed 9 cases over the past 10 weeks that they have been with the service.

Children subject to Child Protection Plans require monthly multi agency meetings, called core group meetings of which 91.2% were completed and recorded within timescale.

Children are regularly seen in the team. Current performance data indicates children are seen on time as follows; Children in Care 94%, Children in Need of Protection 95% and Children in Need 89%. All meet or are close to our KPI target.

The team have completed 19 single assessments. 84.2% of these were completed within 45 days and they have a further 62 assessments open for completion.

100% staff are receiving supervision on time. The team manager has a good understanding of the children open in her team, the performance and quality measures and a strong track record of delivering high performing teams.

### **Quality of work**

There is evidence of good quality assessment and planning as well as skilful direct work. The team are experienced and have a good level knowledge and skill in working with children, young people and families. Where there are any concerns about the timeliness of completed work, these are addressed immediately with team and senior managers.

Cases are being audited internally within the CYPFS Quality Assurance and audit framework and externally by Innovate, and the learning and findings will be available at the end of November for the service to review as part of our evaluation of the way this approach is working.

### **How this has impacted the wider service**

Morale across the service has improved as a result of the Innovate service joining and there appears to be a correlation between this and a reduction in staff resignations and staff move requests. Caseloads have now reduced significantly and the current average caseloads are 18 in this part of the service – this includes newly qualified staff for whom we aim to maintain at caseloads of 14. Practice is more effective and timely. Caseloads do however remain above the optimum level and the number of cases in the Children's Social Work service has increased since September. Therefore work continues to manage these caseloads down.

### **Exit planning**

Innovate staff are currently effectively covering vacancies and uncovered posts within key social work teams in the service. This means that if we are successful in the recruitment to permanent uncovered vacancies, and the work to ensure that work that has been delayed due to COVID working then we aim to see a further reduction in caseloads, and them being maintained after the Innovate Team contract ends.

The plan to manage their exit effectively is based on the elements set out below:

1. A focus on managing children who are currently allocated across the whole service by ensuring effective transfer, step-down to early help services or closure. This regular review is focused on ensuring children's cases only remain open to the statutory service for the time required to support them effectively. All plans over 6 months are reviewed to ensure effective and timely intervention. Therefore reducing the time that some children in the service need to open to a social worker.
2. We continue to ensure a rolling recruitment approach for permanent social worker roles, particularly experienced social workers, however this remains a local and national challenge. We have some vacancies that we will recruit to and this will include further newly qualified workers. The current Recruitment and Retention approach is under review and recommendations will follow in early January.
3. Exploring other options for further temporary cover while permanent recruitment continues whilst at the same time minimising any disruption for children, young people and their families.

### **Contingency planning**

If the focus on the work outlined above indicate that workloads cannot be maintained at a reasonable level after February 2022 a clear plan, and if appropriate business case will be brought forward before the end of the calendar year so that alternative options can be considered, agreed and implemented before the Innovate Team contract comes to an end.

Jean Kelly  
Service Director



**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:**

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Jean Kelly											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes Date agreed: 04/11/2021											
Cabinet Member approval: Cllr Dave Downie – approved by email Date approved: 04/11/2021											

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## Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Work Programme 2021-2022



**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 Helen Rickman, Democratic Advisor on 01752 398444.

Date of meeting	Agenda item	Prioritisation Score	Reason for consideration	Responsible Cabinet Member / Officer
17 November 2021	Home Education – Children missing education		Numbers of children being home educated has been increased, what is the current position? The Committee would like reassurance to know that children and young people are thriving.	Ming Zhang
	Innovate – Workforce		Update to tell us how that work is going and to focus on the exit strategy. Reassurance is it effective and working? Having an impact on caseloads? Retaining our social workers? Whether the exit strategy is on target and on time? If it does need to be extended, why has the initial contract not worked?	Jean Kelly
	Financial Monitoring		To review the budget	David Northey/Helen Slater
	Young Carers		Update on work, update on young carers support within education and how we're identifying and reaching as many young carers as we can.	Ming Zhang
	Inclusion Strategy Board		What is the Strategy Boards remit and priorities.	Ming Zhang
	REACH Academy		Update on the merge of year groups and how this has affected children and young people.	Ming Zhang

<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Prioritisation Score</b>	<b>Reason for consideration</b>	<b>Responsible Cabinet Member / Officer</b>
	COVID Update (Verbal)		Update from Education and Children's Social Care.	Ming Zhang and Jean Kelly
<b>16 February 2022</b>	Home to School Transport			Ming Zhang
	CSE Update / Missing and Child Exploitation action plan			Jean Kelly
	School Attainment			Ming Zhang
	Children's Mental Health Select Committee update			Councillor David James
	Everyone's Invited Review – What have schools done?			Ming Zhang
	Care Leavers and Barnardo's Care Journeys			Jean Kelly
	Early Years		Landscape and what it looks. What impact is the board hoping to have?	Ming Zhang
	Financial Monitoring			David Northey/Helen Slater
<b>Items to be scheduled</b>				
Review report – Adopt South West				
Select Committee Reviews				
Regional Schools Commissioner				
Early Years				
Changes to pupil premium				
Finance Monitoring				
Sufficiency Strategy for Placements				
Children in Care and Foster placements review (6 months)				
Unregulated placements				
Out of Hours Reshaping				
Education Improvements				
Plymouth Education Board and Work programme				
Changes to Pupil Premium				
<b>To be scheduled</b>				

Date of meeting	Agenda item	Prioritisation Score	Reason for consideration	Responsible Cabinet Member / Officer
<b>Joint Select Committee Reviews</b>				

**Annex I – Scrutiny Prioritisation Tool**

		Yes (=1)	Evidence
Public Interest	Is it an issue of concern to partners, stakeholders and/or the community?		
Ability	Could Scrutiny have an influence?		
Performance	Is this an area of underperformance?		
Extent	Does the topic affect people living, working or studying in more than one electoral ward of Plymouth?		
Replication	Will this be the only opportunity for public scrutiny?		
	Is the topic due planned to be the subject of an Executive Decision?		
	<b>Total:</b>		High/Medium/Low

Priority	Score
<b>High</b>	<b>5-6</b>
<b>Medium</b>	<b>3-4</b>
<b>Low</b>	<b>1-2</b>

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