

Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee

Tuesday, 28 May 2019

10.00 am

Oak Room, County Buildings, Stafford

NB. Members are requested to ensure that their Laptops/Tablets are fully charged before the meeting

John Tradewell
Director of Corporate Services
17 May 2019

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes of the Safe & Strong Communities Select Committee meeting held on 4 March 2019** (Pages 1 - 6)
4. **Children and Young People who go Missing from Home and Care in Staffordshire** (Pages 7 - 18)

Report of the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People
5. **Children and Families Improvement Plan** (Pages 19 - 44)

Report of the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People
6. **Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board**

Presentation of the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People
7. **Work Programme Planning** (Pages 45 - 66)
8. **Exclusion of the Public**

The Chairman to move:-

“That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Local Government Act 1972 indicated below”.

Part Two

(All reports in this section are exempt)

nil

Committee Membership

Ann Beech	Jason Jones
Mike Davies	Natasha Pullen
John Francis (Chairman)	Paul Snape
Syed Hussain	Conor Wileman (Vice-Chairman)
Trevor Johnson	Mike Worthington

Note for Members of the Press and Public

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Scrutiny and Support Manager: Tina Gould Tel: (01785) 276148

Minutes of the Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee Meeting held on 4 March 2019

Present: John Francis (Chairman)

Attendance	
Ann Beech	Jason Jones
Mike Davies	Conor Wileman (Vice-Chairman)
Syed Hussain	Mike Worthington

Also in attendance: Gill Heath and Mark Sutton

Apologies: Trevor Johnson, Natasha Pullen and Paul Snape

PART ONE

53. Declarations of Interest

There were none at this meeting.

54. Minutes of the Safe & Strong Communities Select Committee meeting held on 22 January 2019

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee held on 22 January 2019 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

55. Domestic Homicide Reviews and Emerging Themes

The Select Committee were informed that a Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) was a multi-agency review of the circumstances around the death of an individual aged 16 years or older where this had (or appeared to have) resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by a person to whom the individual was related, or with whom they were, or had been, in an intimate relationship, or by a member of the same household as themselves. In April 2011 it became a statutory requirement for local areas to conduct a DHR following a domestic homicide, with the local Community Safety Partnership responsible for conducting the DHR and the implementation of any recommendations resulting from it.

In 2018 an analysis of DHRs in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent was commissioned by the multi-agency Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Domestic Abuse Commissioning and Development Board. The Review considered outcomes from all completed DHRs across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent to identify any trends or themes. Of the fourteen statutory DHRs considered, six were Staffordshire based. In addition to DHRs, Staffordshire (excluding Stoke-on-Trent) had also conducted four Domestic Abuse Multi-Agency Learning Reviews (MALRs). MALRs followed the same process as DHRs, although (unlike DHRs) their final reports were not sent to the Home Office for quality

assurance and were not published. The Review therefore considered 18 reviews (DHRs and MALRs) in total.

Members received a copy of the Review summary of key findings. Of the total DHRs and MALRs in Staffordshire 3 (30%) involved male victims and 7 (70%) involved female victims. Of the 18 Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire DHRs and MALRs 6 (33%) involved male victims and 12 (67%) involved female victims. This was broadly in line with National Home Office figures published in 2016 of 50 (32%) male victims and 107 (68%) female victims.

Of the 14 Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent DHRs, seven were killed by a partner or ex-partner, six were killed by a family member and one was killed by a member of the same household, in this instance landlord/lodger. The youngest Staffordshire DHR victim was 19 years and the oldest was 73, with victims in their 40s being the most prevalent age group. In Stoke-on-Trent the prevalence was for ages 30-50. The most common method of killing the victim in Staffordshire was by stabbing, whilst the most common method in Stoke-on-Trent was via blunt force, with or without a weapon.

For all DHRs in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent the ethnicity of the perpetrators was White British. The ethnicity of the victims was White British for 12 cases, with two cases recorded as having Asian victims. Members asked for clarification of the ethnicity of the two victims recorded as Asian, asking if these were British Asian. These cases had been Stoke-on-Trent based and Officers agreed to clarify this after the meeting.

Members were informed that an action plan was produced as part of each DHR which looked at how any recommendations made would be implemented. The Community Safety Partnership in the area where the victim lived was responsible for monitoring the implementation of any recommendations made in a timely manner. Where the Partnership had concerns over recommendation implementation they could refer their concerns to the Domestic Abuse Commissioning and Development Board.

The Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Domestic Abuse Strategy had considered learning from reviews and looked to address these. In particular consideration had been given to the prevalence of mental health issues and substance misuse. The Domestic Abuse Commissioning and Development Board had endorsed the commissioning of services that promoted prevention, including work around healthy relationships at an early age.

As part of any DHR or MALR, those agencies involved would be expected to undertake a review of their role and actions in relation to the subjects of the review. Members had some concerns over the thoroughness of a review where this was completed by the agency themselves. Members were informed that each agency's review was undertaken by an individual who had not been involved in the case and who had no line management responsibility for those staff involved. Each agency's review of their role was then considered by an independent panel who would consider it objectively. The Chair of a review was independent and often subject specialists relevant to the case would be included on the Review Panel.

Members also heard that the DHR and MALR cases were spread across the County, with no hot spot areas of particular concern. There was only one area that had not yet had cause to conduct either a DHR or a MALR, that being Lichfield.

Members heard details of victim support services and services to help address offenders' behaviour. Both services were delivered under the brand name of New Era.

Whilst the Review had necessarily been considering published DHRs and completed MALRs, and therefore the information was historic, Members heard that the issues presenting in DHRs currently underway were not dissimilar to those highlighted in the Review.

RESOLVED: That:

- a) the learning from DHRs and the way in which this learning is used be supported; and
- b) clarification over the ethnicity of the two domestic homicide Asian victims be forwarded to Members.

56. Prevent

In Staffordshire the implementation of Prevent was overseen by a multi-agency Prevent Board, chaired by the County Council's Commissioner for Safety and Families. The Prevent Board reported to the Staffordshire Contest Board, which oversaw all of the counter-terrorism strands of activity and was chaired by Staffordshire Police.

The Select Committee were informed that the Prevent Board was the mechanism by which the quality of progress in relation to Prevent delivery was monitored, impact assessed, and challenges identified and addressed. A refreshed Prevent Delivery Plan had been presented to the Prevent Board in October 2018. The Plan had been reviewed and updated to reflect the national Contest Strategy (2018), the recommendations within the Staffordshire Counter Terrorism Local Profile (2018) and relevant local activity. Members also heard details of how the delivery Plan was actioned through partnership working. They also noted that Staffordshire's partnership arrangements had been recognised as good practice and were referenced as a case study within the Home Office "Prevent Duty Toolkit for Local Authorities".

Members received details of school responses to the specific Prevent related questions which had been included in the mandatory audit of schools undertaken by the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board. Around 85% had actioned all of the requirements with regard to their Prevent Duty. 2% had been unable to confirm that they had all the expected elements in place and Officers were working with these schools to address this. Equally follow-up action would be taken with those schools who had not responded to the survey to ensure they were aware of and addressing their Prevent responsibilities.

Members raised the issue of online safety and shared their concerns over how radicalisation could be prevented on-line. They were informed that this was part of a broader safeguarding agenda looking at Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), gangs and radicalisation. Work was being undertaken with schools and other agencies looking at how to keep children and young people safe on line. Schools were also encouraged to address these issues, with Ofsted expecting schools to be able to account for how safe their children were on line. Work was also ongoing around community engagement, with schools having a key role to play in this. Members noted concern was around the growth

in home grown extremists, including those on the far right, and the vital importance that no one community should feel unfairly scrutinised but that all communities should feel supported.

RESOLVED: That:

- a) the ongoing work around the implementation of Prevent be noted; and
- b) an update report be brought in 12 months time outlining the progress and developments made around Prevent in Staffordshire.

57. Youth Offending Service (YOS) Review

In 2017 the Cabinet requested a review of the Staffordshire Youth Offending Service (SYOS) to reflect both the changing landscape of the Youth Justice System and the decreasing caseloads. A reduction in staff was identified, with formal consultation with Unions from 25 July 2018. Subsequently all job descriptions were reviewed and evaluated to ensure they met the needs of Staffordshire's children, families and communities. Members received details of the revised staff structure, which had removed a layer of management and reduced the overall management posts. The revised structure included Senior Practitioners (Youth Justice), Social Workers (Youth Justice) and Practitioners (Youth Justice) who would continue to perform the same roles and responsibilities, following small changes to the job descriptions and person specifications. The number of social worker posts would be retained (reflecting the complexity of the children accessing this service). Practitioner and senior practitioner posts had been reduced.

The changes also enabled the SYOS to achieve its agreed contribution to the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) of £300,000 savings in 2018/18 and a further £100,000 in 2018/19. This was in addition to the £100,00 reduction in 2016/17.

The new structure was due to be implemented on 15 March 2019 and Members heard that when compared with other YOS, Staffordshire still had some flexibility within the system and that case loads should remain manageable. The changes would be reviewed in September 2019 to ensure that the new structure was effective.

Members asked for a brief description of the role of each individual job title within the YOS structure. A brief overview was given but Member's asked that a note be forwarded to them after the meeting for future reference.

RESOLVED: That:

- a) the actions completed to achieve the MTFS savings be noted;
- b) the reasons for the YOS review be understood;
- c) a briefing note identifying the role of each job title post within the new YOS structure be forwarded to Members for their reference; and
- d) details of the outcome of the September 2019 review be brought to the select Committee's December 2019 meeting.

58. Children's Centre Visits

In September 2014 Members of the Select Committee had undertaken visits to 41 of the 52 Children's Centres in Staffordshire to review their effectiveness and had produced a

report and recommendations for the Cabinet Member's consideration. Following on from this work Select Committee Members visited Staffordshire's Children's Centres during September and October 2018 to consider the changes and developments made since their 2014 review.

In general Members were pleased to see that there was now a clear Strategy for Early Years and that Children's Centres were being well used. Two key findings resulted from these visits. The first was around the provision of Wi-Fi in the Centres, which had been reported to, and immediately responded to by the Cabinet Member for Children and Families. The second key finding was regarding a request for an update on the operation of the 0-19 Health Visiting contract. A presentation had been arranged at this meeting to address this request.

RESOLVED: That the final report and recommendations of the Committees' Early Years – Follow-Up Visits to Children's Centres be endorsed.

59. 0-19 Health Visiting Contract

To address one of the key findings from the Children's Centres visits, Members received a presentation from Kate Cox, Lead Manager, Children's Services, Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, on the 0-19 Health Visiting contract.

The presentation outlined the new approach to commissioning these services, providing high quality care for children and young people from 0-19 years, rather than the historically separated health visitor and school nurse service approach. Eventually the work of the Children's Centres would also be brought together with health visiting and school nurse services for the benefit of local families. The new approach ensured the most appropriate skilled member of staff was supporting families appropriately. They also received details of the universal services, the graded response and specialist services for those at greatest risk.

Members were pleased to note that, among other key reviews/visits, the individual home antenatal visits would continue under the new system. Members received details of the referral systems and information Hubs that supported families with information, guidance and coordinated referrals. From the two advice Hubs approximately 300 calls were dealt with each day. The Select Committee welcomed details of the new service and congratulated officers on their outline of the programme. They asked that a copy of the slides be forwarded to them after the meeting for reference.

RESOLVED – That the presentation be noted.

60. Work Programme

The Select Committee received a copy of their current work programme. There were a number of outstanding items on their 2018-2019 work programme and Members considered how these would be addressed, with some likely to be referred to Health Scrutiny, some transferred to the new 2019/2020 work programme and some undertaken by a working group.

RESOLVED: That proposals for addressing the outstanding work programme items be noted.

Chairman

Local Members' Interest
N/A

Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee – 28th May 2019

Children and Young People who go Missing from Home and Care in Staffordshire

Recommendation

- a. Members are recommended to receive this report to help understand how the County Council is working with key partners in respect of children and young people who go missing from home or care.

Report of Cllr Mark Sutton, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Summary

What is the Select Committee being asked to do and why?

1. This report has been produced at the request of the Staffordshire's Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee with reference to children and young people who go missing from a variety of places including independent children's homes.
2. The report will provide a transparent account of the work undertaken with Catch 22 who have been commissioned to provide this Statutory Duty on behalf of the Local Authority. It will identify proactive measures taken to reduce missing episodes and to protect children when they do go missing. It will identify areas of good practice and highlight key areas in need of further development and our plans in relation to these, including recent recommendations made following the Ofsted inspection of Staffordshire's Children's Social Care Services.
3. The Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee is asked to read the information detailed in the report which provides it with a clear understanding of the statutory requirements and local commissioning arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people who go missing from care and home. Members are invited to offer scrutiny of this activity.

Report

4. Prior to September 2017, children who go missing from home services were delivered by Staffordshire County Council (SCC), Families First and Brighter Futures. Whilst there was a high quality of practice in some areas this created inconsistency in model of service, quality, reporting methods and challenges for other partners across the sector, such as Police, Schools, Health and other providers. In 2017 Catch 22 were commissioned to deliver Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Missing Services across Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent (SoT). The link between missing children and CSE was highlighted by the Children's Commissioner's enquiry (2012) and further strengthened by recommendations

outlined in the 2014 Statutory Guidance on Children who run away or go missing from home or care. The first year of operation has focussed on transition from previous to new delivery models, gathering baseline data, working with partners to ensure consistency and protecting and safeguarding children at risk. For the purpose of this report analysis has been provided by Catch 22 which reflects upon the commissioning arrangements and learning in the first 12 months and identifies service development and improved practices which will be delivered during the remainder of the contract period.

Statutory Requirements:

5. Section 13 of the Children Act 2004 places a responsibility on every Local Authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board. Staffordshire Local Safeguarding Children Board, with its statutory partners i.e. the police, health and education are required to have in place arrangements to ensure that all statutory functions are discharged to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
6. This includes planning to prevent children from going missing, including assessing the risks, analysing data for patterns and trends associated with particular concerns and risks and taking a proactive approach to the reduction of missing episodes and protection of children when they do go missing.
7. As part of the framework to safeguard children, the Children Missing from Home and Care Protocol has been devised between SCC, SoT City Council and the Staffordshire Commissioner's Office to coordinate response and support for those children who go missing from home or care.

Department for Education (DfE) Guidance:

8. In January 2014, the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) published statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care. This guidance was issued under Section 7 of the Local Authorities Social Services Act 1970, which requires local authorities to act under the general guidance of the Secretary of State.
9. The guidance also complements the following:
 - a. Working Together to Safeguard Children and related statutory guidance (2018);
 - b. Missing Children and Adults Strategy (2011);
 - c. Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation (2009);
 - d. Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan (2011); and
 - e. Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations volumes on care planning and review

Local Arrangements:

10. After an extensive period of research and design Catch 22 was awarded the contract and commenced delivery of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Missing Services from September 2017 across Staffordshire and SoT. This contract is in place until August 2020 with options to extend for up to a further 2 years.

11. This integrated commissioning arrangement is led by Stoke on Trent City Council which operates as the lead Commissioner in partnership with Staffordshire County Council and the Staffordshire Commissioner. The financial contributions, per year for these arrangements are outlined below:

Staffordshire County Council	£292,750
Stoke on Trent City Council	£170,919
Stoke on Trent Public Health	£15,000
Stoke on Trent CCG	£41,081
Staffordshire Commissioner's Office (150k early intervention and 15k management)	£165,000
	£684,750

12. Catch 22 conducts all independent return interviews for missing and absent children and young people aged up to 18 years residing in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. This includes young people placed in Staffordshire from other local authorities. The interview is an opportunity to gather information from the young person to identify root cause factors which have contributed to the incident and help to protect children from the risk of going missing again.
13. The interview is in-depth and is completed by a CSE/Missing Case Worker, who is trained to conduct these interviews and can respond to any issues that emerge for example, giving advice and guidance in relation to staying safe, signposting and referring for further support if required.
14. The information gathered during the interview is shared with the local authority and the police; it supports the professionals working with the child/young person to build a comprehensive picture of the reasons behind the missing episode, activity during the missing episode and potential risk factors. It also provides an opportunity to inform care planning, wider strategic planning and for professionals to consider children/young person's views.
15. Catch 22 is also commissioned through the contract to deliver CSE Services across Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent. It enables the Case Worker to assess risk of exposure to exploitation. The link between missing children and child sexual exploitation was highlighted by the Children's Commissioner's Enquiry (2012) and further strengthened by recommendations outlined in the 2014 Statutory Guidance on Children who run away or go missing from home or care.

Children and Young People Missing from Home or Care in Staffordshire:

An Overview of Service Performance - Staffordshire County Council

16. A Performance and Quality Assurance Framework is in place with monthly and annual reporting from Children's Services. Monthly performance reports (**Appendix 1**) provide Senior Managers, Team Managers and Independent Chairs insight into missing indicators and the level of need and vulnerability. Managers and staff use this summary and the detail behind it to:

- a. Ensure appropriate intervention meetings take place based on need and vulnerability (those that have gone missing 3, 5, and 9 times in 90 days are indicated in the attachment) as detailed in the Children Missing from Home and Care Protocol.
 - b. Build intelligence and insight to be confident that these children/young people are appropriately safeguarded and where necessary, assessments and plans are updated.
17. Performance reporting is also provided to the Strategic Overview Missing Board for partnership oversight by SCC.

An Overview of Service and Performance Activity of the Catch 22 Service

18. Catch 22 provides monthly and quarterly performance reports with regard to the activity relating to children and young people missing from home or care. The information presented from Catch 22 is demonstrated in the tables below. Table 3 gives a more detailed analysis of service performance for the first 6 months of the current contract year across the north and south east of the county.

Table 1 - Year 1 Contract Performance (October 2017 to September 2018)

Number of	Missing episodes	Individuals reported missing	Completed Return Interviews	Individuals seen
Oct–Dec 17	515	306	327	202
Jan–Mar 18	468	288	319	225
Apr–Jun 18	598	351	429	252
Jul–Sept 18	566	310	392	213
Total	2,147	1,255	1,467 (68%)	892

Table 2 - 6 months of Year 2 Contract Performance (October 2018 to March 2019)

Number of	Missing episodes	Individuals reported missing	Completed Return Interviews	Individuals seen
Oct–Dec 18	570	321	398	224
Jan–Mar 19	395	248	282	175
Total	965	569	680	399

Table 3 - Year 2 Detailed Analysis (October 2018 to March 2019)

Missing Children/Young People Activity	North Staffs	South/East Staffs	Staffordshire Total
Number of notifications of missing episodes	440	525	965

Missing notifications where a Return Home Interview (RHI) was offered	429	514	943
Number of Individual children/young people reported missing	277	292	569

Profile of Missing Individuals			
Number of children/young people with one missing episode	207	208	415
Number/% of children/young people with repeat missing episodes	70 (25%)	84 (29%)	154 (27%)
Number of children/young people with repeat missing episodes who completed Return Home Interviews	62	61	123 (80%)

Average Age Range (years)	14.71	14.53	14.62
Gender - Number/%			
Females	121 (44%)	136 (47%)	257 (45%)
Males	156 (56%)	156 (53%)	312 (55%)

Cohort Information			
Reported missing from;			
Child/Young Person residing at home in Staffordshire	128	140	268
Child/Young Person in the care of SCC, residing in Staffordshire	45 (16%)	67 (23%)	112 (20%)
Child/Young Person in the care of Stoke on Trent City Council, residing in Staffordshire	3	7	10
Child/Young Person in the care of another local authority, residing in Staffordshire. (CICOLA)	80 (29%)	72 (25%)	152 (27%)
Child/Young Person in the care of SCC, placed in SoT (Pan Placed)	21 (8%)	6 (2%)	27 (5%)

Completion of RHIs			
Number of individuals who received a RHI	200	199	399
% Percentage of Individuals receiving Return Home Interview	72%	67%	69%

Number of interviews completed	262	245	507
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Number of repeat interviews completed on another Return Interview Form	59	125	184
Total number of RHIs offered which were completed	321	370	691
% Percentage of Total Return Home interviews completed	75%	72%	73%
Declined RHIs			
Number of declined/not completed interviews by children and young people missing	77	93	170
Number of referrals returned to Police as unable to engage children and young people missing (RHI declined incidents/not offered)	91	120	211

19. The Annual Contract Report will be produced by Catch 22 in June 2019 to reflect demand and performance during 2018/19. This will enable comparison with trends from the commencement of the contract and across the first year of the service being in place.
20. The priorities in the first year of operation have been to ensure statutory missing interviews are offered to all children and young people who go missing, information is shared across agencies proactively in order to keep children safe, and to develop a model which is consistent in practice Pan Staffordshire in order to inform a baseline of need.
21. Catch 22 has performed well in its first year of delivery and demonstrates commitment and enthusiasm to improve the lives of vulnerable children and young people across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. Relationships are developing well across the partnership and commissioners are working collaboratively with Catch 22 and the wider partnership to further develop the service offer, to improve practice and strengthen operational relationships to improve support and outcomes for children and young people who go missing from home or care.

Current impact of service delivery across Staffordshire:

22. With consent and where appropriate more young people are signposted to other Services e.g. drugs and alcohol, LST, CAMHS, young carers etc. Anecdotal evidence suggests this is much better co-ordinated.
23. The arrangements for a Catch 22 Caseworker to conduct the missing interview provides the opportunity for an independent and objective assessment of the missing episode. There is joint training on arrangements for completion of return interviews and use of the Police Compact ICT system across Catch 22 and the Police.
24. Catch 22 has completed between 70-80% of missing person interviews, in comparison to a national average of 38%. Interviews for missing episodes are

offered to all children and young people who go missing from home or care who were resident in Staffordshire, including those who are placed by other local authorities (LAs) in Staffordshire care homes.

25. The Catch 22 team has a good record of building a rapport and relationship with those at risk of episodes to help reduce this risk.
26. Effective recording on internal ICT systems for the missing episode and return interview, with supporting business processes. This gives confidence and reassurance that Social Workers have the relevant information around safeguarding children/young people.
27. Performance reporting systems are in place, internal monthly and quarterly reports are produced to monitor demand, manage risk, timescale compliance and general insight to trends.
28. A consistent approach to return interviews and gathering of information as a result of a co-designed interview form, good practice guides and joint training.
29. Strong links between CSE and Missing Coordinator, Catch 22 and Children's Services in sharing information.
30. Revised joint missing protocol for children missing from home and care. This was approved in August 2018 by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.
31. The Missing Children Operational Group has analysed the impact of return home interviews and whether plans take account of risks identified, in the main, appropriate responses are in place to issues and risks noted in young people's return from missing interviews.
32. A member of Catch 22 is the Co-Chair of the English Coalition of Runaway Children (ECRC) Board and enabling Catch 22 to have influence and awareness of current national issues regarding missing children. These include the impact on services of LAC placed out of area on local services. The Stoke and Staffordshire service conducts return home interviews with all CYP who have had a missing episode irrespective of their status. This was recognised as being best practice but is not adopted by all local authorities nationally.

Improvement Planning – Ofsted Inspection Recommendations

33. The Ofsted Focused Inspection on "the Local Authority's arrangements for the protection of vulnerable adolescents, carried out in February 2018 stated:

"When children go missing, the response is effective in the majority of cases. The local authority has commissioned a specialist return home interview service. Most children are seen and benefit from a timely and detailed interview which explores the detail of the missing episode with the young person, captures intelligence and makes recommendations in an effort to reduce risk further. It is a strength that this includes children placed by other local authorities in the Staffordshire area. The

local authority acknowledged that there is a gap for their children in care placed out of area, where the response is less consistent’.

34. The inspection of Staffordshire children’s social services carried out in February 2019 was rated as ‘Good’ in most areas, with the recommendation that some improvement is required in relation to progress of children who need help and protection. This includes some areas of practice for services for missing children and young people.

35. The Inspection Report stated:

‘When children go missing from home or care, return home interviews are not always effective in identifying or reducing risks. Children are offered interviews, but some do not undergo these due to a lack of tenacity and persistence in order to ensure children are seen. Return home interviews do not evidence how information about wider risks to children are shared in order to reduce risk. For those children who go missing frequently, plans are not sufficiently clear to reduce the risk of harm.’

36. Partners have been proactive in responding to the recommendations in the report in developing an improvement plan in the following areas:

- a. To ensure that learning from the analysis of Return Home Interviews is shared more widely to improve the response to care planning.
- b. To seek to increase the number of failed Return Home Interviews to provide greater intelligence on the complexities of children and young people who do not engaged.
- c. To explore the potential improvement in the operation of Missing Intervention Meetings to improve collaborative care and support planning, with a particular focus on those children and young people who have repeat missing episodes and are vulnerable due to high risk behaviours.
- d. To undertake an analysis of cases where Return Home Interviews have been refused or declined to appraise the potential barriers and obstacles for engagement of children and young people. This will also provide greater intelligence on the complexities of these individuals to inform care planning.
- e. To review pathways for children and young people who go missing to ensure that Local Support Teams and social workers are equipped to undertake Return Home Interviews when Catch 22 has been unsuccessful in engaging with young people.

37. Improvement planning includes the following actions:

- a. Catch 22 practices will ensure that all efforts to engage are recorded in the RHI so that clear risk assessment can be carried out and any attempts to complete this by a social worker can be co-ordinated.
- b. Ensuring a method for Catch 22 to resubmit RHIs to the Local Authority and Police when additional information is available will ensure that this can then be used to inform risk assessments and social care support where necessary.
- c. Changes in reporting timescales are being proposed between Catch 22 and the Local Authority to include the details of children and young people with whom

engagement has not been achieved. This will enable SCC to implement a more expedient coordinated approach to completing RHIs, to identify risk and inform care planning.

- d. As part of this Catch 22 will identify the top ten CYP going missing within Staffordshire every month so that those most vulnerable children and young people who go missing are prioritised regarding risk assessment and collaborative care and support planning.
- e. In relation to ongoing workforce development and training on best practice, all Families First staff have been reissued with and encouraged to familiarise themselves with the Children Missing from Home and Care Joint Protocol.
- f. Families First Managers will support and Chair where necessary Missing Intervention Meetings to ensure a robust partnership approach to understanding and supporting the CYP. This will improve risk identification and co-ordinated action planning.
- g. Discussions are taking place to enable Catch 22 to have access to information on SCC's database system maintained for the Building Resilient Families and Communities programme. This will ensure that intelligence held by the provider is also held on the database and used by First Response. In turn this will also inform the providers work/approach in some instances when it holds minimal information on the child/young person prior to carrying out a RHI.
- h. There is a focus on ensuring that the process of reporting CYP who are moved out of area is followed. Alongside this, housing/foster care/residential care co-ordinators will be required to ensure that any Staffordshire CYP that goes missing, even when living out of the county is reported via the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub. This in turn will facilitate better co-ordination where RHIs are successfully completed by another provider organisation, a SCC social worker or an out of area social worker.

Priorities for the next 12 months:

38. Review and agree the Performance and Quality Assurance Framework for missing children and young people which combines all intelligence, across the missing partnership and gives confidence from a strategic perspective and better informs practice at an operational level.
39. Triangulation of multi-agency knowledge in relation to missing, CSE and wider vulnerabilities and how this intelligence is used to inform our decision making when placing children in and out of county.
40. Intervention meetings to take place when children have 3, 5, 9 missing episodes in a 90-day window. This is currently under review as an intervention meeting can take place at any time partners become concerned about escalating risks for a young person. Waiting 3, 5, 9 episodes may be too late.
41. Continue to work on a mechanism for ensuring return interviews are offered to all children placed out of county via better use of digital opportunities, findings of a review and proposals will be reported to the Strategic Missing Board on completion.

42. Ensure that Staffordshire Children placed outside of the county – in other local authorities, received the same level of service provided to children placed within Staffordshire.
43. Work in partnership with SoT and Police to conduct joint audits and periodic audits of return interviews and the most prolific 15 children/young people who go missing across Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent, producing joint action plans which ensure greater sharing of risk.
44. Propose further collaboration across SCC, SoT and Police with the Youth Violence and Vulnerability Working group to ensure greater triangulation of intelligence to further protect those children most at risk and explore more opportunities to prevent repeat missing episodes. This will enable a better understanding of the reasons children go missing in line with statutory guidance and incorporate knowledge of children involved in addition to CSE in County Lines, Gangs and Youth Violence.

Contact Officer

Name and Job Title: Jill Mogg – Senior Commissioning Manager
Liz Mellor - Children's Commissioner

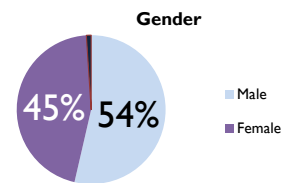
List of Appendices

Appendix 1 - Monthly Monitoring Report, Staffordshire Children and Young People who go missing from home or care. (March 2019)

List of Background Papers

Catch 22 Quarterly Reports October 2017-March 2019

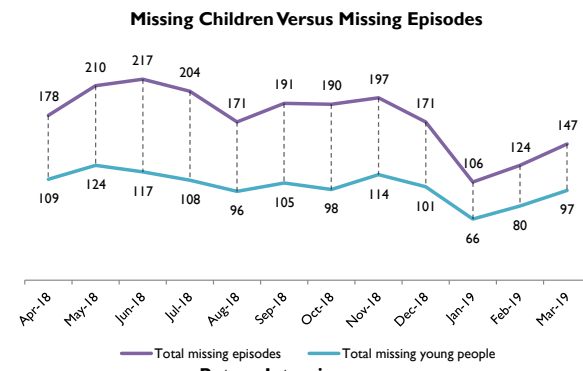
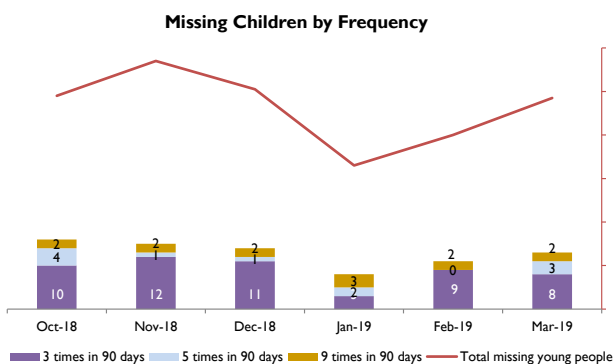
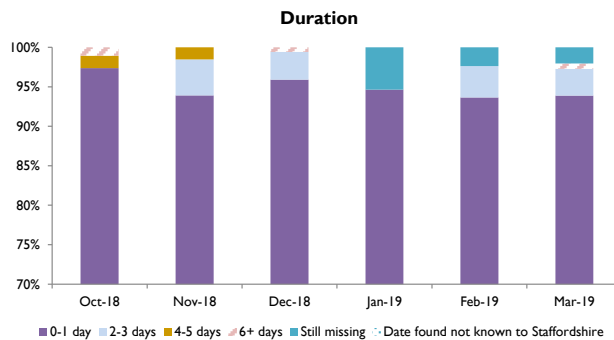
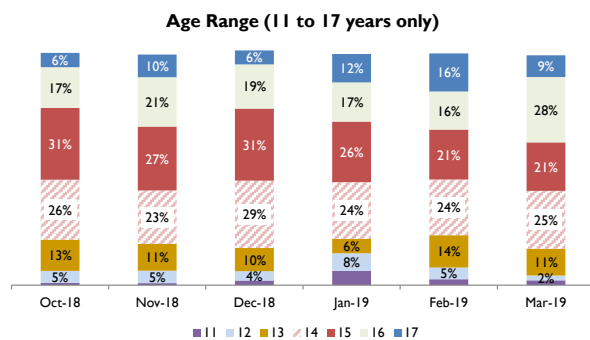
		Last Month	Last Year
Total Missing Episodes	147	↑	↑
Total Missing Children	97	↑	↑



% Staffordshire LAC	% Staffordshire Non LAC	% Other Local Authority	% Return Interviews Completed	Still Missing at Month End
15%	52%	33%	69%	3

*Proportion may exceed 100% as some young people went missing from two placement types in the month

TRENDS

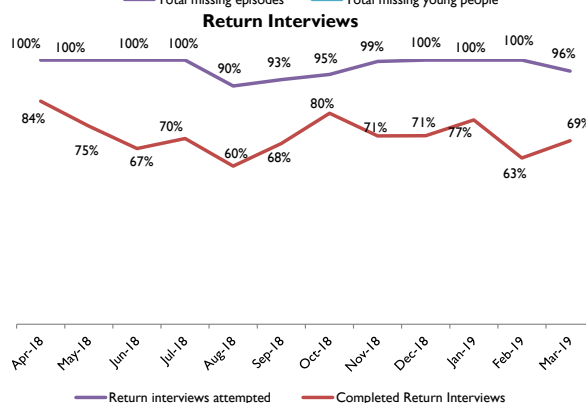


Data Commentary

In March, the number of missing episodes (147) has increased from last month (124) in keeping with seasonal trend and is below the 12 month average (190). The number of children/young people going missing (97) has increased from last month (80) and is below the 12 month average (111). Two thirds of the young people going missing are aged between 14 and 16.

The proportion of return interviews held this month (69%) has increased slightly since last month (63%) and is above the year to date average (58%). The proportion of episodes for children going missing from residential provision has remained relatively stable over the past 5 months. Children reported missing from Staffordshire operated residential provision in March was zero (0).

In the period, Catch 22 reported that 38 return interviews were attempted, but were unsuccessful. The primary reasons where that young people or parent declined the offer (10); referred to SW (7); multiple attempts to engage with Young People were unsuccessful (5); young people had moved to a new placement outside of Staffordshire (5); yp offered no apparent reason / undisclosed (3); yp refused to engage with service (3); Referred to OLA (2); OLA chose to complete (1); under police investigation (1); referred to LST (1).



Summary by Placement Type	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19
Children's Res. Care Home	65	74	59	48	60
Home (Social Worker)	44	29	12	26	46
Home (LST)	28	28	29	36	29
Foster carer not staffs	6	4	1	0	4
Foster carer	11	11	4	8	4
Supported accommodation	15	9	1	5	4
External placed	1	0	0	0	0
Local Authority childrens homes	27	13	0	1	0
Family and Friends	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown	0	3	0	0	0
Totals	197	171	106	124	147

Top 6 Districts	Mar-19
Stafford	38
Newcastle	24
Cannock	15
East Staffordshire	15
Tamworth	15
South Staffs	13

Local Members' Interest
N/A

Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee - Tuesday 28 May 2019

Children and Families Improvement Plan

Recommendation

- a. Members are recommended to receive the progress report which explains how the County Council is working with partners to address the areas for improvement outlined in the Ofsted focussed visit held 26th-27th June 2018 and the Ofsted Inspection of children social care services held 4th- 8th February 2019

Report of Cllr Mark Sutton, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Summary

What is the Select Committee being asked to do and why?

1. The overall aim of this report is to provide Select Committee with an update of the improvement plan post the outcome of Ofsted's focused visit to Staffordshire County Council on the 26-27 June 2018 and the Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services held 4-8 February 2019, which rated services overall as "good"

Report

Background

2. In June 2018 Ofsted Inspectors evaluated the local authority's arrangements for the protection of vulnerable adolescents. Inspectors observed that the local authority has clear strategic plans in place to strengthen their approach to vulnerable adolescents and praised the work taking place within Staffordshire along with partner agencies. However, at the time of this visit Inspectors also identified areas where further improvements could be made. These included:
 - a. Proposed changes to the auditing process to include a greater focus on the quality of practice taking place
 - b. High workloads in specific parts of the service impacting on case planning for children and young people
 - c. Plans for children and young people not being outcome focused and SMART enough linked to timescales
 - d. Management oversight and supervision to progress plans for all children and young people
3. The local authority quickly responded to the areas identified within the focused visit and an improvement plan was implemented in August 2018 focusing on a number of key

areas- recruitment and retention, quality of practice, management oversight and caseload reduction.

4. In February 2019, Ofsted undertook an inspection of local authority children's services and reported that children's services in Staffordshire are good. Leaders and managers have made impressive progress since the focussed visit in in 2018. The findings of the Inspection are set out below:
 - a. The impact of leaders on social work practice within children and families: Good
 - b. The experience and progress of children who need help and protection: Requires Improvement
 - c. The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers: Good
 - d. Overall effectiveness: Good
5. The report highlighted a small number of areas for improvement and these have been built into the plan that was developed in August 2018.
6. The children and families' improvement plan continues to build on the progress made since August 2018 and is subject to regular review by the Children's Social Care Management Team and the Children's Improvement Board.

Contact Officer

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List of Appendices:

Appendix A - Staffordshire Focused Inspection Report July 2018

Appendix B - Staffordshire ILACS Report February 2019

Appendix C - Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services

[Children and Families Improvement Plan April 2019 V9](#)

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19 July 2018

Ms Helen Riley
Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families & Communities
Staffordshire Place
Tipping Street
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ST16 2DH

Dear Ms Riley

Focused visit to Staffordshire County Council children's services

This letter summarises the findings of the focused visit to Staffordshire County Council children's services on 26th and 27th June 2018. The visit was conducted by Alison Smale and Julie Knight, two of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Inspectors evaluated the local authority's arrangements for the protection of vulnerable adolescents who are open to children's services. Inspectors considered the experiences and progress of children whose cases are open to early help services, children in need, children subject to child protection plans and children in care.

A range of evidence was looked at, this included holding case discussions with social workers and support workers; reviewing case records; speaking with young people and their parents or carers. Inspectors also scrutinised relevant local authority performance management and quality assurance information.

Overview

A restructure of the children's social care service is planned. Senior managers believe that the changes will have a positive impact on workforce capacity, caseloads and the quality of practice, resulting in improved outcomes for children and young people. These changes have been delayed for reasons outside of the control of children's social care.

Thresholds for access to social care services in Staffordshire are understood and they are applied appropriately by social workers and partners at the point of referral. However, the recent rise in workloads, caused by an increased turnover of social

workers, has resulted in a small number of children not receiving a good enough level of service, particularly where new risks emerge to children whose cases are already open to children's social care. Excessively high caseloads in some social work teams across the service, are having an adverse impact on social worker's ability to see children in accordance with their plans. Social workers try to see the children they work with regularly so that they can understand their lived experiences. However, many social workers are struggling to see children enough to make direct work meaningful and to achieve change. Supervision and management oversight is not effectively progressing plans for some vulnerable young people. Inspectors saw some evidence of drift, resulting in continuing vulnerability for a small, but significant number of children and young people whose cases are open to children's services. The local authority does not robustly capture the quality of social work practice through its audit activity as senior managers are not involved in the audit process. As a result, not all managers have a clear line of sight on the quality of social work practice and its impact on children.

Senior leaders recognise that improvements to the service must be made as quickly as possible to address the high workloads of social workers, to ensure first line management oversight, and to re-establish the stability that has until now, been a positive feature of this local authority.

Findings

The local authority has clear strategic plans in place to improve and strengthen their approach to vulnerable adolescents by implementing an integrated partnership approach, which is based on contextualised safeguarding. Strategic partnership arrangements are in place, with key agencies including the police and youth offending service. This work is well supported by the Staffordshire safeguarding children board.

Joint working between the child sexual exploitation and missing children co-ordinators ensures good identification of vulnerable children. Much work is being done to fully understand the profile of vulnerable young people in the county. The local authority has commissioned a specialist provider to undertake child sexual exploitation intervention work with young people as well as developing a child sexual exploitation good practice guide which has been shared with practitioners across Staffordshire. Despite the risk from gangs not yet posing a significant issue, the local authority has recognised the potential future risk and is working proactively to develop a more integrated and effective response. The local authority has clear and active plans in place for developing its approach to gangs, trafficking and modern slavery.

The child sexual exploitation panel is well understood and is used effectively by social workers. A child exploitation risk matrix is embedded, and social workers regularly update it. In many cases, this work is used well as a direct work tool with children and young people. Despite this it is not being used sufficiently well to

provide an overall evaluation of risks or of the individual vulnerability of all children. The local authority recognises that the narrow focus of the child sexual exploitation panel means that other vulnerabilities do not receive the same level of scrutiny and management oversight. While the panel is an effective forum for tracking and making decisions to progress many children's cases, the panel needs to be more robust at progressing all cases that present wider risks of exploitation.

Local support teams provide the early help service in Staffordshire. This service provides some very positive direct work with young people and their families that recognises the emotional impact experienced by young people with vulnerabilities. Staff using the outcomes stars method in one pilot area speak positively about the approach. Inspectors saw that the use of this tool is enabling improved benchmarking of progress and analysis. Work with families by the pilot team is more outcomes focused and inspectors saw a greater level of partnership work with children and families, that is having a positive impact. Timescales for achieving positive changes in families have improved and is supported by the use of a tracker and prompts. Workloads are more manageable in the pilot team, following changes to the front door and improved screening. Workloads in other teams, that are not included in the pilot, remain too high and this results in an increased level of staff turnover and sickness.

Despite shortfalls in some service areas, there are areas of strength. The work of the specialist unaccompanied asylum-seeking children team is effective. Staff are knowledgeable and well informed, and children benefit from their expertise. Social workers know children well and take time to get to know children's lived experience, including their culture and identity. When children are missing, multi-agency communication and responsiveness are timely and clear. Trafficking risks are identified, assessed and responded to. There are regular statutory reviews and it is positive that children remain looked after while missing for prolonged periods.

Some young people with more complex vulnerabilities benefit from effective work by the Intensive Support team who offer tenacious engagement and are effective at building relationships with hard to engage with young people and as a result, reduce the risk to these young people. Staff access a wide range of relevant training. This means that staff are well informed, and they understand contextual safeguarding. Social workers are responsive and sensitive to young people coming to terms with lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender (LGBT) sexual identity.

When children go missing, the response is effective in the majority of cases. The local authority has commissioned a specialist return home interview service. Most children are seen and benefit from a timely and detailed interview which explores the detail of the missing episode with the young person, captures intelligence and makes recommendations in an effort to reduce risk further. It is a strength that this includes children placed by other local authorities in the Staffordshire area. The local authority acknowledges that there is a gap for their children in care placed out of area where the response is less consistent.

What needs to improve in this area of social work practice

The audit process does not robustly capture or ensure senior managers have a clear line of sight on the quality of social work practice and its impact on children. Audits seen focus predominantly on process and compliance and do not accurately reflect the quality of practice. This does not enable sufficient learning from audits and has resulted in an overly optimistic overview of practice in quality assurance reports.

High workloads are impacting on social workers and support workers in both children's social care and early help services, meaning that some parts of the service are fragile. For this cohort of vulnerable children, high workloads in some parts of the service mean that staff do not see young people regularly enough to build a trusting relationship, particularly those young people who are hard to engage and have more complex needs.

Workloads vary across teams and this creates inequities of service for children and families. Where workloads are lower, for example in the pilot service, staff see children and families more often, develop better relationships, undertake more effective direct work, improved multi-agency planning and offer more practical help. This work results in changes and positive impact for young people.

While management decisions are regularly recorded, supervision records lack sufficient evaluation and smart actions. Supervision is not used effectively to find solutions to barriers. This means that managers are not sufficiently progressing the cases of some vulnerable children. More evaluative supervision was evident in the family intervention project, where staff reported the positive value of peer supervision and writing up case studies to enable reflection and learning.

Children's plans are not smart enough. Actions do not have sufficient purpose or prioritisation in terms of timescales. Planning meetings do not happen regularly enough and in some cases, they are not recorded. Staff with excessive workloads prioritise and as a result, their case recording is not sufficiently up to date or sufficiently detailed. Inspectors saw some significant gaps in a minority of children's case files. This means some important knowledge about children may be lost and may not inform future actions and risk assessments.

Ofsted will take the findings from this focused visit into account when planning your next inspection or visit.

Yours sincerely

Alison Smale
Her Majesty's Inspector

Draft - not for wider circulation

Staffordshire County Council

Inspection of children's social care services

Inspection dates: 4 February 2019 to 8 February 2019

Lead inspector: Alison Smale
Her Majesty's Inspector

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Good
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Requires improvement
The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers	Good
Overall effectiveness	Good

Children's services in Staffordshire are good. Leaders and managers have made impressive progress since a focused visit in 2018 which highlighted a deterioration in the quality of some services. As a result, the local authority took concerted action to improve services and ensure that vulnerable children are considered as a corporate priority. The budget for children's services is now protected, and additional funding to restructure and increase the number of social workers has been provided.

Leaders and managers' prompt and effective action has resulted in reduced caseloads for social workers. Social workers have more time to consider and complete work which leads to improved outcomes for many children. Most children and families in Staffordshire receive a good service and benefit from good-quality social work practice. Skilled practitioners work with children and families to reduce risks, meet needs and achieve positive change.

The local authority recognises that social work practice in a small number of teams and for some groups of children is not consistently good. This includes care leavers with whom the local authority is not in touch, children at risk from gangs and criminal exploitation, young people who are homeless and children who are electively home educated. The local authority is working to address the needs of these young people, but the pace of change has been slow.

What needs to improve

- The length of time a very small cohort of children remain subject to a child protection plan is too long, without sufficient change in their circumstances, and they remain in neglectful circumstances.
- The local authority's response to children exposed to contextualised risk is not well developed and joined up. For a small number of young people who are at high risk, the response is not robust enough.
- The effectiveness of return home interviews for children who repeatedly go missing from home or care.
- The effectiveness of the response to young people who present as homeless.
- The rise in electively home educated pupils has been significant and there is very limited challenge or safeguarding checks for those families who choose this route for their children.
- The effectiveness of the response to care leavers who the local authority is not in touch with.

The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection requires improvement to be good

1. The first response service provides effective and timely screening when children are referred. Needs are identified promptly, and the right action is taken to ensure that families receive the services they need. Consent from families is obtained appropriately. Thresholds are well understood among partners, but the quality of referrals received from other agencies varies, meaning that the needs of children are not always initially understood, and further information is often required. Partners within the first response multi-agency safeguarding hub work well together to ensure shared analysis and timely decision-making for child protection enquires.
2. The first response service promptly triages all domestic abuse incidents. Children, as victims, are prioritised, which means that children's social care focuses clearly on the associated risks. Decision-making considers both current and historical risk, vulnerability and coercive control. Lower-risk families are referred to community hubs, ensuring that these children and families receive early help from a range of local services. Children whose needs present outside of office hours benefit from an effective emergency duty service.
3. When new concerns present, children and families experience child protection enquiries that are thorough and lead to timely action. Strategy discussions in the first response service are prompt, with good information-sharing, informed by wide-ranging checks across agencies, including adult services. Social workers and managers are confident to challenge professionals to ensure that the right decisions are made for children. In open cases, agencies other than the police and children's social care are not routinely involved in strategy meetings when concerns escalate. This means that decisions are made without full information or challenge.
4. Local support teams offer a highly effective range of targeted programmes and outstanding support to children and families through locality-based teams, which have a significant and positive impact. Children and families benefit from an experienced workforce with a range of skills and tools which support and deliver positive outcomes. The service is well managed, with clear systems and good co-working with children's social care. This ensures effective transition and continuity for families. The service uses effective measures to evidence impact and positive change for children and families.
5. Once referrals are passed through to the safeguarding units, they are assessed and acted on promptly by dedicated duty hubs. Referrals are given the necessary priority. This new approach results in stronger initial work and assessments of families that form a firm basis for future work by the safeguarding teams.

6. The majority of assessments completed in safeguarding teams are strong. Social workers proactively involve males who are in the home or in a relationship with parents. Parenting assessments are used well to assess parenting capacity. The partnership pathway for unborn children is effective, ensuring good oversight, support and risk identification for vulnerable babies. This means that families receive timely support. Where risks to children's safety and well-being are too high for children to remain with their parents, decisions to protect them are made without delay.
7. Most plans are of good quality, with some assessments and plans being of excellent quality. Core groups and child in need meetings, involving partners, are well embedded and effective. Agreements with parents are used to good effect, with clear expectations set out and understood. Safety planning is evident on many files, with appropriate use of family meetings, and inter-agency planning to reduce risk. The quality of assessments and plans is not consistent across the service. A small number of teams complete less strong plans, based on poorer assessments that do not identify and address needs sufficiently well. In these teams, a very small cohort of children remain on a child protection plan for too long. These children experience long-standing neglect without sufficient change in their circumstances.
8. Where child protection plans have not reduced risk, there are clear decisions to progress matters to legal gateway meetings, and, if appropriate, into the public law outline. The pre-proceedings aspect of the public law outline is used effectively. Legal gateway meetings, based on good assessments, ensure thorough decision-making and timely progress to permanence. Family meetings are used effectively, and at an early stage, to fully explore the potential for wider family networks to become engaged in supporting children to achieve good outcomes.
9. Children are seen regularly and seen alone by their social workers. Many children, young people and families benefit from stable and meaningful relationships with social workers. The quality of direct work with children varies between teams, and this means that the understanding of children's lived experience varies depending on which team a child's social worker is in.
10. A range of services are provided to families to effect change, including successful use of the edge of care and intensive prevention service. Following a reorganisation and return of the disabled children's service to the management of children's social care, disabled children benefit from an improved disability service. This ensures that they are safeguarded and that they receive the right help to meet their complex needs.
11. The local authority's response to children exposed to contextualised risk is not sufficiently developed. For a small number of young people at high risk, the response is not sufficiently effective.

12. The local authority has been successful at developing a stronger response for children at risk of or exposed to child sexual exploitation. Many cases evidence good identification of risk. Where risks are clear, they are well managed, and children receive the right services, which reduces risks. Due to difficulties in using the electronic recording system, social workers have difficulty in finding previously completed child sexual exploitation records. This means that where there are low level indicators or historic vulnerabilities, these are not sufficiently risk assessed or understood.
13. When children go missing from home or care, return home interviews are not always effective in identifying or reducing risks. Children are offered interviews, but some do not undergo these due to a lack of tenacity and persistence in order to ensure children are seen. Return home interviews do not evidence how information about wider risks to children are shared in order to reduce risk. For those children who go missing frequently, plans are not sufficiently clear to reduce the risk of harm.
14. The local authority now recognises that it needs to do more to meet the needs of young people who present as homeless. Young people do not receive a prompt assessment or understand their right to become looked after. Consequently, their needs are not fully identified or met.
15. Effective partnership working with colleagues from Staffordshire police ensures that the response to children being placed in custody is improving. As a result, the number of children remaining in custody overnight has reduced.
16. The local authority has not responded quickly enough to the rise in electively home educated pupils. There is very limited challenge or checking of the vulnerability of those children educated at home. Multi-agency groups regularly and effectively review the educational needs, placements and attendance of children who have been, or who are at risk of, permanent exclusion. The local authority is taking an increasingly robust approach towards schools that are slow to admit children in crisis. Officers are tenacious in their tracking of the whereabouts of children who go missing from education to ensure their safety and to ensure that they continue education.

The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers is good

17. Children and young people come into care in a timely manner and when it is in their best interests. Thresholds for coming into care are appropriate, based on clear assessments and decision-making. The creation of court teams is a strength in progressing care proceedings and preventing delay for children.

Social work evidence and early planning promote a range of permanence options, including kinship care. Due consideration is given to placing brothers and sisters together, and, contact arrangements for children are thoroughly and effectively considered. Placement with parents arrangements are well-thought-through and supported. Children benefit from life-story work in order to understand their backgrounds as well as why decisions have been made for their long-term future.

18. Social workers know the children they work with well and this is reflected in their recording. Children are seen regularly and alone by their social worker, and their views inform decision-making. Children benefit from regular consideration and use of advocacy and independent visitors. Regular review of care plans by independent reviewing officers ensures that they understand the wishes and feelings of children and progress plans.
19. Children in care and care leavers are in good physical and mental health. Their health needs are identified and met, and children's enjoyment is encouraged through activities and holidays. Children in care make good progress in education over time. Personal education plans (PEPs) are improving, but checking and monitoring systems are not yet fully embedded.
20. Placement stability is a strength. There are strong systems to support stability and prevent breakdown, for example edge of care and the intensive prevention service. When children are placed out of area, they are appropriately placed in settings which enable their outcomes to improve. Such children have access to education and therapeutic support and are enabled to maintain contact with important people in their life. Social workers visit regularly and maintain meaningful relationships with these children. Thoughtful planning takes place to return children to their home area when possible.
21. A dedicated team for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children is a strength and ensures that their needs are met. On arrival, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are swiftly risk assessed, registered with a doctor, and placed in appropriate education settings, with creative use of pupil premium funds to support language development.
22. Children participate in local forums held across the county to share their views and influence service development. These help the children build up their confidence to engage in the main children in care council. However, despite these initiatives, attendance levels in the children in care council are low. A specialist group for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children is well attended and gives them a good opportunity to engage.
23. The recruitment and assessment of foster carers is effective. Although recruitment remains a challenge, the local authority targets recruitment well. As a result, the numbers of newly approved foster carers are increasing.

Foster carer assessments are thorough and are conducted in a timely manner. Careful consideration and support is given to children remaining with family or friends. The fostering panel is effective in making robust recommendations.

24. Foster carers feel well supported by their social workers and receive help and advice from mentors and a range of support groups. There is a wide range of pre- and post-approval training available to foster carers to enable them to meet the needs of children placed with them. Supervising social workers are creative in the way they support and encourage foster carers to attend training and develop learning. For example, they offer bespoke training to foster carers on an individual basis in their own homes.
25. There is active recruitment of adopters. The agency is just short of their target of 50 approved adopters for this year. Assessments of prospective adopters are analytical, thorough and conducted in a timely way. The panel executes its functions well and provides good scrutiny of applicants' motives to adopt. Panel members receive training to enable them to fulfil their roles effectively. There is a good two-way process of feedback for panel members and social workers, which is successfully improving the quality of assessments.
26. Children benefit from systems which identify children at an early stage for adoption. Introductions are well managed, with input from both the child and adoption social workers. Adopters are positive about their experience of pre- and post-approval training. Fostering for adoption is fully promoted and explored in assessments.
27. The agency provides a flexible range of tailored adoption support, with good focus on therapeutic support. Adoptive families are well informed at an early stage and are clear about their entitlement to adoption support. Adoption support plans are clear, and adopters describe a good quality of social work support.
28. Care leavers value the through-care system and the consistency it offers, particularly at the time of transition from children's to adult services. Most care leavers are seen regularly. Personal advisers advocate for young people to achieve the right services. Care leavers spoken with were positive about the help they receive. The local authority recognises that pathway plans need to improve as they are not consistently ambitious enough for all care leavers.
29. The local authority accepts that the quality and consistency of the care leaver service has been impacted by staffing and sickness. Due to staffing issues in the team, personal advisers do not work closely with young people until they are 18 years old, and there are a small number of young people without a dedicated worker. This means that there is insufficient oversight for some of these young people, and it is more difficult for these vulnerable young people

to maintain contact should they need help as these relationships are not established.

30. There is limited support to help vulnerable care leavers access education, employment and training opportunities. There are only limited programmes to help build care leavers' confidence and independence skills. The local authority acknowledges that there is a shortage of supported accommodation for over-18-year-olds. The local authority is starting to work to address the lack of tolerance by some housing services of young people who struggle initially at independence.

The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families is good

31. The director of children's services, who is also a deputy chief executive, and her management team have ensured that children's services is a corporate priority. Lines of reporting and accountability within the local authority have been strengthened. The local authority has refreshed its commitment to protecting and resourcing children's services with investment and plans that, in the last year, have been implemented to improve services. Consequently, the budget for children's services has been protected and additional funding has been provided to restructure and to increase the number of social workers.
32. The local authority has an effective culture of learning. The local authority has a comprehensive approach to gaining and learning from feedback from young people, complaints and serious case reviews, which has led to a range of communication and training with staff and informed policies to improve practice. The local authority has responded effectively to issues identified in this inspection, and, has responded quickly to areas for improvement and addressed deficiencies in individual cases. For example, it is taking urgent action to review its policy on young homeless people. The local authority's self-evaluation of practice is broadly accurate and the children's services leadership team knows its services well. Since the focused visit last year, leaders and managers have achieved impressive progress and improvements. For example, reduced caseloads have enabled social workers to spend more time with children and families, and the service for disabled children has been improved. The local authority recognises that more needs to be done and is addressing those areas of service which still require improvement.
33. A developing sense of corporate responsibility for children in care and care leavers means that, increasingly, the whole local authority recognises and prioritises the needs of vulnerable children. There is a shared corporate ownership for outcomes.

34. Mature partnerships such as the Local Safeguarding Children Board and Staffordshire Families Strategic Partnership help the local authority to respond to emerging needs. The local authority's transformation agenda is responsive to changing demand and is benefiting children and families, for example by commissioning and developing in-house services to meet a range of needs, such as the domestic abuse service, which is now providing a more equitable service across the county. New approaches, such as the court and local support team re-structure, are piloted and tested to provide a firm service base before being rolled out across the county.
35. The local authority uses performance information and quality assurance well in order to scrutinise and improve practice. Management oversight of practice, including practice scrutiny by senior managers, has resulted in improved quality of supervision, management decisions and the quality of assessments and plans. The local authority accepts that performance in a small number of teams has not been addressed promptly enough. The local authority is aware that quality and accuracy of some performance information is made more difficult by challenges with its electronic recording system and is acting to address this.
36. Staff are positive about working in Staffordshire. They have access to a comprehensive range of training, which is leading to a skilled workforce. Effective systems are in place to ensure careful monitoring of workloads. The leadership team has been effective in reducing workloads and social workers now have sufficient time to see children on a more regular basis. Staff report being able to plan work more effectively and feel more assured that the children they work with are safe. Staff are very positive about their experiences of working for Staffordshire during a time of considerable structural change. Staff describe good access to confident and supportive managers and a calm, consistent strategic approach to service development and provision. Staff are being attracted to work in Staffordshire and the local authority is increasingly effective at recruiting staff to permanent positions.



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Ofsted's Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services

Staffordshire 4 February - 8 February 2019

ILACS Framework

These inspections focus on the effectiveness of local authority services and arrangements:

- to help and protect children
- the experiences and progress of children in care wherever they live, including those children who return home
- the arrangements for permanence for children who are looked after, including adoption
- the experiences and progress of care leavers
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers and the impact they have on the lives of children and young people and the quality of professional practice

Inspection Pathways- for good authorities

- Local authorities judged to be good or outstanding at their most recent inspection will usually receive a **short** inspection. The short inspection will usually take place about three years after the previous inspection and last for 1 week
- In between inspections, the local authority will usually receive one or two focused visit or a JTAI (Joint Targeted Area Inspection)
- Shared self-valuation
- Annual engagement meeting

Staffordshire children's services inspections

- 2009 Comprehensive Area Assessment: **Requires Improvement**
- 2011 (July) Annual unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment: **Identified Areas for Priority Action**
- 2011 (November) Annual children's services assessment : **Performs Poorly**
- 2012 Inspection of local authority arrangements for the protection of children : **Adequate**
- 2014 Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers : **Good**
- 2017 Pilot Area for ILAC: **Good** (although not officially graded as it was a pilot)
- 2018 (June) Focussed Visit: not graded but **concerns** raised (QA Process, Caseloads, supervision & management oversight)
- 2018 (November) Local Area SEND inspection: **Significant widespred concerns raised**

2019 ILACS Judgements

- The impact of leaders on social work practice within children and families: **Good**
- The experience and progress of children who need help and protection: **Requires Improvement**
- The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers : **Good**
- Overall effectiveness: **Good**

Areas for improvement

- The length of time a very small number of children remain subject to a child protection plan
- The Local Authorities response to children exposed to contextualised risk
- The effectiveness of responses to children who repeatedly go missing from home or care
- The effectiveness of the responses to young people who present as homeless
- The oversight of children who are electively home educated
- The effectiveness of the response to care leavers who the local authority is not in touch with

What next

- Develop and deliver detailed improvement plan which includes both a response to the key areas identified by Ofsted and in the SEND inspection, and areas we have identified for improvement
- Review relevant policies and procedures
- Provide appropriate training & support to deliver changes required
- Engage relevant partners to deliver areas for improvement
- Explore good practice areas elsewhere to inform our learning
- Agree and implement an overarching Staffordshire Practice model to inform our practice which values the strengths in families, and recognises the importance of building effective relationships to

Children and Families Improvement Plan

The Inspection of Local Authority Children’s Services (ILACS) completed by Ofsted in Staffordshire February 2019, graded the quality of our Children’s Services as ‘Good’ overall and recognized quality of services delivered to children and families across the authority. The inspection also identified a number of areas that require further improvement and made recommendations to reflect these findings.

This improvement plan addresses the findings and recommendations from the inspection and will form the basis of our business plan for 2019-2020 and can be considered in a number of key areas.

Care Leavers and young people presenting as homeless aged 16-17	Embedding the Quality Assurance framework, developing a practice model and a review of the performance data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of pathway planning • Health histories for care leavers • Work around young people not in education, employment and training • Keeping in touch with care leavers 18-21 • Review of young people presenting as homeless 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Assurance embedding and this being overseen by the new QA steering Group • Development of a practice model across teams and services • Review of data and how this is presented, considered and responded to including key headlines • Participation linked to Children in Care Council
Contextual Safeguarding	Practice improvements and developments around case related practice issues for children and young people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out of workshops • Consider wider vulnerabilities of adolescents thought out the County • Partnership strategy around vulnerable adolescents • Development of vulnerable adolescent panel throughout the County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elective Home Education and triage process • Strategy meeting on open cases and wider agency contributions • Consistency across teams and services linked to assessment and planning • Return home interviews for children and young people missing and key learning around those not engaging

Local Members' Interest

Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee

28 May 2019

Work Programme Planning

Recommendation

1. That the Select Committee considers their 2018-2019 closing work programme, any work to be carried forward to their new 2019-2020 work programme, and further areas of work they wish to include.

Report of Scrutiny and Support Officer

Summary

What is the Select Committee being asked to do and why?

2. At the end of the municipal year the closing work programme needs to be reviewed to consider what outstanding work needs to be included on the new year's programme.

3. Any areas of new work can also be considered for inclusion on the new work programme, with consideration also given to how these will be addressed.

Report

Background

6. Each municipal year Select Committees develop a new work programme. As work programmes are organic documents that change throughout the year, very often there will be areas of work outstanding at the close of each municipal year.

7. The Work Programme for 2018-2019 has a number of areas of work that are outstanding. Consideration needs to be given to whether this work is carried forward to the new work programme and how Members wish the work to be undertaken.

Work Programme Items

8. The 2018-2019 Work Programme is attached at Appendix A. This highlights all work completed, including actions/outcomes.

Items not yet considered are not highlighted and Members need to consider if they wish each of these to be carried forward onto their 2019-2020 work programme.

9. A draft work programme for 2019-2020 is attached at Appendix B. This includes the outstanding items from the 2018-2019 work programme.

10. Also listed on the 2019-2020 draft work programme are a number of items that were included on the previous work programme but are not within the remit of this Select Committee. It is therefore suggested that these are referred to the appropriate committee as listed below:

Referred to	Item	Details
Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee	Stresses within Mental Health Services	This item was added to the Work Programme following triangulation meeting in May. Concerns were expressed regarding stresses within the adult mental health services rota. Specifically the Committee wished to seek reassurances that the Council can meet its obligations under the Mental Health Act for individuals who suffer a mental health crisis that could lead to them being detained under the Mental Health Act. It is proposed to refer this matter to the Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee.
Cabinet	Children's Mental Health	Concerns over the growth in children's mental health issues and that the current service provision cannot accommodate this. NB the recent APMG on children's mental health and wellbeing made a number of recommendations to Cabinet. It is therefore suggested that Cabinet will be best placed to pick up this area of work, avoiding possible duplication. We are awaiting confirmation to how the

		AMPG recommendations are being tracked. The Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee has considered the Children's Mental Health Strategy and is keeping this matter under review. It is proposed to remove this item from the Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee's Work Programme.
Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee	Alternative Education eg PRUs Suggested amendment to 'Children not in full-time education' – safeguarding implications. Clive Cartman Frost is writing an education policy on this that he could bring to Select Committee in July.	The government has recently published guidance on Children not in full-time education (The Timpson report). The impact on educational outcomes of children not in full-time education will be referred to Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee. Follow up of recommendations following the EHE Working Group will be added to both Committee's Work Programmes.
Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee	Care Packages and Communication	Adult care packages and the speed at which they are put in place as well as any barriers in communication between north and south of the county that make this process more difficult.

11. At the 22 January 2019 Select Committee an item was put forward for inclusion on the work programme around transition and preparation for adulthood. In particular Members wanted to look at:

- the transition between children's and adult services;
- the gaps that exist;
- those that remained vulnerable but under the Care Act did not meet the criteria to receive adult services; and
- how to enable individual's to be resilient and prepare them for as independent an adulthood as possible.

It was suggested that this work would be best undertaken as a working group. However on further investigation it was identified that the Transformation

Support Unit had already undertaken research in this area. Details will be shared with the Committee.

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Appendices/Background papers –

- Safe & Strong Communities Select Committee Work Programme 2018-2019
- Safe & Strong Communities Select Committee Draft Work Programme 2019-2020

WORK PROGRAMME

Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee 2018/19

This document sets out the work programme for the Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee for 2018/19. The Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee is responsible for scrutinising: children and adults’ safeguarding; community safety and Localism. The Council has three priority outcomes. This Committee is aligned to the outcome: The people of Staffordshire will feel safer, happier and more supported in and by their community.

We review our work programme at every meeting. Sometimes we change it - if something comes up during the year that we think we should investigate as a priority. Our work results in recommendations for the County Council and other organisations about how what they do can be improved, for the benefit of the people and communities of Staffordshire.

Councillor John Francis

Chairman of the Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee

If you would like to know more about our work programme, please get in touch with Tina Gould, Scrutiny and Support Manager on 01785 276148 or by emailing tina.gould@staffordshire.gov.uk

Membership – County Councillors 2018-19

John Francis (Chairman)
 Conor Wileman (Vice Chairman)
 Ann Beech
 Mike Davies
 Syed Hussain
 Trevor Johnson
 Jason Jones
 Natasha Pullen
 Paul Snape
 Mike Worthington

Calendar of Committee Meetings 2018-2019

23 April 2018 at 11.00 am	Special meeting with the PCC & Chief Constable
8 June 2018 at 10.00 am	
10 July 2018 at 10.00 am	
3 September 2018 at 10.00 am	
8 November 2018 at 10.00 am	
11 December 2018 at 10.00 am	
22 January 2019 at 2.00 pm	
4 March 2019 at 10.00 am	

Meetings usually take place in the Oak Room in County Buildings.

Date of meeting	Item	Details	Action/Outcome
Extra meeting 23 April NB meeting starts at 11.00 am	Safeguarding concerns over the Rise in Crime PCC – Matthew Ellis Chief Constable – Gareth Morgan	Following concerns raised at the 15 January Select Committee and discussions at the 10 January Triangulation meeting the Chairman requested all Members of the Council forward details of crime and safeguarding issues within their area with a view to this Select Committee meeting with the PCC and Chief Constable to address these safeguarding concerns.	The Chief Constable Gareth Morgan and the Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Ellis responded to the questions raised by member around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contact services, including call handling, emergency 999 calls, 101 calls and incident resources; • overall crime performance, acquisitive crime, violence against the person, public order and drug related offences; • use of body cams; • police and PCSO visibility; • PCSO powers; • Mutual aid deployment; • Cross boarder crime; • Motorway policing; • Crewing of police vehicles; and • Local issues.
8 June 2018 10.00 am	Children’s Centres 3 years on Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Mick Harrison	At the Select Committee meeting of 5 March 2018 it was agreed that the Children’s Commissioning Officer should attend the June meeting to update Members on progress since the Children’s Centres Working Group 4 years ago.	A working group will be set up to consider the current work of the Children’s centres in comparison with the findings of the 2014 Select Committee Review and the impact of the significant changes made as a result of the 2014/15 Best Start in Life consultation.
	Inquiry Group Report on Elective Home Education	Following a referral from the Corporate Parenting Panel a review group set up conflated with members of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee. Its first meeting was held on 12 January where Members received a briefing from officers. Further meetings were held, including the inquiry session scheduled for 21 March. The final report and recommendations will be considered by the Select Committee in readiness for forwarding to the Cabinet Member for his executive response.	The Select Committee congratulated the Review Group on their report and endorsed both the report and its recommendations for submission to the Cabinet Member. As this had been a joint review submission would be after the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee had considered the report.
10 July 2018 10.00 am	Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in Staffordshire, to include progress against the CSAF Action Plan Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Officer: Mick Harrison	The Committee has requested a six monthly update on this issue. The Chair of the Children and Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee at Stoke City Council has been invited to attend this meeting and this arrangement is reciprocated.	The Select Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wish to be informed of the outcome of the October SSRGB meeting to which Wolverhampton City Council representatives have been invited; • will write to the LGA outlining their concerns over inconsistency of licensing authorities practices and protocols and to request best practice guidelines; • asked for clarification on the advise and guidance given to taxi drivers/passenger assistants with regard to first aid.
	Provision of “places of safety” under section 136 MHA.	Following the Triangulation meeting of 10 January the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for	The Select Committee were reassured in the work undertaken to ensure those detained under Section 136 of the MHA are taken to

	Cabinet Member – Alan White Lead Officer – Jo Sutherland	Health, Care and Wellbeing asked the Select Committee to consider undertaking an overview of the current provision of places of safety. A few years ago there had been circumstances where prison cells were being used, which was agreed as inappropriate. A review to assess the current provision was requested.	health based Places of Safety and never routinely retained in police custody. They requested that the Chairman write to the PCC on their behalf to allay his concerns on this matter.
3 September 2018 10.00 am	Customer Feedback & Complaints, Adult Social Care Annual Report 17/18 Cabinet Member: Alan White Officer: Kate Bullivant	Adult's Services have a statutory obligation to submit an Annual Report on complaints and representations to the relevant County Council Committee.	Concerns with Care Director were shared. Members congratulated the Complaints Services Manager on her report.
	Customer Feedback & Complaints, Children's Social Care Annual Report 17/18 Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Officer: Kate Bullivant	Children's Services have a statutory obligation to submit an Annual Report on complaints and representations to the relevant County Council Committee.	Members were pleased to note the effective work with colleagues in Children's Services which enabled any lessons learned to inform service developments.
	Edge of Care Inquiry Report of the Inquiry Group	To consider the final report of the Edge of Care Inquiry Group	The Select Committee endorsed the report and recommendations for submitting to the Cabinet Member for his executive response.
	Quarterly performance update against Safeguarding Indicators Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton & Alan White Lead Officer: Andrew Sharp	Requested at the 29 May Triangulation meeting – KPI data will enable scrutiny of a range of services and inform further work as appropriate.	Members requested a future report outlining progress with the developments in improving consistency of data recording, including the work undertaken both locally and regionally and the results of the audit on the underlying reasons for repeat referrals. They also requested three year comparative data on the safeguarding indicators, which will be circulated to Members after the meeting.
	CSE Learning from Reviews (previously taken to the 10 July meeting – exemption paragraph 7) Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Vonni Gordon	This had been taken as an exempt briefing note to the 10 July meeting but Members requested this be brought to their September meeting as an item for discussion with appropriate Officer/Cabinet Member.	Members noted the learning from these reviews.
8 November	Missing Children/MISPERS	Suggested at the 29 May Triangulation meeting. To look at missing children in the broader sense,	The Select Committee were pleased with the progress made at the end of the first year since the contract for missing children was awarded to

2018 10.00am	Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Mick Harrison & Deborah Ramsdale	not just CSE.	catch 22. They requested a further report in 6 months time to consider how the transition work has developed.
	Trading Standards, Rogue Traders & Doorstep Crime Cabinet Member: Gill Heath Lead Officer: Trish Caldwell	Suggested at the 10 January & 29 May Triangulation meeting. Consider the safeguarding issues following the service review in 2018.	Members were pleased to note the work of Trading Standards from a safeguarding perspective and requested a further report in 12 months time to update them on the service provision.
	Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Cabinet Member: Alan White Officer: Peter Hampton	Last considered at their meeting of November 2017 where Members noted the difficulties with the number of referrals and the need to prioritise assessments. They had concerns that this meant the Council was effectively in breach of the law, but within the resource available they accepted this as the only current solution. (Previously considered by this Select Committee in July & November 2017)	The Select Committee are aware of the backlog in DoLS assessments and the need to prioritise assessing only high priority cases with the limited resource available. They have shared their concerns, particularly in light of the Ombudsman case and asked the Cabinet to consider again the resource allocation and prioritisation of assessments.
	Update from the October SSRBG meeting Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Robert Simpson	At the Select Committee meeting of 10 July Members were informed that representatives of Wolverhampton City Council had been asked to attend the October Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Responsible Bodies Group to discuss their taxi licencing. They requested an update on the outcome of this meeting.	NB Deferred until January Select Committee as the October SSRBG was cancelled.
11 December 2018 10.00am	Care Homes Quality Assurance data Including the role of Healthwatch Cabinet Member: Alan White Lead Officer: Andrew Sharp	Suggested at the 29 May Triangulation. To consider the how our care homes are scrutinised and quality assured. Included in this is an understanding of the independent work of Healthwatch.	Members applauded the Quality Assurance Team for their systematic and thorough analysis of data and for the transparency of care quality information for Staffordshire residents.
	Children's & Families System Transformation including Independent Futures, Children Centres & 0-19 Family Support Contract Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton	The Transformation programme for Children and Family Services has previously been considered by this Select Committee on 8 June, 8 July & 12 December 2016 & 13 July 2017 and 5 March 2018. Members request a report on the Transformation to include details of Independent Futures, the work of the Health Visitors and Children's Centres, considering the Family Support 0-19	Members received details of progress made with this process.

	Officer: Mick Harrison/Helen Riley/Janene Cox	contract from a Safeguarding perspective.	
	Elective Home Education Review 2017 – Executive Response to the Review Group Final Report Cabinet Members: Mark Sutton & Philip White	This Select Committee agreed the submission of the Review Group’s final; report and recommendations to the Cabinet Members at their meeting of 8 June. This is the Cabinet Member’s Executive Response to the report and its recommendations.	The Cabinet Member for Learning and Employability accepted most of the recommendation and gave deadlines for the actions to be taken. Whilst having sympathy for recommendation 3 he was unable to allocate further officer resource at this time.
	Edge of Care Inquiry Executive Response Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton	The final report and recommendations of the Edge of Care Inquiry was considered by the Select Committee at their 3 September meeting. The report and recommendations were agreed by the Select Committee and endorsed for submission to the cabinet Member for his Executive Response.	The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People agreed the recommendations made by the Inquiry group and gave deadlines for the actions to be taken.
	DoLs Briefing Cabinet Member: Alan White Lead Officer: Peter Hampton and Kate Loader	Under exemption paragraph 5 Members received a briefing from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Wellbeing on DoLs	Members supported the Cabinet Member in his approach.
18 December 2018 Joint Meeting with the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee	SEND Strategy Cabinet Member – Mark Sutton Officer – Tim Moss	To consider the new SEND Strategy	Consultation on the new Strategy ran from 5 November to 21 December 2018, with the consultation analysis and feedback influencing the final Strategy. The discussions and points made at the joint meeting had been noted but the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People suggested Members take part individually in the consultation as well to help influence the new Strategy..
22 January 2019 2.00 pm	Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in Staffordshire, to include progress against the CSAF Action Plan Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Officer: Mick Harrison	The Committee has requested a six monthly update on this issue. The Chair of the Children and Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee at Stoke City Council has been invited to attend this meeting and this arrangement is reciprocated. (Last considered at 10 July Select Committee meeting). Also included in the report is feedback from the SSRBG’s meeting with Wolverhampton City Council about their taxi licencing (originally	Members welcomed the progress outlined in the report. They requested that preparation for adulthood and “transition” from children’s to adult services be included on their work programme and also asked to see the video clip “Like a cup of tea” which was a successful example of the use of social media to target safeguarding messages at those most vulnerable.

		scheduled for 8 November Select Committee meeting).	
	Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board Cabinet Member: Alan White Independent Chair: John Wood/Helen Jones	This is reported to committee on an annual basis.	Members welcomed the report.
	Staffs Safeguarding Children's Board (SSCB) Annual Report 2016/17 Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Independent Chair: John Wood/Kate Sharratt	This is reported to committee on an annual basis.	<p>Members congratulated the Independent Chairman and Members of the SSCB on their Annual Report.</p> <p>Members asked that the paper giving proposed new arrangements from April 2019 for the SSCB be forwarded to them for information on the likely ways forward for the Board. They also intend to discuss the future scrutiny of the Board with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young people at the next Triangulation meeting.</p> <p>Members also asked for an outline of the current child protection figures with respect to the number of children placed on a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time.</p>
4 March 2019 10.00am	Domestic Homicide Reviews & emerging themes Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton and Alan White Officer: Mick Harrison/Julie Long	To consider possible themes emerging from an overview of these reviews and considering these from both an adult and children's safeguarding view point. (suggested at the 29 May Triangulation).	Members were pleased to hear and support the way in which learning from DHRs was used to inform future practice. They also sought clarification on the ethnicity recording of individual DHS victims, which was forwarded to them after the meeting.
	Children's Centre Visits Report from the Select Committee visits to Children's Centres	Four years ago the Select Committee completed work to assess the role of the Children's Centre. Four years on the Select Committee re-visited this work, visiting the Centres to assess the current situation in comparison with the findings of the original working group report.	Members felt there was a clear strategy for Early Years and noted that Children's Centres were being well used. They had two key findings: provision of Wi-Fi, which the Cabinet Member had responded to; and update on the 0-19 contracts, with a presentation being given at this meeting to address this request.
	Youth Offending Service Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Officer: Vonni Gordon & Hazel Williamson	Consideration of the YOS Review	The Select Committee received details of the changes to YOS resulting from the Review and the reasons for these changes. They also noted that these actions enabled the Service to meet their MTFs savings. The Service changes would be reviewed again in September 2019 and Members requested that details of this review be brought to their December Select Committee.

	<p>Prevent Strategy Cabinet Member: Gill Heath Lead Officer: Mick Harrison/ Becky Murphy</p>	To consider and be updated on the work of the Prevent Strategy	Members noted the on-going work around the implementation of Prevent and requested an update on this work in 12 months time, outlining progress made.
	<p>Ante Natal Visits and the work of the Family Improvement Board Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Natasha Moody & Alex Birch</p>	Requested by the Vice Chairman at the 11 December Select Committee. In particular to consider the East Staffs pilot.	The Select Committee received a presentation on the new 0-19 contract which included details of ante-natal visits and the work of the Family Improvement Board. They were pleased to note that their concerns around the loss of ante-natal home visits was addressed.
Awaiting the final report of the APMG	<p>Stresses within mental health service Cabinet Member: Lead officer:</p>	Suggested at the 29 May Triangulation. To ensure duplication is avoided this work will be postponed until the report of the Innovation APMG has been published.	
Post March 2019 12 months after start of contract	<p>Domestic Abuse Cabinet Member: Gill Heath Lead Officer: Mick Harrison</p>	Update on how the new contract is working.	
tbc	<p>Adult Safeguarding Referrals – result of audit & developments Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Andrew Sharp</p>	As part of their scrutiny of the Quarterly Performance data for adult safeguarding (at their 3 September meeting) the Select Committee requested a report on developments in improving consistency of recording, including the work undertaken both locally and regionally and the results of the audit on the underlying reasons for repeat referrals.	
tbc	<p>Vulnerable Adolescents Focused Visit Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Tony McGregor</p>	To update Members on progress with implementation of the Focused Visit Action Plan on the LA Arrangements for the Protection of Vulnerable Adolescents.	
Post March 2019	<p>Mental Health North – Transfer Cabinet Member: Alan White Lead Officer: Jon Soros</p>	To consider the safeguarding implications of the Mental Health North transfer.	
Tbc – possibly May 2019	<p>Missing Children/MISPERS Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Mick Harrison & Liz Mellor</p>	At their 8 November 2018 meeting Members requested a report in 6 months time to consider how the transition work has developed with Catch 22 delivering the Missing Children Services contract.	

tbc	Trading Standards, Rogue Traders & Doorstep Crime Cabinet Member: Gill Heath Lead Officer: Trish Caldwell	At their 8 November meeting Members requested a further report in 12 months to update them on the work of the service.	
December 2019	Early Help Family Support Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Barbara Hine	At their meeting 11 December Members asked for details of progress made with early help and family support in 12 months to update them on progress made.	
tbc	Health Visiting & Community Midwifery Contracts (0-19 contract) Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Mick Harrison/Tilly Flanagan	Suggested at the 11 December meeting – this is an issue currently within the remit of the Health Scrutiny Committee	This item was covered in the presentation to the 4 March 2019 Select Committee meeting.
tbc	Children's Mental Health Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Vonni Gordon/Danny Mulligan	Suggested at the 11 December meeting – this has recently been part of an APMG	
tbc	Alternative Education eg PRUs Cabinet Member: Philip White Lead Officer	Suggested at the 11 December meeting – this is an issue currently within the remit of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee	
tbc	Transition & Preparation for Adulthood Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Vonni Gordon	At their 22 January 2019 meeting Members requested this issue be included on their work programme – with consideration to be given to whether this should be considered by a working group. In particular they wanted to look at the transition between children's and adult services, the gaps, those that remained vulnerable but under the Care Act did not meet the criteria to receive adult services and how to prepare individual's to be resilient and prepare for as independent an adulthood as possible.	

tbc	Ofsted Children's Services focused visit Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Helen Riley	Requested at the 22 January Select Committee meeting.	
tbc	SEND inspection Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer:	Requested at the 22 January Select Committee meeting.	Details of this were covered within the Joint Meeting with Prosperous Staffordshire when looking at the new SEND Strategy as part of the consultation process.
tbc	Care Packages and Communication Cabinet Member: Lead Officer:	Requested at the 22 January meeting. Members wished to consider care packages and the speed at which they are put in place as well as any barriers in communication between the north and south of the county.	

Standing Items 2018-19

Item	Details	Action/Outcome
Themes emerging from Serious Case Reviews Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Richard Hancock	Where Serious Case Reviews have taken place the Select Committee will consider any learning that can be taken from the Review	
MTFS Reforms and assessing the "no impact claims"	Suggested at the 29 May Triangulation meeting. To scrutinise those areas of the MTFS that promise "no impact" from the changes made to assess if this was accurate and/or whether the identified mitigating action has been effective. This is routinely scrutinised by Corporate Review, with that Select Committee referring to the appropriate Select Committee for further scrutiny as and when necessary.	

Briefing Notes/Updates/Visits 2018-19

Date	Item	Details	Action/Outcome
22 August 2018	Direct Payments Cabinet Member: Alan White Lead Officer: Andrew Jepps	Following the 15 January consideration of Home Care Members requested an item on Direct Payments to clarify how the system worked. The Chairman and Vice Chairman agreed that this should be dealt with via a briefing note in the first instance.	The Briefing note was emailed to Select Committee Members on 22 August 2018.
22 August	Post 18 Transition	At the 10 July Select Committee Members	The Briefing note was emailed to Select Committee Members

2018	Services Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Andrew Sharp & Clare Owen	requested a briefing note on this issue.	on 22 August 2018.
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Working Group and/or Inquiry Days 2018-19

Date	Item	Details	Action/Outcome
Inquiry Day 30 January 2018 + follow-on meetings on 12 February 13 March	Preventing Children coming into Care- now called "Edge of Care" Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Officer: Richard Hancock	This item was initially proposed by the Commissioner for Community Safety, Children and Families. The Chairman has met with the Head of Families First and a scoping report has been prepared for Members' consideration.	The 30 January Inquiry has been held. A further Member meeting on 12 February identified a range of further information they required. This detail will be presented by Officers at the 13 March meeting. The final report was agreed by the Select Committee at the 3 September meeting and has been forwarded to the Cabinet Member for Children & Young People for his executive response.
June and July 2018	Children's Centres – 4 years on Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Officer: Mick Harrison	Three years ago the Select Committee completed work to assess the role of the Children's Centre. Three years on the Select Committee will re-visit this work, visiting the Centres to assess the current situation in comparison with the findings of the original working group report.	At the Select Committee meeting of 26 November Members agreed to a request that this review be put back until the current significant changes within Children's Centres were completed. At the 8 June Select Committee Members agreed to set up this working group, with Members visiting the Centres before the end of the 2018 summer term.
12 January 31 January 21 March Reporting to 8 June 2018 Select Committee	Elective Home Education Cabinet Member – March Sutton Officer – Karl Hobson	Referral from Corporate Parenting Panel – August 2017 (NB – also referred to Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee)	A review group has been set up jointly with members of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee. Its first meeting was held on 12 January where Members received a briefing from officers. A planning meeting was held on 31 January with the inquiry session on 21 March. The Inquiry Group then compiled their report and recommendations which were submitted to the 8 June Select Committee for their comment and/or endorsement. Both this Select Committee and the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee endorsed the report and recommendations. The report was therefore sent to the Cabinet Member for his executive response.

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Current & Related Work of Select Committees and/or All Party Member Groups 2018-19

Timescale	Area of Work	Details	Action/Outcome
30 May 2018 Special joint meeting	All Age Disability Strategy Cabinet Member: Alan White Officer: Martyn Baggaley	The Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee has the All Age Disability Strategy on their work programme with the original intention that this issue would be considered by them and their findings shared. However it has now been agreed that this will be considered at a special joint meeting between Healthy Staffordshire,	Detailed scrutiny took place at the joint meeting with the thoughts, questions, concerns and comments of members at the Meeting being taken into consideration by the authors and Cabinet Members in the preparation of the final version of the Whole Life Disability Strategy 2018-2023

		Prosperous Staffordshire and the Safe and Strong Communities Select Committees on 30 May 2018.	
September 2017 - June 2018	Children's mental health & wellbeing Cabinet Member: Alan White Officers: Tilly Flannigan & Divya Patel APMG Membership Keith Flunder (Chair) Johnny McMahon Bernard Peters Ron Clarke Bryan Jones Ann Edgeller	Innovation APMG: Terms of Reference 'how to promote children's emotional and mental wellbeing to reduce referrals to specialist services across SCC and other partners, by intervening earlier to ensure better long-term outcomes'	The final report of this APMG is due to be considered by Corporate Review in June 2018. The final report was considered by Corporate Review at its meeting of 3 September.
August 2017 – February 2018	Increasing S3 Capacity Cabinet Member: Gill Heath Officers: Angela Schulp & Adam Rooney APMG Membership Mike Davies (Chair) David Smith Kyle Robinson Maureen Compton Julia Jessel	Community APMG: How do we increase the capacity and utilise the services of S3 to deliver 'People helping people' and reduce the involvement of SCC	The final report of the APMG was considered by Corporate Review on 19 February 2018.

WORK PROGRAMME

Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee 2019/20

This document sets out the work programme for the Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee for 2019/20. The Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee is responsible for scrutinising: children and adults’ safeguarding; community safety and Localism. The Council has three priority outcomes. This Committee is aligned to the outcome: The people of Staffordshire will feel safer, happier and more supported in and by their community.

We review our work programme at every meeting. Sometimes we change it - if something comes up during the year that we think we should investigate as a priority. Our work results in recommendations for the County Council and other organisations about how what they do can be improved, for the benefit of the people and communities of Staffordshire.

Councillor John Francis

Chairman of the Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee

If you would like to know more about our work programme, please get in touch with Tina Gould, Scrutiny and Support Manager on 01785 276148 or by emailing tina.gould@staffordshire.gov.uk

Membership – County Councillors 2019-20

John Francis (Chairman)
Conor Wileman (Vice Chairman)
Ann Beech
Mike Davies
Syed Hussain
Trevor Johnson
Jason Jones
Natasha Pullen
Paul Snape
Mike Worthington

Calendar of Committee Meetings - 2019-2020

28 May 2019 at 10.00 am
9 July 2019 at 10.00 am
1 October 2019 at 10.00 am
7 November 2019 at 10.00 am
13 January 2020 at 10.00 am
2 March 2020 at 10.00 am
23 April 2020 at 10.00 am

Meetings usually take place in the Oak Room in County Buildings.

Date of meeting	Item	Details	Action/Outcome
28 May 2019 10.00 am	Missing Children Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Mick Harrison & Liz Mellor	At their 8 November 2018 meeting Members requested a report in 6 months' time to consider how the transition work has developed with Catch 22 delivering the Missing Children Services contract.	
	Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Helen Riley	Requested at the 22 January Select Committee meeting. Presentation on the outcome of the inspection.	
	Children's Improvement Plan Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Helen Riley	The Improvement Plan is an outcome from the Ofsted Inspection.	
	SSCB New Arrangements Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Helen Riley	Presentation on the new arrangements from 1 April 2019.	
	Work Programme Planning	The Select Committee will receive their work programme 2018-2019 which shows the work completed, outcomes and outstanding items. They will also receive a draft of their 2019-2020 work programme and plan their work going forward.	
9 July 2019 10.00 am	Adult Safeguarding Referrals – result of audit & developments Cabinet Member: Alan White Lead Officer: Andrew Sharp	As part of their scrutiny of the Quarterly Performance data for adult safeguarding (at their 3 September meeting) the Select Committee requested a report on developments in improving consistency of recording, including the work undertaken both locally and regionally and the results of the audit on the underlying reasons for repeat referrals.	
	Vulnerable Adolescents Focused Visit Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton ? Alan White Lead Officer: Helen Riley	To update Members on progress with implementation of the Focused Visit Action Plan on the LA Arrangements for the Protection of Vulnerable Adolescents.	
1 October 2019	Domestic Abuse Cabinet Member: Gill	Update on how the new contract is working.	

10.00 am	Heath Lead Officer: Mick Harrison		
	Customer Feedback and Complaints Annual Report 2018-19 – Adults Social Care Cabinet Member: Alan White Officer: Kate Bullivant		
	Customer Feedback and Complaints Annual Report 2018-19 – Children’s Social Care Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Officer: Kate Bullivant		
7 November 2019 10.00 am	Trading Standards, Rogue Traders & Doorstep Crime Cabinet Member: Gill Heath Lead Officer: Trish Caldwell	At their 8 November meeting Members requested a further report in 12 months to update them on the work of the service.	
13 January 2020 10.00 am	Early Help Family Support Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Barbara Hine	At their meeting 11 December Members asked for details of progress made with early help and family support in 12 months to update them on progress made. Consider quality of family support, third sector services, BRFC and use of earned autonomy fund.	Vonni Gordon/Mick Harrison/Barbara Hine to discuss how to address this. (A report has recently been presented to FPEG that may be appropriate to cover this item. Author – Tilly Flanagan).
Awaiting the final report of the APMG	Stresses within mental health service Cabinet Member: Alan White Lead officer: Jo Sutherland	Suggested at the 29 May Triangulation. To ensure duplication is avoided this work will be postponed until the report of the Innovation APMG has been published.	29 May Triangulation referred specifically to stresses within the adult mental health services rota. The Committee seeks reassurance that the Council can meet its statutory obligations under the Mental Health Act for individuals who suffer a mental health crisis that could lead to them being detailed under the MHA.
Post March 2019	Mental Health North – Transfer Cabinet Member: Alan White Lead Officer: Jon Soros	To consider the safeguarding implications of the Mental Health North transfer.	Contact has been made with the service lead. The transfer has gone well and we are advised that this is no longer an issue. It is proposed that this item be removed from the agenda.
tbc	Children’s Mental Health Strategy Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Mick Harrison/Liz Mellor	Suggested at the 11 December meeting – this has recently been part of an APMG	Outcomes of APMG have been reported to Cabinet and Cabinet are reporting on actions recommended in report. Refer to HSSC

See Notes July 2019	Alternative Education eg PRUs retitle Children not in full-time education Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton/Philip White Lead Officer: Vonni Gordon/Tim Moss	Suggested at the 11 December meeting – this is an issue currently within the remit of the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee	Check that PRU's are included on Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee Work Programme. Discuss at next Prosperous Triangulation. The concern of the Committee is around children who are not in education, either because they have been referred to a PRU and are on a part-time syllabus or who are receiving part time home tuition and may be vulnerable. Clive Cartman Frost (lead Vonni Gordon) is writing a Safeguarding in Education Policy that could be brought to the Committee in July 2019. Re Children not in full-time education. The government has undertaken a national consultation. The government's response is awaited. Changes in regard to elective home education may result.
tbc	Care Packages and Communication Cabinet Member: Alan White Lead Officer: Richard Harling/Jo Sutherland	Requested at the 22 January meeting. Members wished to consider care packages and the speed at which they are put in place as well as any barriers in communication between the north and south of the county.	Refer to HSSC

Standing Items 2019-20

Item	Details	Action/Outcome
Themes emerging from Serious Case Reviews Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Richard Hancock	Where Serious Case Reviews have taken place the Select Committee will consider any learning that can be taken from the Review	Some areas picked up by the DHR review process
MTFS Reforms and assessing the "no impact claims"	Suggested at the 29 May Triangulation meeting. To scrutinise those areas of the MTFS that promise "no impact" from the changes made to assess if this was accurate and/or whether the identified mitigating action has been effective. This is routinely scrutinised by Corporate Review, with that Committee referring specific issues to the appropriate Select Committee for further scrutiny as and when necessary.	

Briefing Notes/Updates/Visits 2019-20

Date	Item	Details	Action/Outcome

Working Group and/or Inquiry Days 2019-20

Date	Item	Details	Action/Outcome
	Transition & Preparation for Adulthood Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Deborah Ramsdale	At their 22 January 2019 meeting Members requested this issue be included on their work programme – with consideration to be given to whether this should be considered by a working group. In particular they wanted to look at the transition between children’s and adult services, the gaps, those that remained vulnerable but under the Care Act did not meet the criteria to receive adult services and how to prepare individual’s to be resilient and prepare for as independent an adulthood as possible.	Deborah Ramsdale is working on adults transition, including transition clinics. TSU have undertaken a piece of work in this area. A Peer Review on Adults is due in October 2019. Proposed to stall working on this until post the Peer Review.

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Current & Related Work of Select Committees and/or All Party Working Groups 2019-20

Timescale	Area of Work	Details	Action/Outcome
	Loneliness		
	Aspiration		

