

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Information report

Committee	Corporate Parenting Board
Date:	21 June 2021
Title:	Transforming Social Care Programme, Children In Care Projects: overview for Corporate Parenting Board
Report From:	Transforming Social Care Team, Children and Families Branch

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of recent Transforming Social Care (TSC) projects which impact on children in care.
2. The role of the Corporate Parenting Board in championing these projects is highlighted at the end of the report.

Executive Summary

1. The Transforming Social Care Programme (TSC) sits within the Children and Families Branch and leads on strategic change projects. We work in partnership with colleagues across District and County Services to identify and review areas for improvement, develop recommendations and implement change. TSC works together with the Service Development Team to embed improvements in practice and ensure that the intended outcomes of the project are achieved over time.
2. This paper provides an overview of three projects which have been running over the past 18 months. They have been grouped under the title 'gateway projects' because they all have an impact on 'the right children coming into care at the right time, for the right period of time'.
3. These projects are:
 - 3.1. Family meetings and plans
 - 3.2. Family and Friends Care

3.3. Embedding reunification across the service

4. It is striking that whilst they were separate pieces of work focusing on different points in time during a family/child journey – the most significant area of practice discussed was what happened with families prior to a child coming into care. More specifically we focused on how we involve the wider support networks in planning with children and families.
5. We recognised that this area of practice needs to be further developed and embedded so practitioners have the confidence, skills and resources to do it more consistently.
6. Whilst TSC's role in these projects is ramping down, the work required across C&F branch continues. The Service Development team are now taking the lead on the next phase which we've termed 'Family Connections'. This includes clearer messaging, resources and training for practitioners. It also includes reviewing our own processes, language and structure to remove any barriers to children returning safely home or to their wider networks.
7. A new Family Connections Service is also being launched from July 2021, this is an enhanced version of the existing Connected Carers Assessment Team (CCAT). We will be developing a support function so family and friends carers are better prepared and supported as they take on a caring role in the short and long term.
8. We conclude this report by identifying the role of the Corporate Parenting Board and partner agencies in promoting and enabling more children to stay or return to their homes and wider support networks.

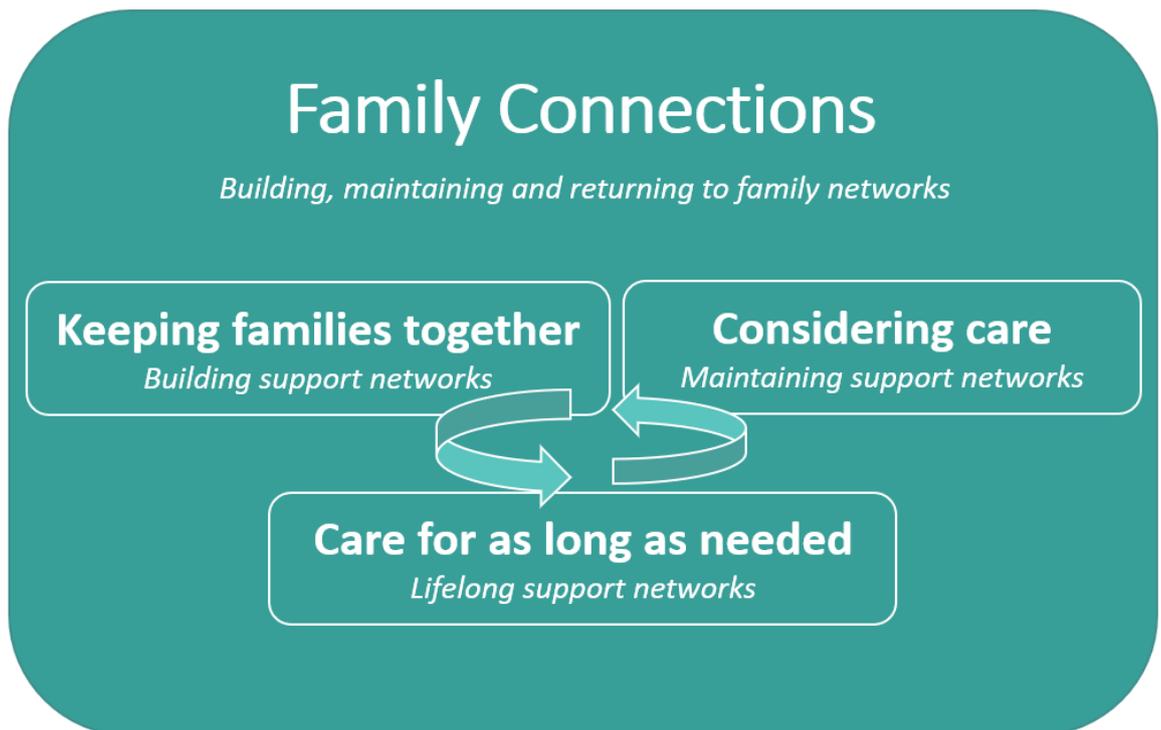
Projects overview

Project	Purpose	Deliverables / recommendations	Impact
Family meetings and plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further embedding of Hampshire Approach (family/child ownership and engagement in plan) • Earlier and improved engagement of wider support network and potential carers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created one Family Plan template which is used across Early Help, CIN and CP planning • Created one My Life My Future care plan used across CIC and CL teams • Created family meeting recommendations to encourage more consistent practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans are more family/child friendly, building on strengths whilst recognising risks • Improvement in plan quality demonstrated in audits • Contributing towards more plans being achieved and sustained.
Family and Friends Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More children to be placed with family and friends carers outside of the care system • Improve support for family and friends carers 	<p>Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear comms and tools for practitioners – giving same message <p>Routes into care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to promote earlier and continued engagement of wider family network • Promote section 20, private arrangements and earlier planning for SGOs <p>Support package</p>	<p>We expect to demonstrate the following impact in the coming years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate route into family and friends care based on needs of child, not our own internal processes • Increase in special guardianship, informal and section 20 placements and reductions in regulation 24 and Connected Carer placements • Improved communication, preparation and support for connected carers

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow a package of support as we better understand need and demand • Review SGO payments <p>Team structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create enhanced Family Connections Service under new Team Manager sitting under Laura Mallinson's District • Team will develop support function over 15 months, after which business case will be made for long term offering. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved placement stability
Embedding reunification across the service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed a reunification culture across the service • Flip our thinking from 'can this child go home?' to 'what needs to happen for this child to go home' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify our key messages and language on reunification and permanence • Create resource pack for practitioners to give clarity and confidence • Review processes, policy and structure to remove barriers to children returning home 	<p>We expect to demonstrate the following impact in coming years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased flexible and shared care arrangements • Improved relationships with birth families whilst child is in care • More children returning safely home or to their wider support networks

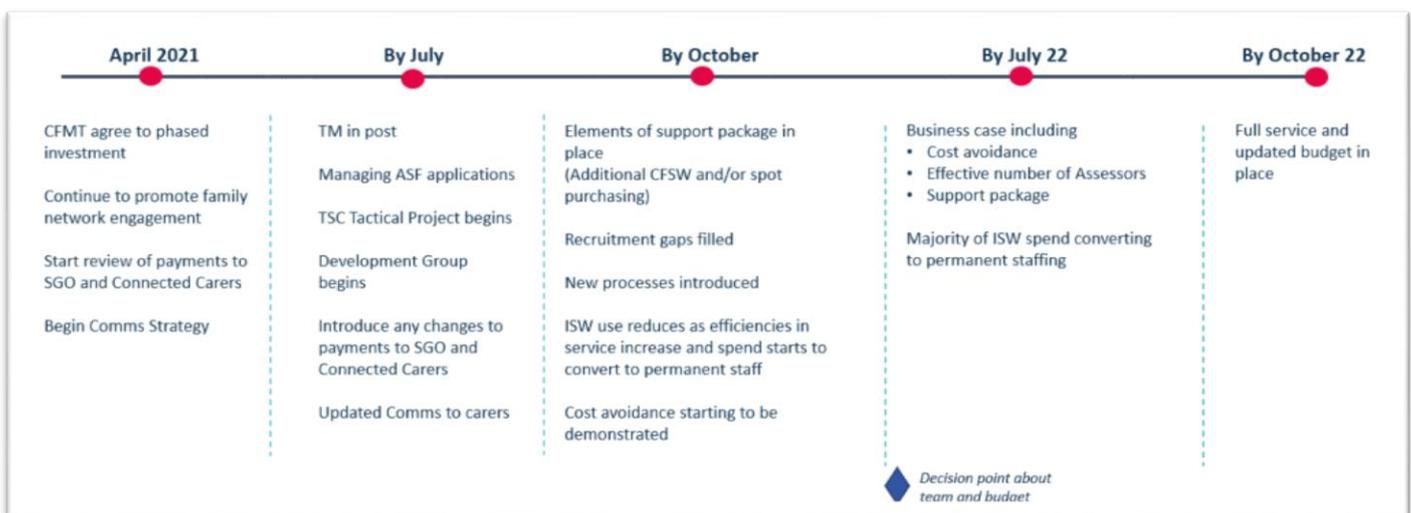
Next steps: embedding practice through 'Family Connections'

1. In recognition that the success of these projects rely on building and improving family networks, we are naming the next phase 'Family Connections'.
2. The Service Development Team will lead this phase, with project management support from TSC. The Project Lead for the gateway projects will also work together with Service Development to ensure a smooth handover and to maintain momentum.
3. Family Connections is about promoting our key messages and providing the resources and training so practitioners can confidentiality and consistently build and support family networks.



4. Family Connections deliverables will include:
 - Key messages visual
 - Resource pack for practitioners with
 - Case studies
 - How to guides

- Clear processes and policies
 - Tools to support practice
 - Updated training for practitioners and Foster Carers
 - A review of our structure and processes to ensure there are no barriers to this way of working.
5. Following the recommendations from the Family and Friends Care Project, we are enhancing our offer to family and friends carers. From July 2021 CCAT (Connected Carers Assessment Team) will be rebranded as the Family Connections Team. Assessors who previously worked within CAST teams will be brought together under a new Team Manager and the team will report to Laura Mallinson as strategic lead for CIC and reunification.
 6. The team will have an enhanced remit to help prepare and support family and friends carers, and they will be a key driver in increasing the number of Special Guardianships and informal or section 20 placements.
 7. The coming year will focus on developing a support function in response to evidence of need. TSC will support this new team by working with them to process map their new ways of working and building reports to evidence their impact.
 8. TSC will also work with the team to write a business case in the summer of 2022 to outline the impact of their work and propose how the service should be delivered in the long term.



Role of Corporate Parenting Board

1. Support and raise awareness
2. Prioritise reunification/family network housing
3. Consider how mental health support can best be provided to these families

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	no
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	no
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes