

**HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM**

REPORT FOR CABINET

Decision Maker:	Cabinet
Date:	7 December 2021
Title:	Annual Safeguarding Report - Children's Services 2020-21
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an annual update to Cabinet on safeguarding children activity within Children's Services during 2020/21.

Recommendations

2. That Cabinet notes the positive progress and continued consistently high performance with regards to safeguarding children in Hampshire.
3. That Cabinet note the commitment of a wide range of Children's Services officers in achieving this level of performance.
4. That Cabinet receives further updates on safeguarding on an annual basis.

Executive Summary

5. This report identifies key national developments, summarises performance and activity levels, and details a number of key local developments and future priorities.
6. The report provides assurance that whilst demand for children's social care services continues to increase year on year, particularly as a result of the pandemic, the response to the safeguarding of vulnerable children is both robust and timely. New and emerging risks to children are identified and addressed collaboratively with partners and the wider transformation of children's social care will deliver a modern social work service fit for the future challenges over the next decade.

Contextual Information

7. Cabinet will recall under the new Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) introduced in January 2018 and amended in March 2019,

local authorities are subject to standard and short inspections depending on their previous Ofsted judgement.

8. In November 2018, Hampshire was subject to a focused visit, inspecting children subject to a child protection plan, including the quality and impact of pre-proceedings intervention under the Public Law Outline (PLO). Hampshire had received a very positive letter from Ofsted following this visit.
9. In April and May 2019 Hampshire was subject to a 'short' ILACS inspection. Report to Council dated 15 July refers to this inspection. This inspection judged Hampshire to be outstanding overall and across the other three areas of judgement.
10. It is worth noting that each of these inspections were rooted in safeguarding and have fully tested Hampshire's safeguarding practice, alongside testing the front door process within the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

Finance

11. There are no financial recommendations in this report although the issue of the cost (price) of placements for children in care is a key pressure for the County Council.

National Developments

Covid-19

12. The DfE published updated guidance to inform local authorities and other children's social care providers, of the temporary changes to regulations governing children's social care services, made to support the delivery of services to children and their families during the pandemic. The statutory duties remain the same, however, they allow for very specific circumstances where changes can be made to the use of secondary legislation. Amendments allow for flexibility in some circumstances, only to be used when absolutely necessary, with senior management oversight and consistent with overarching safeguarding principles. A paper went to CSDMT examining the implications for the amendments.
13. Children and Families branch took a three phased approach as detailed in Appendix A. However, it is important to note that throughout the pandemic and despite at times significant staffing challenges, the service has continued to operate as business as usual, albeit with the use of some virtual visits/meetings.

Child exploitation:

14. There are clear links between child exploitation and those children who are trafficked and/or that go missing. The term 'exploitation' includes the following risk areas:

15. Child sexual exploitation (CSE), online exploitation, criminal exploitation including County Lines (CCE), drug related harm, knife crime and serious violence; as well as other forms of exploitation that involve coercion and control such as radicalisation and extremism; forced marriage, female genital mutilation.
16. The Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth & Southampton (HIPS) Child Exploitation Group is a strategic multi-agency group, covering the HIPS areas to meet legislative requirements, governmental guidance and to identify and implement best practice to protect children from all forms of exploitation. The HIPS Child Exploitation Group includes representation from multi agency partners. The group has developed the HIPS Child Exploitation Strategy, which sets out how all agencies will work together to ensure the most effective and coordinated response to identify and protect children at risk of exploitation both within and across the HIPS Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) areas. The group is accountable to the HIPS Executive Group and provides updates to them on progress against the strategy and associated delivery plan.
17. At a local district level in Hampshire, senior children's social care managers lead Missing Exploited and Trafficked (MET) operational meetings. These ensure the local identification, support, safeguarding and diversion of children who are at risk of, or being exploited within Hampshire's districts.
18. The latest available data for children who go missing in Hampshire, be that from home or for those in care, shows a continued improving position. Fewer children are going missing and when they do, there is a robust and effective response from children's social care and Hampshire Constabulary. Each district team tracks and risk assesses their children who go missing to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place to prevent repeat occurrences. This is an important area of work and one that Ofsted gives significant scrutiny to.
19. County Lines remains an increasing concern for Hampshire Children's Services and all agencies concerned with children in the area. All agencies and professionals contribute to tackling this form of exploitation, with more specialist work being undertaken by the pan-Hampshire Police MET team and the Hampshire Children's Services specialist Willow team, a multi-agency team consisting of specialist social workers, health professionals and St Giles Trust workers, working closely with Hampshire Constabulary to protect the highest risk children. Together with Hampshire Constabulary there is a coordinated deployment of these specialist resources to identify networks, ensuring the safeguarding of the most vulnerable children and the disruption of County Lines activity.

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC):

20. There are two groups of asylum-seeking children for whom Hampshire take responsibility. Those arriving spontaneously, often disembarking from the back of lorries on the M27/M3 corridor, who then legally become looked after children and are the responsibility of the Local Authority. The second

group are through the National Transfer Scheme, as detailed below. Caring for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children has implications that are wide reaching and complex. Health services and education are impacted as are Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) as many of the children are severely traumatised. There are also issues in respect of the availability and cost of translation services alongside a significant national shortage and lack of suitable placements for looked after children.

Hampshire UASC Arrivals

UASC arrivals	Jan - Mar 2018	Apr-Jun 2018	Jul-Sep 2018	Oct-Dec 2018	Jan - Mar 2019	Apr-Jun 2019	Jul-Sep 2019	Oct-Dec 2019	Jan - Mar 2020	Apr-Jun 2020	Jul-Sep 2020	Oct-Dec 2020	Jan - Mar 2021
Quarterly Data	14	29	31	17	18	7	8	3	13	0	18	4	7

21. As at 30 June 2021 the total number of UASC (under 18 years) looked after by Hampshire is 63.

UASC Care Leavers	Jan - Mar 2018	Apr-Jun 2018	Jul-Sep 2018	Oct-Dec 2018	Jan - Mar 2019	Apr-Jun 2019	Jul-Sep 2019	Oct-Dec 2019	Jan - Mar 2020	Apr-Jun 2020	Jul-Sep 2020	Oct-Dec 2020	Jan - Mar 2021
Period End	246	247	270	294	308	328	329	327	334	335	341	347	363

22. The second table above shows the number of UASC Care Leavers at each period end. There has been a 164% increase in the number of UASC care leavers since June 2017 (137), which is to be expected given the average age of UASC arrivals is 17.
23. Since July 2016, Hampshire has been accepting children through the National Transfer Scheme (NTS). Hampshire have always been proactive in the NTS scheme and have previously been supportive with the closure of the Calais camp and more recently with the large influx of children arriving through Dover. Between August and October 2020 Hampshire took children direct from the Port of Dover as Kent County Council were unable to support more arrivals. The transfer scheme has been on hold until July 2021 and Hampshire's commitment is to take one child per month from the scheme. This is considered proportionate if the transfer scheme was mandated and all local authorities took a fair share of those arrivals. However, some local authorities refuse to receive any children
24. The majority of the children are placed in independent fostering agency (IFA) placements and a significant number are placed outside of Hampshire, in order that we can better meet their cultural and individual

needs. The age range is from 11 years old and the significant majority are males. They will need to be looked after by the local authority until they reach 18 years and will then have care leaver status with continuing support from the local authority until they are 25 years of age. Whilst the Home Office provide set funding for UASC and care leavers there is still a shortfall, particularly for those over the age of 18. It should also be noted that around 30% of UASC will not be given leave to remain in the UK and as such will have 'no recourse to public funds' requiring the local authority to entirely fund all of their living costs until they reach 25 years of age.

Working Together 2018

25. The Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) is a mature, robust and effective multi-agency partnership. Drawing on the reflective, proactive and innovative practice of the children's workforce across Hampshire, we continue to develop and improve our services through effective safeguarding, learning and development. Hampshire County Council Children's Services, Hampshire Constabulary, and the five CCGs form the three safeguarding partners. All three lead safeguarding partners hold a strategic role within their organisations and are able to speak with authority, commit to matters of policy and hold their organisation to account. Strong strategic leadership during the pandemic ensured rapid and decisive action to safeguard Hampshire's children and young people at risk of harm or abuse and ensured access to the most appropriate support services to keep them safe.
26. The HSCP has a clear commitment from senior leaders, building on strengths within the strong partnership relationships that exist, our vision is to protect children from harm and prevent them from the risk of being harmed and support their recovery from harmful situations. Key to our success has been a focus on the different safeguarding contexts that exist across Hampshire, with emphasis being placed on children and young people being safeguarded in their lives at home, in their friendship circles, in health, in education and in the public spaces that they occupy both offline and online.

Performance and Activity levels

27. Workloads, as evidenced in contacts, referrals and safeguarding activity, continue to be high with 8,978 cases open to Children's Social Care at the time of writing this report. The table below sets out the trends over the last four years including the source of referrals received via Hantsdirect.

Contacts and Referrals

Contact and Referrals	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2021-21	
	Denom	Value	Denom	Value	Denom	Value	Denom	Value	Demon	Value
Number of initial contacts		87235		106010		117188		125413		126153
Number of referrals		37831		35953		40014		44434		48826
Referral source: Individual	2165	11.10%	1908	11.50%	1906	10.40%	2303	11.39%	2484	11.41%
Education	4559	23.50%	3862	23.30%	4432	24.10%	5007	24.76%	4230	19.43%
Health Services	2603	13.40%	2251	13.60%	3063	16.60%	3656	18.08%	4259	19.57%
Housing	233	1.20%	174	1.00%	188	1.00%	248	1.23%	181	0.83%
Local Authority Services	1606	8.30%	1704	10.30%	1661	9.00%	1600	7.91%	1856	8.53%
Police	5360	27.60%	4265	25.70%	4559	24.80%	4585	22.68%	5803	26.66%
Other legal agency	447	2.30%	388	2.30%	593	3.20%	696	3.44%	884	4.06%
Other	1765	9.10%	1194	7.20%	1248	6.80%	1262	6.24%	1166	5.36%
Anonymous	478	2.50%	384	2.30%	495	2.70%	531	2.63%	643	2.95%
Unknown	219	1.00%	466	2.80%	263	1.40%	332	1.64%	2	0.01%
Not recorded	0	0%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	258	1.19%

28. The total number of contacts as at 31 March 2021 (126,153) is 7.6% higher than the total received at 31 March 2019 (117,188), which was 11% higher than the previous year (77,934). The 2020-21 is a 62% increase on the 2015-16 number. This is indicative of the continuing pressures across the child protection system which is reflected nationally. For 2020-21, education 19.43% have been overtaken as the highest referrer with police increasing to highest referrer (26.66%) which is to be expected in a period which saw school closures due to lockdowns. These contact percentages have remained fairly consistent over the last three years.

Assessments and Child Protection Investigations (s47)

Section 47 and Assessments	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
% of S47 going to initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC)	4,211	43.7%	3926	44.9%	4317	40.6%	5035	31.4%	4747	34.7%

Child & Family Assessment (C&FA) Timeliness	19841	89.6%	18496	87.90%	18003	90.9%	19712	92.6%	15924	95.3%
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29. With regards to assessments, as can be seen in the table above, the percentage of child protection investigations (section 47 investigations) which progress to an initial child protection conference over a year, has remained at around the same level compared to previous years. This continues to reinforce the fact that thresholds are being consistently applied by social workers and managers.
30. The timeliness of completing a Child and Family Assessment (C&FA) since their introduction in 2014-15, is a very positive picture given the large number of assessments undertaken over the last year. This has not fallen from the high 80s for the last three years and is higher than the majority of other local authorities in the region.

Child Protection Plans (CPP)

Child Protection Plans (CPP)	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
No of children on CPP		1263		1293		1097		938		1000

31. As detailed above, work within the child protection planning process remains robust with numbers showing a decline from the end of March 2017, but an increase more recently due to the Covid pandemic. More children who were subject to a child protection investigation and were then presented at a child protection conference, were deemed to warrant being made subject to a child protection plan because of the risk of significant harm. The increase is as a result of additional pressures on families as a result of Covid 19 and we have seen a rise in the complexity of risk and issues within some families that social workers are working with. However, as lockdowns ease and life returns to normal we do expect those numbers to reduce again.
32. The number of children subject to a plan for neglect remains in the 60-70 percent (although a word of caution in that categorisation between neglect and emotional abuse can be variable, and neglect while present may not be the main presenting factor). HSCB launched its Neglect Strategy in October 2016 and this continues to help professionals better identify neglect.
33. A low percentage of child protection plans are lasting beyond two years (which is good as it indicates proactive work) and relatively few require a repeat plan within two years. The number of timely visits made within the

required dates remains a significant strength of the service and reinforces that children are being seen and kept safe.

Full Time Children Looked After (CLA)

Full Time Children Looked After (CLA)	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
No of full time CLA	1339	1305	1440	1592	1664	1602	1656

	Apr-Jun 2018	Jul-Sep 2018	Oct-Dec 2018	Jan-Mar 2019	Apr-Jun 2019	Jul-Sep 2019	Oct-Dec 2019	Jan-Mar 2020	Apr-Jun 2020	Jul-Sep 2020	Oct-Dec 2020	Jan-Mar 2021
Entering full time care	151	207	168	159	135	155	121	159	158	166	152	157
Leaving full time care	149	148	136	185	161	153	148	166	107	136	184	139
Net increase	2	59	32	-26	-26	2	-27	-7	51	30	-32	18
Of those new into care children PwP	24	18	24	30	32	32	14	8	25	23	24	27
Of those new UASC	29	31	19	18	7	8	3	13	0	20	4	7

34. With regards to children in care, the number has increased by 54 (3%) over the last 12 months. The numbers of CLA is impacting significantly on the financial challenges the Council is facing and the capacity of the service.
35. It should be noted that there is of course significant churn throughout the year of the children in care population. Additionally, changes in court practices are placing more children at home whilst on a Care Order (and thus 'in care') whilst previously such children would probably have remained the subject of support in the community without entering the court (and care) arena. This is primarily due to a complex set of changes relating to the 'Public Law Outline'. A recent review of this practice by the President of the Family Division, and Head of Family Justice, said this practice of placing children at home on care orders should cease, but we are yet to experience that in Hampshire.

36. Nationally the picture of demand continues to outstrip the supply of placements for children in care, and the costs of placements are rising significantly. The increasing complexity of the children coming into the care system has meant additional costs associated with their placements. As above, demand for placements outstrips supply and this is particularly the case with the most complex and troubled teenagers, who frequently require more intensive residential placements. The costs (price) of those placements continue to rise year on year. Significant work is carried out by our Placement Commissioning team (such as working through framework contracts and contract specification) to ensure that Hampshire achieves the best value that it can in what is an 'overheated' market.
37. Our Modernising Placements Programme is aiming to significantly increase the numbers of HCC carers by offering a wider range of support to those carers, thus enabling them to care for children with more complex needs. This, in conjunction with changes to our children's homes, should increase capacity and assist in better managing the costs of some placements.

Local Developments

Recruitment and Retention:

38. The recruitment and retention of children's social workers continues to be a key issue. This is a national problem which is particularly acute in the South East region. In 2018 there was an investment by HCC of £6.5m and over 100 new social work posts to deliver effective sustained change in vulnerable families. Since this investment over 300 qualified social workers have been recruited into HCC's Children's Services. This has included 250 Newly Qualified Social Workers who have joined our Graduate Entry Training Scheme in a planned strategy to grow our own Social Workers for the future. The department is also seeking to maximise other routes to bring social workers into Hampshire through apprenticeships and a national training programme (Step Up to Social Work). In 2021 overseas social workers are also a small but growing element of recruitment activity.
39. Permanent vacancy rates in our front-line teams remains around 13%, although there are four further cohorts of Newly Qualified Social Workers planned to start this financial year. Although social worker turnover stabilised at around 13% during the Covid-19 pandemic this is now starting to increase as restrictions are lifted. To ensure that HCC remains attractive in a competitive recruitment market, pay bench-marking work has been undertaken and pay for our social workers is currently under review. Retention of social workers continues to be supported by social worker Personal Assistants to reduce the administrative burden, as well as flexible working and technology to support mobile working.
40. Due to the need to cover vacancies, the need to support our newly qualified social workers and with rising demand upon services, the number of agency social workers has increased. Through our own employment agency (Connect to Hampshire) the number of off contract workers has been substantially reduced, although there continues to be significant

pressure upon the supply of qualified social workers due to demand within the region.

41. Children's Services continues to invest in a comprehensive marketing strategy to support the recruitment of permanent social workers. This includes published articles through Community Care promoting HCC as an employer, attendance and presentation delivery at national professional development and recruitment events, regular digital recruitment campaigns and delivery of our own Social Work in the South event.

Transforming Social Care (TSC) in Hampshire

42. The Transforming Social Care Programme is now in its second phase and continues to deliver innovative whole system change and continuous improvement to our social work practice. The 2020 Annual Safeguarding Report gave an overview of Phase 1 projects and what had begun to be delivered under Phase 2. This report summarises those projects which have concluded or are ongoing during 2021.

43. Ongoing projects

- Implementation of Family Connections Service – assessment, preparation and support for Family and Friends Carers
- Continuing to embed Intensive and Specialist workers to work with priority families and keep/return more children safely home
- Right Time Right Place – family life isn't 9-5 and so this project is considering how our service could adapt to flexibly meet the demands of families and potentially attract new social workers who wish to work different hours/patterns
- Implementing improvements to the Independent Reviewing Service
- Implementing improvements to the Family Time Service (previously Contact Service)
- Working with health partners to implement Health Assessment improvements
- Trial of virtual reality headsets to increase understanding of the impact of trauma and harmful parental behaviours

44. Completed projects

- Improvements to Early Help and Group Work delivery
- Improvements to Volunteer Service
- Applying the Hampshire Approach to family meetings and plans
- Care Leavers projects (housing, emotional and mental health, health passport)
- Introduced the Challenging Behaviour programme 'Great Behaviour Breakdown'

45. Appendix B provides further details about each project and its impact.

Youth Offending Service:

46. During the last year Hampshire Youth Offending team (HYOT) has continued to deliver youth justice and youth crime prevention to the children whilst managing the peaks of the pandemic. HYOT has used the period to continue to drive up the quality of delivery and associated outcomes for children. To achieve this, it has focused on the areas for development identified by a self-assessment and improving its key performance indicators. These indicators are those which have a long-term impact on children's lives and achieving their potential in adulthood. They are as follows:
- Reducing the numbers of children who are first time entrants (FTE) into the criminal justice system.
 - Reducing the numbers of children who reoffended whilst under our supervision.
 - Reducing the numbers of children in custody.
47. This has informed HYOTs priorities for 2021/22 These are detailed in our Youth Justice Plan but are broadly as follows:
- Improving assessments including understanding children's diverse needs and taking a trauma informed approach.
 - Implement the improvements identified following the National Standards Self-assessment. In particular, the work done with children who are experiencing a transition.
 - Reducing FTE by working together with the other Hampshire YOTs and Hampshire police to develop a youth diversion programme.
 - Ensuring that HYOT has the correct interventions to meet the needs of children, parents/carers, and harmed people.
 - Develop and improve communication across the YOT to support effective implementation of policies, procedures, and practice to improve outcome for children.
48. HYOT continues to achieve these objectives in partnership with other agencies. These are the local authority, police, probation, health and the Youth Justice Board.

Sector Led Improvement Work

49. Hampshire has been a Partner in Practice (PiP) with the Department for Education since 2016, and as such, has provided social work improvement support and advice to other local authorities across the region and more widely as requested nationally. This improvement work under PiP came to an end in March 2021 when Hampshire, jointly with the Isle of Wight, was successful in bidding to deliver improvement support in the DfE's new

programme, the Sector Led Improvement Programme (SLIP). This started in July 2021 and there is indicative funding for three years for Hampshire to deliver circa 1350 days of support a year. Our work over the past year has supported improvement in several authorities including Buckinghamshire, West Sussex, Southampton and packages of support for Reading and Slough.

50. In addition to the work in 2020/21 under the PiP programme, Hampshire has worked with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) to undertake some specific improvement support with the British Overseas Territories. Currently this work is ongoing with St Helena and we are in negotiations to provide some advice and support to Pitcairn Island.
51. Members can be assured that, even with the work of the Director of Children's Services and some of his senior managers in the above authorities, there is no detriment to the oversight and management of Hampshire Children's Services as evidenced by the most recent Ofsted inspection report. Hampshire receives full financial recovery for Sector Led improvement from the DfE or FCDO. A small central team of social work managers has been established with the funding to further support capacity in this area and ensure that the work in Hampshire maintains due focus. As with all work undertaken in other authorities, there is always positive learning gained to further improve services in Hampshire. These benefits to Hampshire are significant and enable both staff and services in Hampshire to be continuously developed. Ofsted commented that, *'Leaders recognise the benefits that come from being an improvement partner, not only in creating income, but also in the learning that is gained from other local authorities and from keeping its own staff stimulated and stretched.'*

Future Challenges and Operational Priorities

52. The future challenges and priorities can be summarised as follows (this is not an exhaustive list and the history of this type of work is that new priorities will emerge such as child exploitation and domestic abuse have done).
53. The full long-term impact of the pandemic is not yet known. Since March 2021, albeit post the time frame for this annual safeguarding report, children's social care have seen a sustained increase in demand of over 20% above pre-pandemic levels. It is not yet known how long that will continue but experience shows us this might now be the new normal level of demand going forward. At this stage the increase in demand has not led to a similar increase in the numbers of children coming into care.
54. Given that the number of children entering the care system remains a challenge, as does the cost (price) of their placements, it is essential that the transformation work as described in paragraphs 7.6 -7.10 becomes fully embedded to keep more children at home, where it is safe and appropriate to do so. Transforming children's social care will deliver a modern social work service fit for the future challenges over the next decade. Where children do come into care, our Modernising Placements Programme,

paragraph 6.15, will ensure children have the right placement to meet their needs.

55. The costs associated with the placements for looked after children will continue to be a significant pressure for the County Council. Significant additional corporate funding has already been given to the department, but as demand increases and the supply of placements comes under further pressure, inevitably costs will rise.
56. Child exploitation, in all its forms, continues to be an increasing area of work, particularly the 'County Lines' issues. Although Hampshire is well placed to meet these challenges, it is important that we remain vigilant and responsive, working in tandem with partners to protect children.
57. The recruitment and retention of social workers will continue to need to be addressed.
58. Tactical changes have been made to the current social care IT system to ensure that the system continues to be fit for purpose. A new system will be implemented in 2022. The new system must allow social workers to work in a modern digital environment, which will free up their capacity and reduce administration.

Consultation and Equalities

59. There is no adverse impact on equalities and no consultation is required.

Climate Change Impact Assessment

60. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience impacts of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.
61. This report is essentially strategic/administrative in nature and does not have any climate change considerations.

Other Key Issues

62. None

Conclusions

63. Throughout 2020/21 there continued to be a highly effective strategic response to the safeguarding of vulnerable children and a robust operational response, despite the challenges presented by Covid-19.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
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:	No

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

See guidance at <https://hants.sharepoint.com/sites/ID/SitePages/Equality-Impact-Assessments.aspx?web=1>

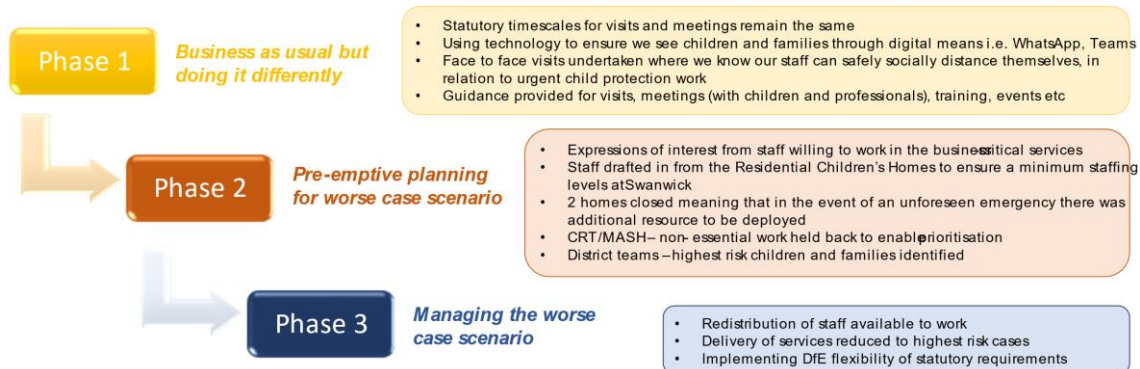
Insert in full your **Equality Statement** which will either state:

- (a) *why you consider that the project/proposal will have a low or no impact on groups with protected characteristics or*
- (b) *will give details of the identified impacts and potential mitigating actions*

Appendix A – Covid Approach

Our approach through the lockdown:

As part of our contingency planning we developed a phased approach, with each phase based on having fewer staff available to work should the situation worsen



We remained in Phase 1 until Lockdown 3 when some of Phase 2 was implemented



Providing an outstanding service to children and families



Maintaining management grip

It was imperative, from the very start, to respond quickly, be agile, and maintain control:

- Guidance has been issued promptly and updated
- Statutory timescales have been maintained
- Visits have continued – virtually and in person
- Local level management has been enhanced
- Management oversight has remained

... all whilst children have continued coming into care and fewer have been leaving

Throughout lockdown and between lockdowns there has been constant engagement and feedback to understand and capture how teams are responding to the crisis. We have done this through:

- Daily/bi-weekly senior management (CFMT) Covid meetings
- AD log/action tracker
- Weekly/fortnightly Covid specific team and district manager meetings
- BAU team meetings and supervisions
- Q&A process and comms
- Monitoring of staff absence /capacity to enable staff to be deployed differently



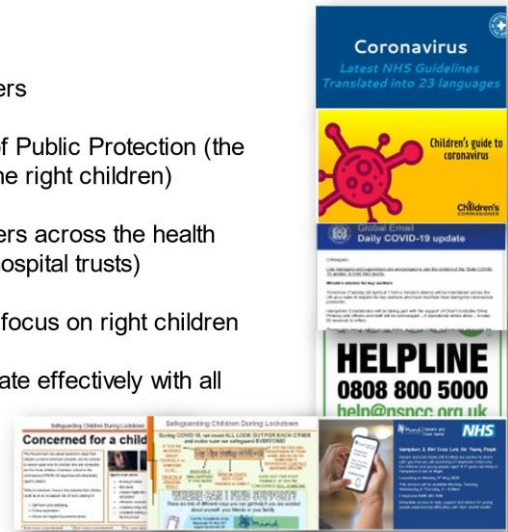
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Partners

We have maintained a constant dialogue with our partners

- Daily contact between Assistant Director and Head of Public Protection (the police) if needed (shared high risk cases-focus on the right children)
- Proactively sharing our important updates with partners across the health economy (public health, CCG, safeguarding leads, hospital trusts)
- Shared high risk cases with police and vice versa to focus on right children
- Working closely with colleagues in E&I to communicate effectively with all schools



Schools

We have maintained a constant dialogue with our schools

- Our schools remained opened during the crisis for children of key workers and those classed as vulnerable
- We have monitored attendance closely for our vulnerable children, and continue to do so
- We have risk assessed each vulnerable child who has not attended school
- We have worked with Education & Inclusion staff and schools to provide laptops to eligible vulnerable children
- Children & Families and Education & Inclusion have worked together in close collaboration



Appendix B - TSC

TSC is delivering a whole system change



The PIP (Partners in Practice) Programme was a Department for Education funded initiative which commenced in 2016. Its **ambitions** to transform how we deliver social care to Children and Families across Hampshire. The programme was repurposed from **PIP Programme** to **Transforming Social Care** in June 2018. This is because we recognise that our journey in Transforming Social Care will go further, in terms of both scope and time.

A **family service** – a system focused on improving outcomes for the **child/family** context

A social work led, integrated **multi-disciplinary service**, from the **front door** to specialist services

An approach supporting social workers to **deliver meaningful interventions** and create lasting change

Improved flexibility for good practice **to flourish**

Children are supported within their **family/community** wherever possible.

Delivered through

A methodology and toolkit that systematically helps us intervene effectively

Lean processes, mobile working and easy to use IT that enhances the way we work

A stable organisation structure that is multi-disciplinary by design and enables & empowers front line staff





Access to the right, shared, information, at the right time to enable informed decision making

Strong, resilient working partnerships that pull in the same direction

Culture & behaviours at all levels that are family and outcomes focused




Phase 2 projects (late 2019 to present)



Project	Objective	Outcomes / Impact
Family meetings and plans 	<p>Brought together 5 planning templates across early help, CIN, CP, CIC and CL planning into two documents: A Family Plan and a My Life My Future Plan.</p> <p>Also introduced Family Meeting Model to support practitioners in engaging wider family in planning meetings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One plan that travels with the family as they move through our service – increasing ownership, understanding, engagement and achievement of plans One plan travels with children in care through to care leaver and independence. Supports their journey in a holistic way. Further embedding strength based and collaborative working with families by incorporating strength based prompts in documents.
Early Help 	<p>To increase the amount of FSS resource used for direct work with families and reducing delays between referral and service delivery.</p> <p>To increase partner engagement and to reduce barriers/delays to families receiving contiguous and consistent support when they move between thresholds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More FSS resource spent working with families. Partners engage with the process and support early help. Families receive support more quickly. Fewer families have a change of worker and/or interruptions to services received. Families are more resilient and less likely to require further services.
Volunteer Service Review 	<p>Increase in the number of volunteers working with children and families, increase capacity to meet statutory requirements and a reduce admin time to facilitate increased volunteer activity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More Mentors and Family Support Volunteers working with children and families across Level 3 and Level 4. More Independent Visitors working regularly with CIC and Care Leavers. More availability and matching of volunteers to children
Health Assessments for Children in Care 	<p>All CLA having their Initial Health Assessments or Review Health Assessments completed on time and the IHA and RHAs will be used to promote health and wellbeing throughout the CYPs journey in care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All CLA will have their IHA/RHA completed on time, annual Ofsted reporting will reflect this. Every CYP will have a clear, strengths-based plan to address and meet their ongoing health and wellbeing needs.




Phase 2 projects (late 2019 to present)



Project	Objective	Outcomes / Impact
Family and Friends Care 	<p>Improving routes into care with consistent messaging for families along with better understanding about process, eligibility and support.</p> <p>Earlier identification of carers, better integration with planning processes. Enhanced support packages for F&F carers and improved ways of working to deliver F&F service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More children placed with Family and Friends carers outside of the care system.
Embedding Reunification across the Service 	<p>Embed a reunification culture across the service, ensuring policies, processes, structure, services and skills are focused on 'thinking reunification' before a child even comes into care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More children are able to return home or to their wider family networks.
Contact Service Review 	<p>Increased Contact Supervisor support for potential reunification cases and all referrals that require Supervised Contact can be allocated.</p> <p>To make contact more family friendly, ensuring families have contact at the appropriate time and place and contact Supervisors have the appropriate training to deliver a high - quality service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The service directly contributes, through tailored contact sessions, to reunification. No / minimal waiting lists, reducing our use of third party providers. A flexible contact team, available at a time convenient to the family. A clear learning / training pathway for supervisors.




Phase 2 projects (late 2019 to present)



Project	Objective	Outcomes / Impact
IRS Review 	<p>Understand demand and workload, to ensure appropriate allocation of resource , to identify improvements to enhance and develop service quality, performance and impact .</p> <p>To identify cashable and non -cashable efficiencies / improvements (including to confirm what, if any, T19 savings or overspend can be expected within T19 timescales)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarity on how / if service quality and performance can be improved
Right Time, Right Place 	<p>Prevention is delivered when it can have the greatest impact and crises are responded to quickly, with no difference in approach between 9 -5 Mon-Fri and 'out of hours'.</p> <p>Supervised contact is delivered when needed (not only within 9-5 Mon-Fri) along with staff having a better work life balance and hours worked are better supported and acknowledged.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Escalation of risk is prevented Crises are responded to swiftly Children do not miss school / parents miss work in order to engage with services Relationships are maintained / improved between CLA and their birth families Staff receive the required support round the clock, and can balance this with their home life
Virtual Reality 	<p>To increase the understanding of the impact of trauma and harmful parental behaviours on a child's development, behaviour and long term outcomes along with improvement in recruitment of foster carers and increased placement stability.</p>	<p>Test and learn outcomes will be measured by a robust report/presentation which articulates the outcomes of the report for Senior Managers to consider further investment.</p>




Phase 2 projects (late 2019 to present)



Project	Objective	Outcomes / Impact
Ongoing specialist worker investment 	Families will receive a specific and specialist intervention to meet identified needs as part of a whole family approach. CS workforce knowledge and confidence will increase in these specialist areas through consultations and learning sessions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families receive appropriate and specialist interventions earlier and more quickly as part of the IW Teams – threshold is set by CSD Parents are better able to understand the impact of their harmful behaviours on their children's wellbeing and safety Increased number of families are supported to address issues as Soc Wkrs/IWs deliver interventions overseen/coached by a CAMHS Spec Wker More children safely at home
Ongoing intensive worker investment 	An increased number of 'priority cohorts' families will receive evidence based interventions whilst reduced number of parents that will experience recurrent care proceedings. Positive change will be both achieved and sustained by the family.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More children will be kept safely at home, through both prevention and reunification Parents with a child removed will be able to address their own needs in order to be better able to safeguard/parent any future children through accessing appropriate services
Challenging Behaviour 	Ensure that Parent/Carers have effective support to manage challenging behaviour and reduce escalation of the behaviour and so preventing child entering the care system and enabling child to stay at home safely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents increase ability to manage child/ren's challenging behaviour Workforce able to provide meaningful support to enable parents to set boundaries; create proactive and reactive strategies to manage behaviour Parents know how to access support and help when required By supporting parents earlier in managing challenging behaviour more effectively this will reduce the likelihood of behaviour escalating to the point of statutory intervention and possible care proceedings

Phase 2 projects (late 2019 to present)



Project	Objective	Outcomes / Impact
Care Leaver Housing 	Supporting embedding of Homelessness Prevention roles within Care Leaver teams, increasing Tenancy Education and skills, addressing gaps in provision (for example where young people fall through thresholds).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CL have specialist support to access housing and sustain tenancies Partners will understand the needs and vulnerabilities of CL and be able to work collaboratively with CL team in the best interest of CL CL will be able to access a robust learning package to support their independency and help sustain accommodation/tenancies By strengthening positive relationships between HCC/ CL teams and housing partners will enable stronger collaboration around solutions that will support CL to build tenancy skills to sustain their tenancies and so reducing vulnerability and homelessness.
Care Leaver emotional and mental health 	Identified a need for Care Leavers, but also considering at cross service improvements. Improving access to universal services, increasing staff skills and confidence to provide low level support and address gaps where identified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to universal support is clearly defined and available for families/CYP Staff skills / confidence will improve to enable them to provide meaningful and appropriate support to build resilience and confidence in families/ CYP/ CL Targeted provision for CL is clear By supporting parents earlier in managing challenging behaviour more effectively this will reduce the likelihood of behaviour escalating to the point of statutory intervention and possible care proceedings.
Care Leaver Health Passports 	Improving processes to collate existing health information and present in meaningful way for young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All CLA will have their IHA/RHA completed on time, annual Ofsted reporting will reflect this.

Our impact in numbers



Self Interventions Technology CWO Hampshire Approach Internal Comms

Activity Volumes - 3 Month Moving Average From April 2017 to May 2021

