Nottinghamshire County Council

Children and Young People's Committee

Monday, 07 March 2022 at 10:30

County Hall, **West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7QP**

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Notes

(1) Councillors are advised to contact their Research Officer for details of any Group Meetings which are planned for this meeting.

(2) Members of the public wishing to inspect "Background Papers" referred to in the reports on the agenda or Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act should contact:-

Customer Services Centre 0300 500 80 80

(3) Persons making a declaration of interest should have regard to the Code of Conduct and the Council's Procedure Rules. Those declaring must indicate the nature of their interest and the reasons for the declaration.

Councillors or Officers requiring clarification on whether to make a declaration of interest are invited to contact Martin Gately (Tel. 0115 977 2826) or a colleague in Democratic Services prior to the meeting.

(4) Councillors are reminded that Committee and Sub-Committee papers, with the exception of those which contain Exempt or Confidential Information, may be recycled.

(5) This agenda and its associated reports are available to view online via an online calendar - http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/dms/Meetings.aspx

Nottinghamshire County Council

minutes

Meeting	CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE
Date	17 January 2022 (commencing at 10:30 am)

Membership
Persons absent are marked with an 'A'

COUNCILLORS

Tracey Taylor (Chairman)
Sinead Anderson (Vice-Chairman)
Sam Smith (Vice-Chairman)

	Matt Barney	Roger Jackson
A	Anne Callaghan	Johno Lee
A	Samantha Deakin	Andy Meakin
A	Errol Henry	Michelle Welsh

Substitute Members:

Jim Creamer
Kate Foale

Other Councillors in attendance:

Keith Girling

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)

4 Vacancies

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Marion Clay	Service Director, Children and Families Services
Steve Edwards	Service Director, Children and Families Services
Laurence Jones	Service Director, Children and Families Services
Pip Milbourne	Business Support, Children and Families Services
Martin Gately	Democratic Services Officer, Chief Executive's

1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 13 DECEMBER 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2021 having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read and have been signed by the Chairman.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Jim Creamer substituted for Councillor Errol Henry.
Councillor Kate Foale substituted for Councillor Anne Callaghan.
Councillor Samantha Deakin sent apologies for medical reasons.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None.

4. DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S HOME PROVISION

The Chairman introduced the report and responded to questions and comments from Members.

RESOLVED 2022/001

That:

1) the disestablishment of the following posts from Minster View children's home from 30th April 2022 be agreed:

- 1 FTE Registered Manager (Hay Band D)
- 4 FTE Assistant Managers (Hay Band B)
- 1 FTE Site Manager (Grade 3)
- 1.6 FTE Domestic Assistants (Grade 1)
- 1 Laundry Assistant (Grade 1)
- 1.5 FTE Cooks (Grade 3)
- 6 Residential Care Workers (Grade 4)
- 21 Residential Social Care Workers (Grade 5).

2) the establishment of the following additional posts in West View children's home from 30th April 2022 be agreed:

    - 8 Residential Social Care Workers (Grade 5)
    - 4 Residential Care Workers (Grade 4).

3) the establishment of the following posts for two new two-bedded children's homes from 30th April 2022 be agreed:

- 1 FTE Registered Manager (grade subject to job evaluation)
- 2 FTE Assistant Managers (Hay Band B)
- 0.8 FTE Specialist Social Worker (Trauma) (Hay Band B)
- 1 FTE Site Manager (Grade 3)
- 2 FTE Domestic Assistants (Grade 1)
- 6 Night Care Workers (Grade 3)

- 4 Residential Care Workers (Grade 4)
- 16 Residential Social Care Workers (Grade 5).

5. FOSTER CARER ITEMS

Mr Edwards indicated that there no foster carer items for the committee to consider.
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6. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS ARRANGEMENTS 2023-2024

The Chairman introduced the report and responded to questions and comments from Members.

RESOLVED 2022/002

That:

1) the school admission arrangements for 20232024 as detailed in Appendix 1 be agreed, including:

    - overall procedures and practices for community and voluntary controlled schools, detailed in Section 1
    - oversubscription criteria and published admission numbers, as listed in Section 2

7. CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION SIX MONTHLY UPDATE

The Chairman introduced the report and responded to questions and comments from Members.

RESOLVED 2022/003

That:

1) no further actions were required in relation to the issues contained within the report.

8. UPDATE ON NOTTINGHAMSHIRE'S STRATEGY FOR IMPROVING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

The Chairman introduced the report and responded to questions and comments from Members.

RESOLVED 2022/004

That:

1) no further action was required in relation to the issues contained within the report

2) an update report be received in the next 12 months and that this be included in the work programme.

9. ESTABLISHMENT OF ADDITIONAL POSTS IN THE INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S DISABILITY SERVICE

The Chairman introduced the report and responded to questions and comments from Members.

RESOLVED 2022/005

That:

1) the permanent establishment of the following posts within the Integrated Children's Disability Service with effect from 1st April 2022 be approved:

- 1 fte Occupational Therapist (Band A/B)
- 1 fte Occupational Therapy Assistant (Grade 5)
- 1 fte Occupational Therapy Service Organiser (Grade 4)
- 1.5 fte Assessment Officers (Grade 5)
- 2 fte Service Organisers (Grade 4).

2) the permanent establishment of 1 fte Occupational Therapy Senior Practitioner post (Band C), which was previously temporary, within the Children's Occupational Therapy Team be approved with effect from 17th January 2021.

10. ESTABLISHMENT OF ADDITIONAL SUPPORT WORKER POST IN THE PERMANENCE TEAM

The Chairman introduced the report and responded to questions and comments from Members.

RESOLVED 2022/006

That:

1) approval be given to establish an additional 1 fte Permanence Support Worker post (indicative Grade 4 but subject to job evaluation) the Permanence Team.

11. **NEURODEVELOPMENTAL BEHAVIOURAL SUPPORT SERVICE**

The Chairman introduced the report and responded to questions and comments from Members.

RESOLVED 2022/007

That:

1) the Local Authority enter into a formal arrangement with the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group in order to plan for the Council to take on the delivery of an early neurodevelopmental behaviour support service for children 0-18 in Nottinghamshire.

2) a 1 FTE Children's Service Manager (Band E) post be established in the Family Service for seven months.

12. **INTRODUCTION OF DIVERTPLUS AND CHANGES TO THE STAFFING ESTABLISHMENT IN THE YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE**

The Chairman introduced the report and responded to questions and comments from Members.

RESOLVED 2022/008

That:

1) the establishment of the following post in the Youth Justice Service Outreach and Interventions Team be approved from 1st April 2022 on a two-year fixed term contract to support the delivery of DivertPlus:

   - 1 FTE Youth Worker (Youth Worker JNC grade)

13. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chairman introduced the report and responded to questions and comments from Members.

Additions to the work programme were: a report back on DivertPlus progress in six months, and, for April's meeting, a report on the sustainability of small schools in Nottinghamshire.

RESOLVED 2022/009

That:

1) No further amendments were required to the work programme.

The meeting closed at 12:15 pm.

CHAIRMAN

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Children and Young People's Committee

7th March 2022

Agenda Item: 4

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION, LEARNING AND SKILLS

PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVERS IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE (2022 TO 2025)

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides Committee with an update on Nottinghamshire's 'Partnership Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers (2018-2021)' during the final year of its implementation (academic year 2020-21). This report supports Members to fulfil their duties as corporate parents and to monitor this Partnership Strategy to ensure Members continue to provide sufficient vision and ambition to allow every looked after child and care leaver ("our children") to thrive and to reach their potential socially, emotionally and in relation to their educational progress and attainment.

2. In addition, this report seeks to provide Committee with an update on progress in relation to the Local Offer for Care Leavers and the impact to date on improving the wellbeing and wider outcomes for care leavers. Committee approved Nottinghamshire County Council's Local Offer for Care Leavers in February 2019.

3. Finally, this report presents and seeks approval from Committee for the new Partnership Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers (2022-2025), attached as **Appendix 1**, which has been developed in consultation with children in care and those young people who have left care.

Information

4. Throughout this report, references to children in care and those who have left care will be referred to as 'our children and young people' wherever possible.

5. The Department for Education Publication 'Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers' (February 2018) states that "*Local Authorities have a unique responsibility to the children they look after and their care leavers*". This statutory advice also states that local authorities that have a strong corporate parenting culture recognise that the "*care system is not just about keeping children safe, but also to promote recovery, resilience and well-being*".

6. Since 2014, local authorities have had a duty (Children Act 2004 section 10) to promote cooperation between relevant partners with a view to improving the wellbeing of all children and young people in their area.

7. Section 10 defines relevant partners as including: the district council; the local policing body and the chief officer of police; probation board; any provider of probation services; youth offending team; NHS England and Clinical Commissioning Groups; and the governing bodies of publicly funded schools.

8. The Council's new 10-year vision for Nottinghamshire captured in "The Nottinghamshire Plan: Our plan for healthy, prosperous and greener Nottinghamshire" is committed to prioritising the needs of our children and young people. Members should note their responsibilities as corporate parents as follows:

- to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of those children and young people
- to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
- to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people
- to help those children and young people to gain access to and make the best use of services provided by the Local Authority and its relevant partners
- to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people
- for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work and
- to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

The Looked After Children and Leaving Care Partnership Strategy (2018-2021)

9. The Looked After Children and Leaving Care Partnership Strategy 2018-2021 has continued to drive the ambitions of the partners in relation to their priorities for looked after children and care leavers in Nottinghamshire. This is the third report to Members, presenting an update from the Partnership Board on their progress.

10. Whilst all partners have endeavoured to continue to deliver the Strategy's priorities throughout the current pandemic crisis, it is, nonetheless, the case that progress has been, at times, compromised and delayed. However, no scheduled Partnership Board meeting was cancelled during 2019-2021 as a result of the crisis, and the Board has met virtually with continued excellent attendance by partners during 2020 and 2021.

11. The Looked After Children and Care Leavers Partnership Board continues to be chaired by the Service Director for Education, Learning and Skills. This Board is also attended by one of the Vice-Chairmen of the Children and Young People's Committee, Councillor Sinead Anderson.

12. The Board meets bi-monthly and is well attended by both internal services and external partners which, in addition to internal education and social care colleagues, includes District Council representation, D2N2, East Midlands Chamber of Commerce, public health, designated looked after children Doctors and Nurses representing the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), higher and further education, Nottinghamshire Police and

the National Probation Service. In 2021, the Partnership and the Board welcomed new membership by the National Probation Service and by representatives of the Fostering Liaison Action Group. Membership by the Department for Work and Pensions was secured in January 2022. The Terms of Reference, which includes membership of the Board, is available as a background paper. The current Terms of Reference document is currently being updated to reflect recent changes to Board membership.

13. The Strategy has been driven by a partnership delivery plan which has been 'owned' by strategic partners. Over the three years of this Strategy, partners have increasingly ensured that the ambitions for improved outcomes for looked after children and care leavers are prioritised within their respective organisations. This report highlights some of the key achievements by the Partnership.

14. At the January 2022 meeting, Board members were invited to identify what they regarded as the most significant achievements of the Partnership from the last three years, celebrating those that have made a difference to the lives of our children and young people. The following grid captures the way in which this Strategy has galvanised partners to ensure that the needs of our children and young people are prioritised and represents a sample of the successes of some of our partners outside of the Council.

District/borough councils	**Children in Care Nursing Team**	
We have embedded corporate parenting responsibilities within our organisations through the delivery of the Local Offer for Care Leavers, particularly in terms of Council tax exemptions and the leisure centre concessions	Collaborative work with the Children in Care Council to re-design the format in which young people are given their personal health information just prior to leaving care. The nursing team have received positive feedback from young people following the change	Learning gained from new ways of working with children and young people as a result of Covid-19 restrictions - this meant that the quality of children's health assessments was not compromised, the Team learnt new ways of communicating with children, (including the use of MS Teams) and the voice of the child continued to be a pivotal part of the assessment. As a result, our children and young people have a greater choice about how their health assessment is delivered.
Nottingham Trent University	**West Nottinghamshire College**	**Growth Infrastructure and Development Team (NCC)**
• Launch of "Next Steps" online and face-to-face information and guidance sessions for care experienced young people from Nottinghamshire County and Nottingham City – 89% of participants agreed visiting NTU had made them more likely to consider attending university	• 11% of learners who are care leavers entered higher education – proportionately more than their peers in other parts of the country • Progression to higher levels of study for our young people has been in line with their peers • Our young people speak very highly of the specialist	• The Care2work programme with Broxtowe Youth Homelessness to support our young people to move towards independence (16+). This includes guidance and awareness training to support employers to provide placements and a link with Futures to provide careers advice and guidance. So far

• Ambassador role - a current care experienced NTU student who attends outreach events • Welcome packs for all first-year students who are care experienced • Virtual Q&A to help ensure everything is in place for young people before they arrive • Online Looked After Children Conference in partnership with Nottinghamshire Virtual School for educators and Designated Teachers working with looked after children	support they receive from WNC staff when in college • Positive working relationships with the social work teams and other agencies to ensure a "joined up" approach to support for our young people	11 young people have completed the programme and we have provided funding to 2023. • Accommodation for care leavers is now included in the revised Planning Obligations Strategy.
Probation Service	**The Independent Chair Service**	**D2N2/East Midlands Chamber of commerce**
• Launch of good practice and other staff resource packs specifically designed for working with young adults and care experienced people • Designated Youth Justice Senior Probation Officers to support young people with the transition from youth to adult justice services • Presentation by the Board's Care Leaver Champion during the Probation Service's Safeguarding Adults week to familiarise staff with unique difficulties faced by our young people and to promote the Local Offer • Improving identification of our young people who are Persons on Probation	• The development of a strength based and relational approach to practice • The development of Quality Assurance Framework that supports practice improvement for our children and young people • Through the national and regional groups for independent chairs we have contributed to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care	• Online "Recruiting Talent" event attended by the Council's Chief Executive who highlighted the number and needs of our care leavers to over 70 businesses • Over 20 companies are offering taster sessions for our care leavers • Online best practice resources and support for employers regarding employing care leavers • Achievement Advisers from the Leaving Care Service are connected with employment and skills activities in every district – Recruiting Talent events have resulted in more companies working with the Achievement Teams • Ensuring consistency of care leaver Local Offers across the D2N2 areas
Futures	**Bassetlaw CCG**	**Terry Galloway – Care Leaver Champion**
• "Unlocking potential" ESF-funded contract – during 2021, the team provided targeted and specialist	• Co-production of a film and booklet on health advice for young people moving from	• Becoming a "Kickstart Gateway", to get our young people into work, as they become less vulnerable and

support for 10 of our young people who were at risk of leaving employment, education or training and found new opportunities for them/prevented them from becoming "NEET"	children's to adults' health services.	build better relationships with people when they are in work • working with 130 businesses with 250 jobs and placed 130 young people into jobs (including our young people) • using learning on how to run and scale up a scheme and launched a pilot

Health Partners

15. The Service Improvement Forum was established in 2016 and continues to meet quarterly. It is a multi-agency looked after children forum with agreement and commitment from both Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council, relevant health providers, Designated Doctors and Nurses for looked after children for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire CCG and Bassetlaw CCG, and commissioners. The aim of the forum is to improve health outcomes for children in care. An action plan is overseen by the designated professionals and commissioners. The Service Improvement Forum has shared effective multi-agency partnership working with the Board and plans to continue to do so in 2022.

16. Work often includes liaison with our counterparts in neighbouring provider organisations and CCGs when improving pathways for our children and young people placed out of area or those other local authority children placed in Nottinghamshire.

17. A key piece of work the Service Improvement Forum has undertaken in 2021 is the agreement to an Initial Health Assessment and Review Health Assessment timeline. This timeline outlines roles and responsibilities of all partners to achieve statutory timeframes for Initial and Review Health Assessments, acknowledging it takes a partnership approach to achieve them. This timeline was implemented in September 2021 and therefore will require review as to its effectiveness.

18. Our year end statistics for 2020/21 for immunisations and dental checks were as follows:

    - in 2020/21 86% of our children had up to date immunisations. This compares with 96% for 2019/20 and has been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. This continues to be an area of focus for the Local Authority and health providers.

    - in 2020/21 51% of our children had up to date dental checks. This compares with 89% for 2019/20 and has been significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. This continues to be an area of focus for the Local Authority and health providers.

19. During August 2020 the Designated professionals within the CCGs were informed by the Looked After Children Service of the difficulties for our children and young people accessing dental checks both routinely and on entering care. At this time dental services were significantly reduced due to Covid-19. Dental care is commissioned by NHS England. Liaison by the Designated Nurse with the relevant dental care lead took place to discuss the challenges, concerns, and the need for prioritisation of children and young people who have entered care after years of neglect and the impact that has on oral health. An

escalation process and access to advice are now in place to support the Looked After Children's Service to secure dental care for our children and young people when it is required. However, challenges in access to dental care remain.

20. A two-stage audit undertaken by Service Improvement Forum partners was completed in 2020. It reviewed how the health of our children is managed within statutory looked after child review meetings and resulted in several recommendations. One recommendation was agreeing a standard operating procedure. This standard operating procedure includes who should be invited/consulted with, who should receive minutes, along with an agreed escalation process should the most up to date statutory health assessment not be available. This standard operating procedure was implemented in September 2021 and has yet to be audited.

21. Additional health improvement activity during 2020 to 2021 has included:

- on-going oversight of the out of area pathway, managing the health needs of our children and young people placed out of Nottinghamshire boundaries
- Designated Nurse supported the Children in Care Nursing Team to update the health summary documentation for our care leavers
- establishment of quarterly strategic residential care information sharing meetings
- creation of working group (both medical and nursing provider contribution) to establish a pathway for obtaining medical advice for adoption within Nottingham and Nottinghamshire CCG. This will be shared with the local authorities and Adoption East Midlands for agreement of roles and responsibilities – at the time of writing this report the pathway is awaiting agreement
- agreement to a Remand Pathway to ensure young people on remand have their health needs assessed
- continue to strengthen the information in relation to our children and young people shared with GPs via the Safeguarding GP Leads meetings.

22. At any given time, the Designated Nurses for looked after children and the senior children's public health commissioner at the Council can be actively working together to support two or three "live" cases where the Council's Looked After Children Service is having challenges in accessing Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) support for our young people living outside the Nottinghamshire County and Nottingham City boundary.

23. In response, a local escalation pathway has been written and agreed to support the Service when having difficulties in accessing external CAMHS/Emotional health support. This pathway includes the involvement of the looked after children Specialist Named Nurse, Designated Nurses for looked after children and the Council's senior children's public health commissioner.

24. As part of the new Partnership strategy, in 2022/23, Nottinghamshire and Bassetlaw health commissioners will work with NHS England to strengthen reciprocal arrangements to ensure that children and young people placed out of area have access to CAMHS provision.

25. The CAMHS Looked After Children Team has continued to work successfully with our young people and their networks during the Covid-19 pandemic. Working remotely was

new to the Team, and they have established new ways of working to provide excellent quality of care and outcomes for our young people. As a result of moving to a virtual platform, training is now more accessible and flexible to the needs of the community and has improved access for networks and consultations. The Team continues to offer in-person appointments, as it did at the height of the pandemic, despite the uncertainty at the time.

26. There continues to be a great level of interest from prospective candidates to work in the Team, and this contributes towards a Team of highly expert professionals who are passionate about our young people.

27. The Looked After Children and Leaving Care Services continue to work with local health to deliver "You Know Your Mind", which has been operational since 2018. This is an integrated personal commissioning intervention for our children and young people aged 0 to 24 years with mental health needs. With professional input, children and young people use a personal health budget (up to £500 each) to support their own mental and emotional health needs in a timely way that they think will make the most difference to them.

28. Examples of support that has been put in place include bicycles, gym memberships or home gym equipment, boxing sessions, swimming lessons, dance and ice-skating classes, photography equipment, music equipment and lessons, horse riding lessons, and arts and crafts equipment.

29. One young person asked for support to create a reading area in their home with bean bags and lots of new books, which they used when they struggled to sleep at night, to relax and this helped their anxieties. Some young people have used the funding to set up their own sensory or mindfulness spaces in their homes.

30. Feedback from children and young people, along with professionals, has been overwhelmingly positive:

"Having the bike has allowed me to remove myself from incidents in the home and gather my thoughts clearly"

"The foster carer reported that having purchased several story books this has allowed the child to look forward to bedtime and settled throughout the night. She is no longer anxious and stressed about her bedtime"

"'I can manage my mood and anxiety better, having the bike has allowed me to go riding with my friends, visit my family members and my PA also showed me how to change a tyre!'

"'Having an Xbox has allowed me to make new friends and invite them around to my home, I would never have done this before because I felt that I had nothing to offer"

The Virtual School

31. The ambition to ensure our children and young people fulfil their potential has continued to be a priority for the Virtual School which has developed evidence-based guidance for schools on the effective use of the Pupil Premium to ensure that 'fulfilling potential' is a key

driver for all additional requests for funding. For 2021-22 the Virtual School is releasing catch-up funding and National Tutoring Programme funding to schools to support the recovery following Covid-19.

32. In partnership with all children social care teams and the Leaving Care Service, the Virtual School has developed a Personal Education Plan Quality Assurance process. This process highlights good practice and informs areas for development for all partners involved in the Personal Education Plan process. The strength-based Personal Education Plans are held on an online platform which supports the Quality Assurance process and will be reported to the Divisional Leadership Team.

33. The Virtual School was successful in securing a bid for a Post-16 Pupil Premium pilot. The pilot provides an opportunity for colleges to direct additional funding to support our young people to achieve in their education setting and plan successful next steps towards future plans. The pilot includes four specific interventions at West Nottinghamshire College, as well as a per student budget for use at other further education colleges. 33 of our young people are being supported by the project at West Notts College. This includes staff training to ensure wider impact for future students and other students with vulnerability, such as those on the edge of care. The budget per student for other Further Education settings has been offered for another 82 of our young people.

Further and Higher Education

34. West Nottinghamshire College works closely with the Virtual School and other local schools to support our children as they progress into Key Stage 5. During 2018 to 2021 the College provided education to 115 of our young people. The College works closely with the Looked After Care and the Leaving Care Services to ensure financial support, skills for independent living and general life skills are also part of the offer at college. On enrolment each of our children is automatically assigned a support coach who takes the lead on transition, liaison with social care and ensuring a smooth transition into college. Support coaches meet with young people as and when needed and, for those with more vulnerabilities, on a weekly basis.

35. There are currently 17 young people who have applied to Higher Education courses for 2022 - 2023. For the current academic year 2021-2022, 31 young people are undertaking their university studies (Years 1, 2, 3 or 4) and one young person is in their second year of a post-graduate degree. Examples of undergraduate courses being studied by our young people include BSc Psychology, International Relations and Politics, Midwifery, Biochemistry, Medicine, Bio Veterinary Science, Forensic Science, Exercise and Sport Sciences and Quantity Surveying, BA History, Music, Education (Psychology), Criminology, Social Work, History, Politics, Child Learning and Development and Interactive Design, LLB Law and Business Law.

36. Two of our young people are studying foundation degrees and Higher National Certificates in Sport Science and Exercise, and Working with Children, Young People and Families respectively. Postgraduate studies include International Law and Global Justice, and Data Science and Analytics. Our young people are studying at a range of higher education institutions including the University of Nottingham, Lincoln, Oxford, Durham, Manchester, Hull, Birmingham, Plymouth and Exeter, as well as Nottingham Trent University, Herriot Watt University and Long Eaton Football Club/University Centre Colchester.

37. Six of our young people graduated at the end of academic year 2020-21, including a PGCE Primary Education with Qualified Teacher Status, BA (Hons) Education Studies & Early Years degree from Nottingham Trent University, BSc Accounting & Finance with first class honours from University of Leicester, BEng Mechanical Engineering from Sheffield Hallam University and a postgraduate diploma in Translation Studies and as a qualified translator from the University of Sheffield.

38. Good partnership working continues between the Leaving Care Service's Achievement Service and Nottingham Trent University's Centre for Student and Community Engagement Team. In Spring 2021, the University delivered "Next Steps" access to higher education sessions to six of our young people. Two subsequently successfully enrolled at Sheffield Hallam University and University of Hull in September 2021, three have completed their UCAS applications for September 2022 entry and one of the young people has decided to defer their place until September 2023. The other two young people are currently studying Level 2 qualifications at local Further Education colleges and have been inspired to progress onto Level 3 qualifications to fulfil university entrance criteria and apply for September 2024 entry. These academic mentoring sessions are available in 2022. The Achievement Service is aware of 17 looked after children and care leavers who have expressed university plans for the 2022/2023 academic year.

39. Nottingham Trent University remains committed to working with partners to achieve the key priorities in the new Looked After Children and Leaving Care Partnership Strategy. Since 2019, Nottingham Trent University has established an Estranged and Care Leavers Working Group comprised of staff from across the university to ensure best practice and support for care leavers in respect of student finance, accommodation, transition, support and employability. Their offer of support for care leavers and care experienced students has grown significantly over the lifetime of the last strategy and includes significant practical and wellbeing support through Student Support Advisers, dedicated specialists within the employability team through their Rise initiative, financial support through the £1,000 a year Care Leavers and Foyer Resident Bursary and money management workshops.

40. Nottingham Trent University has signed up to the Care Leaver Covenant which clearly outlines their commitments to support care experienced young people. These commitments are continuously reviewed and updated considering guidance, best practice and student voice through their focus groups for care experienced students.

41. Nottingham Trent University collaborates with colleagues from other institutions through their membership of the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL) and the East Midlands Care Leavers Activities and Student Support (EMCLASS). They work with the University of Nottingham to run an information event for professionals working with care leavers to support their progression to higher education.

42. Looked after young people are priority groups for all pre- and post-16 outreach activities including our work experience scheme and progression scheme.

43. Early Childhood Services have implemented a recruitment campaign to promote roles in and attract young people to the early years sector (Working in Childcare | Notts Help Yourself and working in childcare leaflet). This has included targeting young people in

schools, promoting apprenticeships, work experience and shadowing. We have also collaborated with workforce development colleagues to promote apprentice opportunities to within the early years sector and the Children's Centre Service to our young people. One young person who is also a parent has been recruited as an apprentice within the Families Information Service. However, we have yet to knowingly recruit any care experienced young following several attempts.

44. It may be that young people in general are less interested in working in childcare and early years at this time. We know that many schools no longer offer health, social care and childcare GCSEs or A-levels so young people are not as aware of these career options as they might have been previously.

Police and Youth Justice

45. In September 2021, the Board agreed with the local Youth Justice Partnership Board its role in the local accountability structure to help implement the National Protocol on Reducing Unnecessary Criminalisation of Looked-After Children and Care Leavers. In Nottinghamshire, 2019/20 data shows that the rate of looked after children re-offending is strikingly higher than that of other groups, particularly those who are not open to Children's Social Care. Whilst not large numbers, the number of children entering the criminal justice system for the first time is disproportionally large compared to the general population (also based on 2019 and 2020 data). Nationally, children who are looked after for at least 12 months are five times more likely to offend than all children.

46. The Protocol focuses on acknowledging those young people who fall into the criminal justice system because of the nature of their identity or circumstances as a looked after child rather than their behaviour, or as a result of the disproportionate responses to their behaviour by the adults around them. For example, a residential placement may call the Police in response to a young person's behaviour when perhaps the parents of a young person living in their family home may not. A 10-point checklist for police officers, including custody sergeants, has been devised to ensure responses by the Police are proportionate. The 10-point checklist identifies important factors to help inform the Crown Prosecution Service on the most appropriate course of action. This checklist is helping to embed a culture change and move towards trauma-informed practice within Nottinghamshire Police.

47. Our partnership working has been enhanced by recruitment of a Children in Care police officer who offers support, advice, diversion and signposting to placement providers and caregivers.

48. The Nottinghamshire Reducing Offending of Children in Care and Care Leavers Oversight Group will report to the Board annually and the new strategy includes a specific commitment to reducing the criminalisation of looked after children.

Listening to Our Children and Young People

49. Upon becoming looked after, all our young people are given the opportunity to complete the 'Listen to Me' booklet before each Looked After Child Review, or more regularly should they wish to. This enables their views to be sought in relation to their care plan and enables

their views to be heard in meetings held should they not choose to attend, or it may support their participation in meetings.

50. As well as the 'Listen to Me' booklet our children and young people can use the Mind of My Own app, which enables them to share their wishes and feelings directly with the professionals they work with, including their independent reviewing officers at any time. Mind of My Own was launched in Nottinghamshire in July 2019. This app provides an online platform for our children and young people to directly communicate their views, wishes and feelings to their Children's Service worker, 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

51. The Mind of My Own Express app can be used to support young people with additional needs to share their wishes and feelings with the professionals who are important to them. By using these resources, children's Social Workers continue to ensure the views, thoughts and feelings of our children inform their Care Plans and Pathway Planning processes.

52. Our children were the first group of children in the County to benefit from the app. In October 2020, the app was rolled out to the Leaving Care Service. The app has now been rolled out to most services and teams in the Children and Families department, most recently to the Education Partnership and there are plans to roll it out to Adoption East Midlands in the future. Our children and young people of all ages are using the app/sending statements. Those between the ages of 11 and 15 years continue to send the most statements.

53. The Youth Service's Participation and Engagement team has used the Partnership Strategy to drive further meaningful engagement with our children and young people. This service has continued to work with them to better understand their experiences and to ensure that this ambition to make a positive contribution continues to be relevant to them.

54. During 2020 and 2021, the Children in Care Council's sub-groups and No Labels have met 27 times. Due to the pandemic this has mainly been digital interaction which has involved creative ways of maintaining engagement. Members have been actively involved in several events or participated in sharing their views and making decisions on a variety of strategic and business agenda items. This has provided a safe and supportive environment in which our children and young people can come together to participate and engage in constructive and fun activities as well as having an opportunity to express their views and feelings about life in care and how it can be further improved.

55. An example of this was recently articulated in a spoken word project which saw members of the Children in Care Council talking about their lived experience through writing poetry with the support of a youth worker and County Youth Arts. This work was collated and will be shared with professionals within the Council and the wider partnership. A further example is the strength-based language glossary devised with social care colleagues around the importance of language used by professionals when working with children and families.

The Local Offer for Care Leavers

56. Preparing our children for adulthood remains the overarching objective of the Partnership Strategy. The Nottinghamshire Local Offer for Care Leavers is driven by the ambitions that ensure every young person (care leaver) can become a resilient and confident young adult, in secure work, with financial independence along with permanent and secure housing, either through long-term tenancy or by buying their own homes. Moreover, the Local Offer supports the development of a healthy lifestyle that brings confidence and fulfilment and seeks to support care leavers to develop the ability to forge and maintain friendships and relationships and be able to engage positively with their wider communities.

57. The Care Leaver Offer was developed through strong partnership working, particularly with the district councils and health partners, and was approved by the Children and Young People's Committee on 11th February 2019 and published on 8th April 2019. This Offer will continue to evolve as partners seek to constantly refresh and strengthen the offer. There was an update of the printed booklet in March 2020 and Members can view the current offer at: **www.nottshelpyourself.org.uk/careleaverslo**.

58. The communication of the Offer to our young people has been boosted by the introduction of the 'Notts Next Steps' app in May 2020 which was co-produced with Nottinghamshire Care Leavers. Following the end of the initial contract period the app has been extended into 2022. Notts Next Steps is an outreach tool created to generate interest and encourage young people to consider a range of employment, education and training opportunities including developing employability and basic skills often on a bespoke basis. The app is designed to work without an internet connection, meaning that our young people have access to information about the Nottinghamshire Local Offer to Care Leavers on a 24/7 basis without needing to rely on Wi-Fi availability or using their phone data. The app continues to offer a helpful resource providing contact information about the Leaving Care Service, help and support, advice and guidance and about other organisations that can offer support during their transition into independence.

59. The Offer provides exemption from Council Tax for all care leavers up to 25 years and is key to supporting care leavers to secure independent living. This benefit has been delivered by district councils who have committed to absorbing the additional costs for this. The Leaving Care Service shares monthly information with the district and borough councils to identify care leavers who should have exemption from Council Tax charges (if they are eligible to pay Council Tax in the first instance). The table below indicates current take up of the exemption and figures for the previous year:

	December 2021	January 2022
Ashfield	127	128
Bassetlaw	98	97
Broxtowe	60	59
Gedling	63	68
Mansfield	125	127
Newark	80	84
Rushcliffe	14	42

60. In addition to the Council Tax exemption, district and borough councils have continued to offer support for our young people to live on their own if this is what they desire. There is also outreach support available from the Supported Accommodation Providers for those young people that have been residing in supported accommodation. The Leaving Care Service has continued to build positive working relationships with district council housing departments and individual Housing Officers to provide continued support to Care Leavers to enable them to maintain their tenancies and to 'troubleshoot' any problems as they arise.

61. Building on the firm foundations of the partnership between the Leaving Care Service and district and borough councils, our young people are now able to join their local council leisure centre gyms and wider facilities, including swimming and fitness classes at no cost. Since the leisure offer was introduced in July 2019 at least 18 young people have taken this up and have been positive in their feedback, advising their Personal Advisors of the benefits to both their physical and mental health. At the time of writing, three young people have taken up of the offer in January 2022 and this represents a healthy start to the year which we would hope to continue!

62. During 2021, West Notts College created an independent living 'flat' that the Student Support Team uses with groups of our young people to promote independent living skills. Our young people have taken part in two sessions so far. This team now has regular meetings with the Leaving Care Team and direct contact with the Looked After Children Service and has established strong processes to aid transition.

63. The Achievement Service has increased to four Achievement Advisors and one Achievement Coordinator plus a 0.4 FTE post dedicated to Business Engagement and work opportunities. This has increased the capacity of the Achievement Service to work with the Virtual School to intervene at an earlier age. This is all underpinned by the continuing effective partnership between the Leaving Care Team and the Department for Work and Pensions which allows the Achievement Adviser within the Leaving Care Team to act on the young person's behalf as and when necessary. This has made a significant difference to ensure that our young people secure additional support when looking for employment and training. This support includes access to work readiness programmes, access to work experience, Care 2 Work, support to complete job applications, preparation for interviews, access to life skills courses, and support for apprenticeship applications.

64. Since the Achievement Service and the Virtual School started to track whether our young people are in education, employment and training in Year 12 and 13 back in January 2020, we have seen an increase every year. In January 2022, 75% of our young people in year 12 and 13 are in education, employment or training, compared with 68% in January 2020.

	% of our young people in education, employment and training in Year 12 and 13 (aged 16 and 17)	**Number of our young people in education, employment and training in Year 12 and 13** (aged 16 and 17)
Jan 2022	75%	214 out of 285
Jan 2021	70%	199 out of 283
Jan 2020	68%	108 out of 157

65. In January 2021, prior to the official launch of the Achievement Service in March 2021, 366 (52.7%) of our young people aged 18 to 21 were in education, employment and training

(EET) and 47.3% were not in education, employment and training (NEET). In January 2022, nine months since the launch of the Service, 407 (59.4%) of our young people aged 18 to 21 were in education, employment and training, an almost 7% increase, demonstrating the positive impact of the Achievement Service on the educational and employment outcomes of our young people in just nine months.

	Percentage of our young people aged 18 to 21 in education, employment and training (EET)
Jan 2022	59.4%
Jan 2021	52.7%

Voluntary Sector

66. Voluntary sector partnership links have improved following the Achievement Service attending the Recruiting Talent event held virtually in April 2021. In April 2021, the Achievement Service met with Nottinghamshire's Community Voluntary Services providers to explore offering bespoke volunteering opportunities for care experienced young people. Out of 366 care leavers only 1.4% chose to participate in volunteering. The aim is to increase this figure and promote the potential great benefits of volunteering to our young people, including the Achievement Service incentivising volunteering with rewards. The Partnership Board will meet annually to review progress with the Achievement Service, the review taking place in April 2022.

67. In 2021, the "WERK" (Work Experience Readiness) Programme was re-branded to the new "Care 2 Work" Programme and Broxtowe Youth Homelessness were commissioned to develop and deliver this accredited work readiness programme for looked after children aged 16 and 17, with the purpose of developing the necessary skills and prepare them for work. The two-day course provides the young people with the opportunity to showcase the transferrable skills they have gained as care experienced young people and to learn how they can be applied into the workplace for their future economic activity. Since April 2021, 11 of our young people have participated in the programme and achieved the Level 1 Aim Award Qualification in Personal Presentation at Work. Following this, the young people have participated in a variety of work experience placements secured by the Achievement Service's Business Engagement Achievement Adviser, including in hospitality, retail, construction, health and social care, childcare, car garages, equine care and voluntary support services. Following this, the young people are referred to Futures, to take the next steps in their EET progression plans with support from the Achievement Service and Broxtowe Youth Homelessness.

Department for Work and Pensions

68. The Leaving Care and the Achievement Services are proud of the excellent operational partnership that has been established with the Department for Work and Pensions/Job Centres on behalf of Nottinghamshire care leavers over the last several years, ignited by the 2013 and 2015 Department for Work and Pensions Care Leaver Strategy. This ensures our young people are supported to enhance their employability skills at their individual pace to move them closer to the world of work.

The 21Plus Service

69. For the year 2021 there were 849 separate child enquiries for the 21Plus team with 221 young people being allocated to a Personal Advisor so that additional support could be provided. 754 of these child enquiries were self-referrals, which is positive as it indicates that care leavers eligible for the service are aware of the support they can access and will make contact when requiring support.

70. 258 of the child enquiries were specifically related to issues around homelessness and housing; these were picked up by the Homelessness Prevention Personal Advisors, to provide dedicated support advice and guidance.

71. In terms of the staffing provision there is now 1 FTE experienced Personal Advisor, 0.8 FTE experienced Personal Advisor, and 2 x 0.5 FTE experienced Personal Advisors. In September 2021 a second Homelessness Prevention Personal Advisor was seconded from the South leaving care team, after funding was granted for a further year from the Rough Sleeping Initiative fund. This has allowed the two workers to focus on training for social workers around accommodation planning for young people, offering a tenancy support package for young people moving into their first home and continuing to develop relationships with the seven councils.

72. The Council is required to make at least one contact with all our young people aged 21 to 24 years per year. The 21Plus service remain proactive in terms of this, the team has made contact with over 97% of all our eligible young people aged 21 to 24 years. A birthday card has also been developed and is now sent to all young people in the month of their birthday which provides a reminder of the 21Plus service contact details. Already this card has generated some new enquiries, which is extremely positive.

73. For those young people who may be more vulnerable or have more complex needs, a 21Plus worker is now allocated at point of case transfer, an introductory meeting is also offered with the support of the existing Personal Adviser. This again is seen as a positive development and is already being well received.

74. Examples of positive feedback include:

Regarding the support provided to a care leaver who is still awaiting a decision on their claim for asylum:

"Thanks, really do appreciate your support - let's hope the Home Office decide soon and accept his status to stay - you have all been amazing support to (young person) and myself."

Received from a 21Plus Service care leaver:

"I would like the extra help. The reason I got in touch was because of the birthday card with your details in it - if it wasn't for that birthday card I could have been on the streets. Thank you for all your help."

75. Personal Advisers continue to be allocated to our looked after young people by the time they are 17½ years old. This has supported the development of positive relationships prior to the transition from 'looked after' to 'leaving care' services at 18 years of age.

76. Ongoing engagement and participation with our young people will continue to be essential to ensure the Local Offer for Care Leavers, as well as the overarching Partnership Strategy, continues to evolve to meet the changing needs of each cohort of care leavers, particularly older ones.

77. The development and implementation of a strengths-based and relational-based approach to practice for the independent reviewing officers over the past 18 months has been a real change in culture. An initial sample group of independent reviewing officers have started using the new agenda and written record format in Looked After Child Review meetings. Feedback has been excellent – most of the young people chaired their own meetings, reported feeling in control of the meeting and being able to talk about the things they wanted to talk about and not being led by the adults involved in the meeting. The experience has provided opportunities to clarify their understanding of their care plans. This has been a very positive piece of work and the service is looking forward to rolling it out more widely over the next couple of months. 35 young people over 18 have now decided to have an independent reviewing officer continue to oversee their care and we hope this will grow.

78. There has continued to be a focus on the 'review' element of Pathway Plans to ensure that actions and tasks identified in the Plan have been progressed appropriately. There is an expectation that team managers within the Leaving Care Service review all Pathway Plans to ensure that all Plans identify specific tasks that will result in improved experiences and outcomes for our young people. In addition, Plans are expected to be continually involved in, updated and informed by the young person. During their inspection in October 2019, Ofsted confirmed that our Pathway Plans are reviewed regularly and focus on progressing important priorities, with young people's views integrated throughout the plans, ensuring that they are meaningful to young people.

79. Where risks to our young people are identified, the Leaving Care Service now routinely attends and convenes risk strategy meetings with multi-agency partners. On occasion Multi-Agency Problem Solving meetings have also been held. Managers retain oversight of these risks, and both the risk and safety plans are recorded on Mosaic. The Leaving Care Service is also involved in Child Criminal Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation monitoring and processes and continues to engage with MAPPA (Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements) meetings and other relevant safeguarding meetings with multi-agency partners for young people aged 18 - 24 years old.

Nottinghamshire Looked After Children and Care Leavers Partnership Strategy 2022-2025

80. The voices of our children and young people are at the heart of the new Strategy, which is attached as **Appendix 1**; its priorities have been directly influenced by what our children and young people have told us is important to them. Throughout most of the calendar year 2021 and as the last strategy was concluding, the Board gathered views from children and young people with a wide range of care experience and ages, as well as those children from Nottinghamshire living in other parts of the country. Sources included:

- Nottinghamshire Public Health-led Looked After Children and Care Leavers Interim Needs Assessment (2020) commissioned by the Board, which included feedback from our children and young people
- relevant views from Nottinghamshire Children in Care Council "No Labels" and sub-groups for care experienced children and young people gathered between 2018 and 2021
- feedback gathered from our children and young people as part of the Council's quality assurance activity during 2018 to 2021
- feedback from children and young people accessing You Know Your Mind funding
- Mind of My Own statement reports from 2020 to 2021.

81. In addition, during Spring 2021, young people from Nottinghamshire Children in Care Council, "No Labels", and West Notts College led a consultation with other care experienced children and young people to find out what they thought the partnership priorities for the next four years should be. These young people were facilitated by a participation working group of the Partnership Board.

82. Taking the key priorities emerging from the feedback from our children and young people, a small writing group comprising representatives of education, police, children's social care and health partners also collated the output from a round of structured discussions with individual Board members as well as from structured group discussions at the Board meeting in July 2021 to inform the drafting of the new strategy. A review of the Partnership's vision, ambitions and commitments was also undertaken.

83. Building on their involvement in the development of the strategy, members of the Children in Care Council, "No Labels", have written the foreword to the strategy, reinforcing the importance of their voice throughout the consultation process and the strategy's implementation going forward. Ensuring that all our children and young people are aware of the strategy and how to access the support and services partners are committing to is a priority of all the partners.

84. In addition, Terry Galloway, a local care leaver champion, who has been pivotal in the development of the Nottinghamshire Local Offer for Care Leavers, has provided a foreword that reflects on progress made by the Partnership and offers a focus for the Partnership for the next four years.

85. The strategy also reflects on the positive impact that the Partnership has had on the lived experience of our children and young people over the past three years and describes how these achievements provide a strong foundation for the Partnership's ambitions and aspirations over the next four years. The document describes what our children and young people have told us matters most to them and what they do not want.

86. Nottinghamshire County Council's Pledge to looked after children has been incorporated into the new strategy to become a Partnership Pledge for our children and young people. The foundation commitments of the Pledge have been reviewed to reflect their feedback. As part of the delivery of the strategy, partners will pledge how they will meet these commitments, and we will work with children and young people to communicate the Pledge to all children and young people in care at times and in ways that suit them.

87. The strategy document features photography by care leavers from Nottinghamshire. They are winners of a competition to have their images included in the strategy, organised by our Leaving Care Service. Over 30 entries were received, the standard of which is very high, demonstrating the talents of our young people.

88. An online public consultation on the draft strategy took place from 15th November to 19th December 2021. 59 responses were received, 36 from young people - 14 looked after children and 22 care leavers. Other respondents included foster carers, and front-line workers, managers and senior managers/decision makers from health providers and commissioners, education, Nottinghamshire Police, district and borough councils, the voluntary/not-for-profit sector organisations and internal services at the Council.

89. Almost 94% of respondents agreed or neither agreed/disagreed with the ambitions and commitments of the strategy (others either disagreed (3%) or didn't know (3%)). 68% did not think there was anything missing from the ambitions and 32% thought there was. 61% of respondents thought that elements of the new strategy needed to be changed and 39% thought not. Some changes were made to the strategy document in response. In addition, feedback related to specific services areas was shared with the relevant teams from across the Partnership. Some of comments from the young people who took part in the consultation are included in the strategy document.

90. This is the second strategy of Nottinghamshire's Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategic Partnership Board.

91. Through this renewed Partnership Strategy, the Council is committed to delivering a genuine, multi-agency, child-centred strategy which makes the most of the collective resources across the Partnership to achieve our shared ambition and deliver our commitments. As a Partnership, the collective commitment is to give every one of our children and young people the foundations and support to thrive in adulthood.

Other Options Considered

92. No other options have been considered

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

93. To ensure that Elected Members can fulfil their corporate parenting duties.

Statutory and Policy Implications

94. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

95. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That Committee:

1) approves the proposed Partnership Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers in Nottinghamshire (2022 to 2025), attached as **Appendix 1**

2) gives approval for annual updates on the impact of the Local Offer for Care Leavers to be provided as appropriate

3) gives approval for an annual report on the work of the Partnership Board and the impact of the Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers in Nottinghamshire (2022 to 2025) to be provided as appropriate.

Marion Clay
Service Director, Education, Learning and Skills

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Constitutional Comments (EP 15/02/22)

96. The recommendations fall within the remit of the Children and Young People's Committee by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (MDN 15/02/22)

97. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

DfE statutory guidance for local authorities Local Offer for care leavers: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-offer-guidance

DfE statutory guidance for local authorities, Applying parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/applying-corporate-parenting-principles-to-looked-after-children-and-care-leavers

Partnership Strategy for Looked After Children and Care Leavers in Nottinghamshire 2018-2021 – report to Policy Committee on 14 February 2018

Approval of Nottinghamshire's Local Offer for Care Leavers - report to Children and Young People's Committee on 11 February 2019

Nottinghamshire's Local Offer for Care Leavers, March 2020

Terms of Reference of the Looked After Children and Care Leavers Partnership Board

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C1548

A Partnership Strategy for

Looked After Children and Care leavers 2022-2025

Working with the wider community

Nottinghamshire County Council

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All the photographs in this strategy document have been taken by talented and creative care experienced young people living in Nottinghamshire as part of a competition organised by the Looked After Children and Leaving Care Services at Nottinghamshire County Council. The standard of entries was high, showing how gifted the care experienced young people of Nottinghamshire are. **Thank you to everyone who entered – we hope the winners enjoy seeing their work in print!**

Foreword by No Labels – Nottinghamshire Children in Care Council

"This partnership strategy for children who are looked after and care leavers in Nottinghamshire has been informed by children, young people and care leavers working together with Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) and partners through a county-wide consultation.

It is important that our voice as children, young people and care leavers is considered both in documents written about us and the words spoken with us.

We feel that the ambitions and promises within this strategy are relevant to our lives and should be a priority of those who care for us within Nottinghamshire County Council and partner organisations such as education, health, police, housing, adult social care and children's social care.

As individuals we all matter, and every young person's care experience will be different. Having access to this strategy will enable any child, young person or care leaver to find out information, understand the reasons why some decisions are made and ask questions.

We would respectfully request that all children, young people and care leavers are made aware of this strategy and how they can access a copy whilst in the care of Nottinghamshire County Council and partners, to support a trusting relationship with those who look after us."

"The ambitions and commitments are good and really pleased to see there is more emphasis on the young person as an individual and this is clear to see."

Matt Bainbridge
Nottinghamshire care leaver

Foreword by Terry Galloway – Care leaver champion

Hallie Jade, competition winner

Introduction

This is the second strategy that I've had the pleasure of introducing for Nottinghamshire's Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategic Partnership in my role as Care Leaver Champion.

Over the last four years, we have improved the services for our children in the care system and significantly increased the offer for children leaving our care by being the first two-tier area in England to publish a "Joint Care Leaver Local Offer". I'm proud that Nottinghamshire councils and partners have worked to embed into our communities the importance of equipping, assisting and preparing our care leavers for adulthood and independent living.

Community

I very much want to see the Partnership Board further develop and promote joint working and protocols that will help our children in care and care leavers become more interdependent within our communities.

We must accept that care does not end at an arbitrary age such as 18, 21 or 25. If we are to be truly proud of who we are in Nottinghamshire, then we need to work towards supporting everyone that has been through the care system, no matter what their age is.

We are a community, and together, it is our responsibility. We are a village, which is why working in conjunction with our NHS, Department for Work and Pensions, Department for Levelling Up, Department for Education, prisons, Youth Justice and Family Court colleagues is the only way to develop a cohesive, lifelong, localised care system that works for future generations

Our Strategy

Over the next few years, we must work together in the wider community to create systemic change: a better, more cohesive way of thinking and with agencies and organisations working towards a common goal.

This must include the early dignified help and support that families need and trust, to enable better relationships. Our new strategy provides an opportunity to work with our partners to truly embed "community" within our system.

Signatories to this strategy

Hallie Jade, competition winner

Children in care and care leavers mean so much to me and my organisation. Supporting and preparing Nottinghamshire care experienced children and young people for adulthood and independent living, including services relating to health and wellbeing, relationships, education and training, employment, accommodation, and participation in society, is a commitment that we are prepared to make as part of the Nottinghamshire Children in Care and Care Leavers Partnership Board.

Terry Galloway Terry Galloway Care Leaver Champion	Anthony May Chief Executive Officer Nottinghamshire County Council	Ashfield District Council	Bassetlaw District Council
Broxtowe Borough Council	Gedling Borough Council	Mansfield District Council	Newark & Sherwood District Council
Rushcliffe Borough Council	Will Morlidge - Interim Chief Executive Officer D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership	Scott Knowles – Chief Executive Officer East Midlands Chambers of Commerce	Kathryn Gardiner Kathryn Gardiner – Transitions Co-Ordinator, Nottingham Trent University
Louise Knott – Vice Principal: West Nottinghamshire College	P.Price-Hazlehurst Paul Price-Hazlehurst, Chief Executive Officer, Futures	Rosa Waddingham – Chief Nurse, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group	Supt James Woolley - Nottinghamshire Police
Saika Jabeen – Head of Nottinghamshire Probation Delivery Unit	Laura Redfern - Treasurer, Fostering Liaison Advisory Group	Nicola Ryan – Chief Nurse, Bassetlaw Clinical Commissioning Group	Kerry Jackson Advanced Customer Support Senior Leader, Department for Work and Pensions

Our Partnership Vision:

"We want our children and young people who have experience of care to have every opportunity and the support they need to be the best they possibly can be.

We want our children and young people to have the best start in life and we will encourage and promote our children and young people to have resilience, ambition, aspirational goals and practical and emotional support for their successful journey into adulthood.

We will nurture strong roots of stability, love, encouragement, positive relationships, and healing from past harm."

A picture taken by a young person as part of a competition organised by the Looked After Children and Leaving Care Services at Nottinghamshire County Council

Who is the strategy for?

This strategy is for looked after children and care leavers. This includes children in the care of Nottinghamshire County Council living in or out of Nottinghamshire. It also includes children living in Nottinghamshire who are looked after by other local authorities, where partners are able, in line with their specific responsibilities, to provide support. In addition, it includes unaccompanied asylum seeking children and European Economic Area national children with or without settled status, along with young people who come into care aged 16 or 17 due to homelessness. All care leavers living in Nottinghamshire will be supported through this strategy regardless of the location of their home when they were in care. Whilst the responsibilities that individual organisations have in respect of supporting children in care and care leavers to achieve their best outcomes may differ, all share the same commitment to working together to provide the best possible joined up and holistic support.

Introduction

This strategy has been developed by the Nottinghamshire Looked After Children and Care Leavers Partnership Board, in collaboration with children, young people and young adults. The Partnership currently includes the following organisations:

- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Newark and Sherwood District Council on behalf of the seven Nottinghamshire district and borough councils
- Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- D2N2 and East Midlands Chamber of Commerce
- Nottingham Trent University
- Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust
- Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Nottinghamshire Futures
- Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Bassetlaw Clinical Commissioning Group
- Nottinghamshire Police
- Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- National Probation Service
- West Nottinghamshire College on behalf of further education colleges
- A care leaver champion
- Fostering Liaison Advisory Group
- Department for Work and Pensions

Partners have a range of statutory responsibilities towards children in care and care leavers, with Nottinghamshire County Council and the seven Nottinghamshire district and borough councils acting as the 'corporate parent' for any child that becomes looked after. This means that the Councils are jointly accountable for the experiences and support that the child receives. This responsibility is shared by all organisations within the Partnership.

Over the life of the last strategy and as this strategy has been developed, the wider partnership structures supporting children and young people have continued to evolve through the development of the Integrated Care System, the introduction of new safeguarding arrangements through the move to the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership, or the development of locality working structures to support young people in schools. As such, the Partnership Board has continued to and will continue to adapt and respond to the changing landscape, proactively taking the opportunity this presents to promote and act in the best interests of looked after children and care leavers.

The Seven Corporate Parenting Principles

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 outlines the seven corporate parenting principles that help enable better outcomes for looked after children and young people. These principles apply throughout the child's upbringing and into adulthood.

1. To act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing, of those children and young people.
2. To encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings.
3. To take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people.
4. To help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners.
5. To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people.
6. For those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work.
7. To prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

These principles underpin the work of the Partnership Board. They also set an expectation of Board members to use their voice to influence and advocate on behalf of looked after children and care leavers in their wider organisations, taking all opportunities to amplify the understanding of the experiences and needs of looked after children and care leavers at a local, regional and national level.

Looking Back

When we developed the last partnership strategy for Nottinghamshire looked after children and care in 2018, we could not have anticipated the Covid-19 pandemic and the impact it would have on the life experiences of our children and young people. Despite the challenges of the last 18 months, the Partnership has retained a focus on what young people say matters most to them – feeling safe, having support for health needs, accessing good education or training, securing well-paid employment and permanent housing, and feeling like valued members of society.

Over the life of the last strategy, our partnership working has made a significant impact on support available to our young people and to the outcomes they have achieved:

What the Partnership has achieved	What this has meant for our looked after children, young people and care leavers
In 2019, Nottinghamshire's Local Offer for Care Leavers was published. This tells young people what services and support are available to them when they leave care. The involvement of the seven district and borough councils working alongside other partners, including Integrated Care System (ICS) partners, led to a comprehensive offer which goes beyond the statutory expected requirements, providing a platform from which our care leavers can thrive. The Offer includes council tax exemption, local authority housing priority, free access to local authority leisure services, and ongoing support for 21 to 24-year-old care leavers from NCC's 21Plus Service.	*"It's nice to know people care about me, and I'm not just a dusty file on a shelf"* – 22-year-old care leaver on the Local Offer for Care Leavers During 2021, at least 18 young people have signed up for the free leisure services offer, with at least 3 more signing up in 2022 so far. One young person made use of the free leisure centre access to attend keep-fit sessions and relax when they weren't at university. They also attended swimming sessions with their child and made friends with some other local parents. A Personal Advisor received a photograph from a care leaver showing their beautiful Christmas decorations they'd put up in their first council tenancy home.

What the Partnership has achieved	What this has meant for our looked after children, young people and care leavers
A joint initiative between NHS England, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and NCC Children's Services called You Know Your Mind provides personal health budgets for looked after young people with mental health needs, enabling support to be provided in a person-centred, creative and flexible way.	62.2% of young people who received support through You Know Your Mind said they feel happier and have better mental health and wellbeing. One young person who experiences anxiety when leaving their care home had photography equipment provided by You Know Your Mind, which they used to take pictures of the local nature reserve when they went for walks during lockdown.
Strengths-based personal education plans (PEPs) have been co-produced with young people and put in place by NCC Children's Services, local schools and other education providers, enabling our young people to set clearer goals for what they want to achieve and how they can access support to achieve it.	*"Children and young people seem much more interested in these plans, especially when talking about their hopes and dreams"* – social worker (NCC Looked After Children's Service) Here's what one of our children (aged 10) told us in their recent PEP: **My hopes, dreams and future goals:** I would like to do science and drama I'd like to be a voice actor or an actor I'd like to like carrots like everyone else does If I can't go back to mum, I'd like to live with xxx and xxx – we get on very well - until I'm 18 years old **What is going well?** Having my sister coming to stay (but she has been a pain in the last few days). My older brother gave me a hug at contact – brother/sister love means we hug but say an insult (to bond). I have made a few friends. I like frogs, ducks, lemons and limes I am strong at talking out loud, I am good at science – the experiment bit. **Do you feel safe and able to relax at school** – yes **What things could be better?** I'd like to get better at reading aloud (don't like the sound of my voice; feel awkward), I'd like to get better at working faster **Dislikes** – reading aloud – but I'll have to get over this if I want to be an actor

What the Partnership has achieved	What this has meant for our looked after children, young people and care leavers
There has been a real focus on improving young people's access to alternative routes into employment and training. The establishment of NCC's Achievement Service has enabled greater partnership working with local businesses, careers advice and training providers, with a particular focus on supporting 16- to 24-year-olds.	Every year, more of our looked after children are currently in employment, education, and training and all have access to support to explore and plan for their career aspirations. For example, in January 2022, 75% of our young people in Years 12 and 13 are in education, employment or training, compared with 70% at the same time in 2021, and 68% in 2020. Together we are prioritising opportunities for care leavers. For example, Nottinghamshire County Council and Newark & Sherwood District Council have recruited care leavers into apprenticeship posts.
Through the pandemic, West Nottinghamshire College and NCC Children's Services worked together to support 23 young people to continue their education remotely, including providing Wi-Fi dongles through partnerships with accommodation providers	*"For example, one of our young people, who was in their final year of a level 3 programme and needed specialist equipment, tried coming into college during the first Lockdown in March 2020. They found that doing so significantly increased their anxiety and it started to affect their mental health. They asked what we could do to help, so the college worked with NCC Looked After Children's and Leaving Care Services to jointly fund a specialist laptop and software so they could do their college work from home. We also worked together to boost their home WiFi (as uploading projects was a significant challenge for them) by funding a WiFi hub hotspot at home. Our young person successfully completed their course and is now at university."* Louise Knott, Vice Principal, West Nottinghamshire College

A picture taken by a young person as part of a competition organised by the Looked After Children and Leaving Care Services at Nottinghamshire County Council

What the Partnership has achieved	What this has meant for our looked after children, young people and care leavers
There has been an increased focus on supporting young people at risk of offending or criminal exploitation. Nottinghamshire Police and Children's Social Care have been working in partnership through the recruitment of a dedicated police officer to develop and improve police colleagues' understanding of how to work in a trauma-informed way* * The terms trauma-informed practice and relationship-based practice refer to how adults work with our children and young people in ways which acknowledge and take into account and consider the personal, lived experience of the child. For example, a child whose early life experience has been one of neglect, abuse and fear will require adults who work with them to understand why the child may find it difficult to form, maintain or repair relationships. This approach to working with our children recognises the central importance of the relationship within which the adult is working with the child.	By working together across our partnership, we have been able to implement support and disruption plans for young people at risk of criminal exploitation and actively minimise risk Nottinghamshire Police received a call from a Nottinghamshire Children's Services residential care home about one of our young people using cannabis. Following calls to the Looked After Children Police Officer from the care home and to the young person's Youth Justice worker, a discussion with the Police's local beat manager, and a visit to the young person by the Looked After Children Police Officer, a partnership approach was taken. Not only did this approach highlight a potential risk of sexual exploitation for our young person, as they told us that they were being supplied cannabis free of charge (a technique used by perpetrators of child sexual exploitation - CSE), providing insight to the beat manager about the circumstances of our young person meant that the Police took the advice not to prosecute and instead offered a sanction. Without the support of the Looked After Children's Police Officer, the young person would have been prosecuted in a very matter of fact way as this offence usually is, adding more complexity to their life and the risk of CSE going unnoticed.

There are also some areas where we have not made as much progress as we would have liked over the last three years, with the pandemic contributing to this. For example, we have more to do to ensure that young people have responsive and effective mental health support (particularly if they are living out of Nottinghamshire), to ensure that young people have timely and good quality health assessments when they come into care, and to ensure that there are enough of the right kind of homes in Nottinghamshire for our young people to live. We will continue to focus on these areas in this next strategy.

Looking Forward

The achievements of the last three years give us a strong foundation upon which to build further. As a Partnership we are ambitious and aspirational for our looked after children and care leavers and we will continue to work together to ensure that they have access to the same opportunities, support and outcomes that we would want for our own children. At the heart of the strategy is the lived experiences of children and young people. This is what young people have told us matters most to them:

- Having a voice that is listened to, heard and has influence
- Being and feeling safe
- Feeling understood by professionals in our lives, and those professionals remaining consistent where possible
- Experiencing stability, at home and at school
- Remaining in contact with friends, family and others who are important in our lives, including our pets
- Being able to take part in social and extra-curricular activities and celebrations like other children and young people
- Having safe and regular time with our birth family
- Having the time and support to prepare for changes that need to happen
- Knowing what services and support are available
- Learning 'real-life' skills

They have told us some things that they don't want:

- Having lots of paperwork
- Having to tell our 'story' over and over
- Feeling blamed for change and challenges whilst in care or after leaving care, such as placements breaking down

These views and wishes will drive both our priorities and our behaviours through the course of this strategy.

> *"I think things will get better with what is being put in place"*
>
> *Megan*
> *Nottinghamshire looked after child*

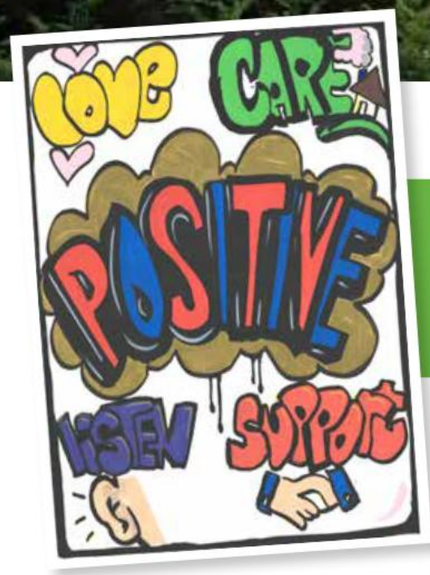
Our Partnership Ambitions and Commitments:

The ambitions we held within our previous strategy remain as relevant today. As corporate parents, we have high aspirations and expectations that every looked after child and care leaver:

- is safe and feels safe
- experiences good physical, emotional and mental health and wellbeing
- fulfils their potential
- is actively involved as a member of their local community
- has a successful transition to adulthood
- achieves sustained and fulfilling education, employment and economic independence

Whilst all children and young people are unique, we recognise that some children will have specific needs relating to their life experiences (for example unaccompanied asylum-seeking children), their circumstances (for example care leavers with young children) or characteristics (for example neurodiverse children or those identifying as LGBTQ). We will endeavour to meet all children's individual needs through tailored support so that all can achieve these aspirations.

Hallie Jade, competition winner



Artwork created by young people from No Labels (Nottinghamshire's Children in Care Council) to express what they need from the adults in their lives.

Our Pledge

We will ensure that your voice is heard and has influence

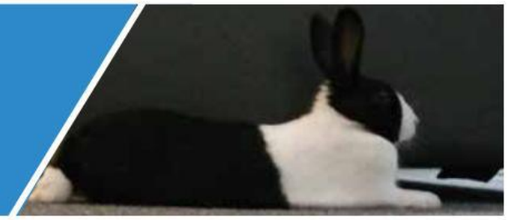
We will help you to experience stability as much as possible – at home, at school and in relationships which matter to you

We will encourage you to dream and be aspirational and ambitious about now and about the future

We will seek to understand and recognise your individual needs at all stages through your experiences of care

In delivering this strategy, each partner organisation will be asked to pledge how they will meet these commitments in the way that they provide services, and in the decisions they take. We will work with young people to develop this into a partnership pledge, setting out what all children and young people in care and care leavers can expect from organisations supporting them.

Realising the Ambitions and Commitments

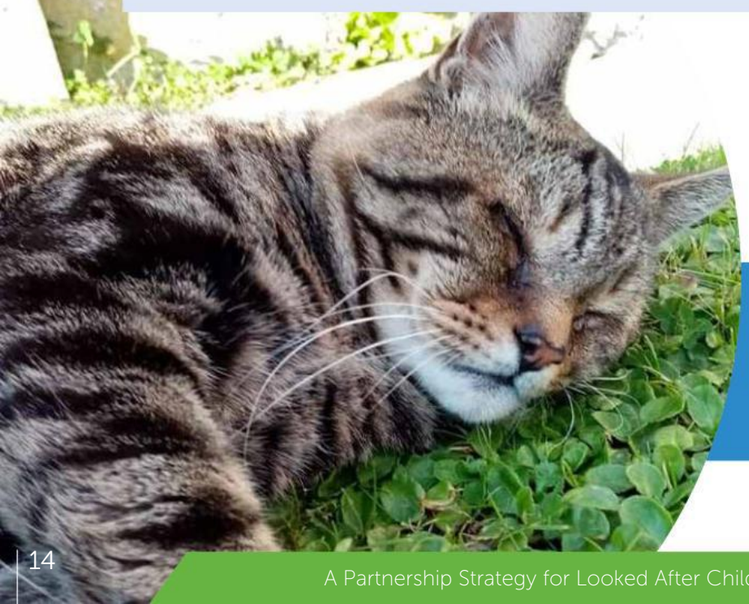


The action plan to deliver this strategy does not look to replicate all the positive activity that individual organisations are taking to support looked after children and care leavers, rather to identify where the Partnership, as a collective, can add value and focus on those areas that our children and young people have identified matter most.

Looked After Children and Care Leavers are safe and feel safe:

We will:

- raise awareness with key stakeholders of the additional vulnerabilities of looked after children in the context of the criminal justice system to reduce the disproportionate representation of our children and young people in the First Time Entrant, re-offending and custody data
- raise awareness with key stakeholders of the additional vulnerabilities of looked after children and care leavers to the risks of becoming victims of sexual exploitation or criminal exploitation
- develop a framework for enabling and encouraging our children and young people to have voice, agency and a positive sense of self, which will be used in all significant interactions with them
- recognise that our children and young people will have different care experiences and may need some additional support, consideration and flexibility when navigating services and provision to be safe and feel safe
- promote and encourage safeguarding for care leavers



A picture taken by a young person as part of a competition organised by the Looked After Children and Leaving Care Services at Nottinghamshire County Council

Looked After Children and Care Leavers experience good physical, emotional and mental health and wellbeing

We will:

- ensure that all our children and young people can access support to understand their life experiences and their identity, recognising the importance of this as a foundation for good emotional wellbeing
- review our local approaches to trauma-informed practice* across the Integrated Care System and within our schools and education providers, and develop a programme that ensures all professionals have the knowledge, skills and time to meet the needs of our children and young people in a relationship-based* and trauma-informed way*
- work to ensure organisations work together to provide high quality care within statutory timescales
- work with regional and national partners with the aim that all looked after children and young people receive timely and high-quality health and wellbeing support whether they are living in or outside Nottinghamshire
- evaluate the impact of the pandemic on children and young people and use this to shape the support and services provided

Looked After Children and Care Leavers fulfil their potential

We will:

- work together to ensure our children and young people's education is appropriate and meeting their needs, as well as providing pastoral support with compassion and understanding
- work with schools and education and training providers to provide access to courses and qualifications that meet the needs of our young people to achieve their aspirations for higher education, work or training
- work together to offer a curriculum and training opportunities that will accelerate progress and attainment for ALL our children and young people up to the age of 24
- extend the Virtual School training offer** to other relevant services across the Partnership

** The Virtual School collaborates with the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) in offering training which supports schools to meet the needs of Our Children and Young People. Examples include Meaningful PEPS (Personal Education Plans) and Emotion Coaching (how adults can help children better understand and manage their emotions). This training offer has been opened to a wider range of people who are involved in the lives of our children, including staff in children's homes and foster carers.

Looked After Children and Care Leavers are actively involved as members of their local communities

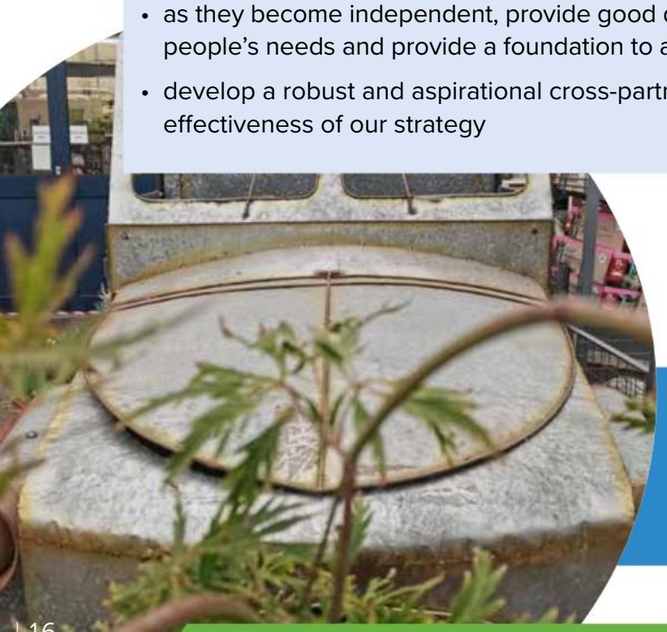
We will:

- support our children and young people to feel they belong in their communities, and we will recognise, celebrate, and share their successes and achievements
- advocate for our children and young people within our organisations and those we work alongside to help inform practice and remove barriers and myths linked to being care experienced
- promote community activities, events and opportunities to our children and young people using a variety of communication tools including the Notts Next Steps App

Looked After Children and Care Leavers have a successful transition to adulthood

We will:

- strengthen our Local Offer for Care Leavers and extend the Offer to looked after children
- strengthen our support to our young people to develop the life skills they need to live successful adult lives, including budgeting, cooking and keeping a tenancy going
- support our young people to make a positive move from statutory schooling to post-16 education or training and beyond, with a focus on preparing for adulthood
- as they become independent, provide good quality homes that meet our young people's needs and provide a foundation to achieve their goals, including "staying put"
- develop a robust and aspirational cross-partnership framework to evaluate the effectiveness of our strategy



A picture taken by a young person as part of a competition organised by the Looked After Children and Leaving Care Services at Nottinghamshire County Council

Looked After Children and Care Leavers achieve sustained and fulfilling education, employment and economic independence

We will:

- increase the number of organisations offering work experience, internships, apprenticeships and guaranteed interviews, with partners to the strategy leading the way
- prepare our children and young people for employment and work within a changing job market, recognising the additional support and experiences we must provide to ensure they have the skills and understanding to succeed
- ensure our young people achieve economic independence by providing stability and physical assets to help them move into and sustain employment. For example a nice place to live, a way to get to work and suitable clothes to wear

"I think the ideas of the new strategy are good and the ambitions are in line with what me as a child in care who is going to be a care leaver soon is wanting. I really think these ambitions will help me fulfil the enrolment into my adulthood and help develop me to be in the best possible place I could be and will help me in my transition to independence.

The skills listed are all essential to helping me achieve this goal of independence, and getting support with my health and wellbeing is also really important to me as I want to make sure I am fully ready."

Callum, Nottinghamshire care leaver

What will success look like in three years' time?

- our local workforce will have the skills and training to better meet the needs of all looked after children and care leavers living in Nottinghamshire
- more of our children and young people will experience stability, in relationships that matter, in school and at home
- more of our young people will be in education, employment or training that meets their aspirations
- our children and young people will have equitable access to health services, regardless of where they are living
- more of our young people will take part in extra-curricular and community activities
- children in care will be no more likely to be criminalised than other children and young people in Nottinghamshire

Governance

This strategy will be supported by a delivery plan, with progress overseen by the Looked After Children and Care Leavers Partnership Board. The Board will report into the No Labels Children in Care Council every six months, on progress in achieving the ambitions within the strategy, and on the way that partners are meeting the commitments outlined in the strategy. No Labels will be able to set new priorities for the Partnership Board, as they emerge through the life of the strategy.

The Board will also report into the Children and Young People's Committee, and the Governance Board for Children in Care and Care Leavers.

Individual Board members will be responsible for reporting progress through their respective governance arrangements.

The Board will ensure all members of the Partnership are held to account on their commitments within the strategy.

"Believe in young people, then they will believe in themselves and have aspirations/expect to succeed in life."

"For school teachers: listen to young people, learn from young people and teach"

"Young people in care want to hear good and positive things; more positive thinking and talk from young people and adults."

Artwork created by No Labels

> *"If this new strategy is implemented into practice, looked after children and care leavers will definitely have a great opportunity to use all the resources that are available to them."*
>
> *Nottinghamshire care leaver*

"I believe the ambitions set out should be attained for every Looked After Child, every child under the care of the Local Authority deserves to reach their full potential and have access to the services in order to allow them to reach this.

I do not feel this should be a barrier and the ambitions set out also align with this."

Nottinghamshire care leaver

"Thanks to organise such a great strategy"

Nottinghamshire unaccompanied asylum seeking young person

Working with the wider community

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D&P01-22/78830

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Children and Young People's Committee

7th March 2022

Agenda Item: 5

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION, LEARNING AND SKILLS

DESTINATIONS OF YEAR 12-13 LOOKED AFTER YOUNG PEOPLE COHORT 2020 – 2021

Purpose of the Report

1. This report informs Committee of the education destinations of Nottinghamshire looked after young people who left statutory education at the end of the academic year 2020-2021 into Year 12, and those in Year 13 of post-16 education. The report asks Committee to consider whether there are any further actions it requires arising out of this information.

Information

2. Members of the Children and Young People's Committee act as corporate parents to the children and young people looked after by Nottinghamshire County Council and therefore receive regular reports on the academic successes of these children and young people.

3. Despite changes to education legislation regarding the age of participation (Education Acts 2008/2011, introduced the raising of the participation age), statutory school age has not been changed; a child must start statutory schooling the term after they turn five years old and remain in education until their 16th birthday (finishing on the last Friday in June of that year). However, all pupils leaving statutory schooling are required to participate in education, employment or training until 18 years of age. Should a young person not secure GCSE level 4 or above in English and/or mathematics at the end of statutory schooling, the young person is also required to continue studying these subjects until they are 18 years of age or until the required level is obtained.

4. The change to the law for post-16 education requires young people to undertake one of the following until they are 18 years old:

   - stay in full-time education, for example at a college
   - start an apprenticeship or traineeship
   - spend 20 hours or more a week working or volunteering, while in part-time education or training.

5. All looked after pupils throughout their statutory schooling and post-16 education are supported at every stage through the Personal Education Planning process. This strength-based plan is reviewed on a termly basis and is a statutory part of the care planning for that young person. Social workers, designated teachers, other education staff, foster carers and the young person are all part of the meeting to review the Personal Education Plan. This meeting reviews the achievements to date and areas that will need extra support to ensure the pupil reaches their full potential. As part of these meetings, preparation for adulthood is a key focus. This includes asking questions around skills and strengths of the pupil and how these may be encouraged and built upon to meet the goals the pupil may have for their future.

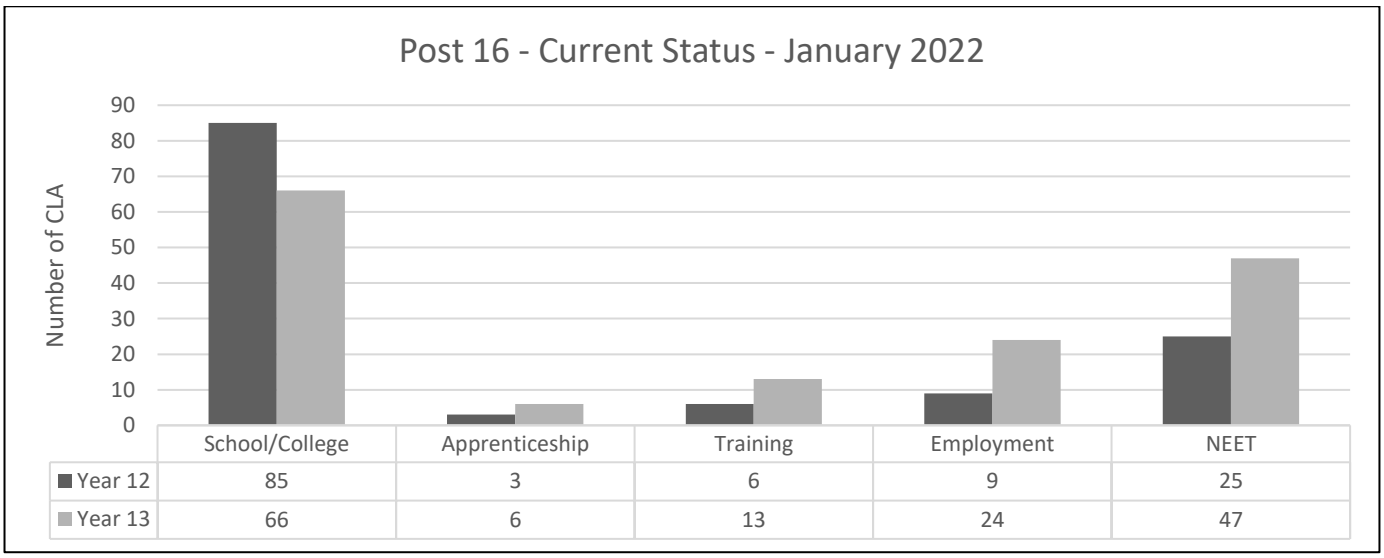
6. At these meetings, during the secondary phase, pupils are encouraged and supported to consider their post-16 education choices as soon as Year 8. Schools must provide information, advice and guidance to inform these decisions. Schools are also required to ensure pupils achieve the most appropriate qualifications for their post-16 studies.

7. An Achievement Adviser, based in the Leaving Care team and who holds a full-time position, supports the 16-18 year old cohort based within the looked after team. There is a joint responsibility and established collaborative working between the Achievement Service and the Virtual School to support the 16-18 year old cohort across all social care teams. The support to settings and young people includes termly meetings with the designated person for looked after students, termly network meetings for colleges, advice and guidance to individual students and attendance at Personal Education Plans where needed.

8. From January 2022 the Personal Education Plans for 3-18 year olds are now held on an online platform (ASSET) to provide efficient analysis of the educational data contained within the document. The platform holds Nottinghamshire's Personal Education Planning documents to maintain the strength-based approach and enables data analysis for the whole cohort.

Breakdown of education destinations – correct as of January 2022

9. The graph below gives a breakdown of Year 12 and Year 13 looked after young people's current status with regards to education, employment and training (EET). It also indicates those not in education, employment or training (NEET).



	School/College	Apprenticeship	Training	Employment	NEET
Year 12	85	3	6	9	25
Year 13	66	6	13	24	47

10. 75% of Year 12/13 young people are in EET (212/284; this compares with 199/283 in January 2021). 53% of young people are currently attending further education colleges or school 6th forms (137 in colleges and 14 in school 6th forms). 25% of our young people are NEET (72/284), which has decreased from 30% in January 2021.

English and mathematics grade 4 results for Year 12, 2021 (teacher assessment due to COVID-19 and data is for all our young people not the reportable 903 cohort)

	English 4+	Maths 4+	English & Maths 4+
All	33%	29%	23%
903 Cohort	34%	31%	24%

	English 5+	Maths 5+	English & Maths 5+
All	16%	15%	8%
903 Cohort	20%	15%	10%

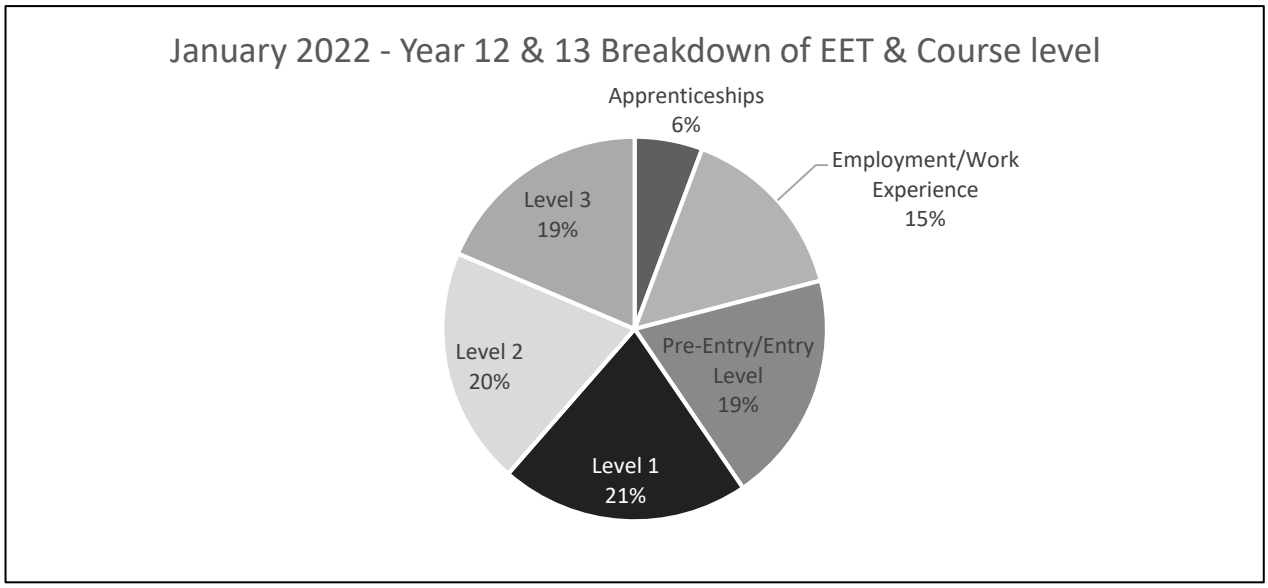
11. 33% (40/120) of the current Year 12 cohort achieved at least a grade 4 in GCSE English at the end of Year 11 and 29% (35/120) of the current Year 12 cohort achieved at least a grade 4 in GCSE mathematics at the end of Year 11. 23% of the cohort (28/120) achieved both English and mathematics.

12. All our young people who are in EET and have not achieved the required GCSE level 4 mathematics and English qualification are following courses at the appropriate level (ranging from Entry Level 1 to GCSE retakes) to work towards the required standard.

Breakdown of courses – correct as of January 2022

13. The chart below shows the level of course our young people are studying at or whether they are employed or in an apprenticeship. Level 1 qualifications are the equivalent of grade 1-3 at GCSE, Level 2 equates to GCSE grades 4-9 and Level 3 are A Level or equivalent qualifications.

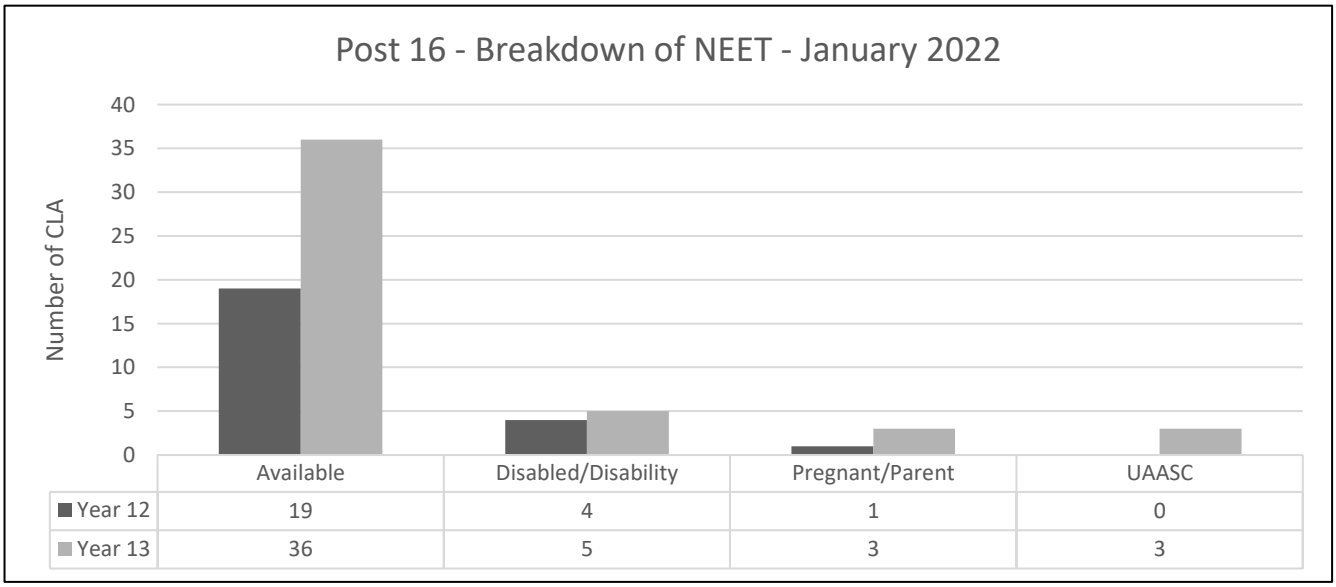
<u>January 2022 – Year 12 & 13 Breakdown of EET & Course Level</u>



Not in education, employment or training (NEET) – correct as of December 2020

14. The graph below indicates those young people who are NEET. 'Available' status indicates that the young person is able to seek EET but has not secured this at the point of producing this data. Unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people (UASC) often do not have the legal status to be able to seek EET, therefore, will remain on the NEET statistics until the asylum claim has been processed (3 young people). Whilst UASC young people are under 18 there are a number of courses at colleges and voluntary organisations which remain available and open for this cohort of learners. Beyond 18, if asylum is not processed and granted at this point then work is not available although the voluntary sector and college courses are still available to be accessed. These young people continue to be supported through the Council's Leaving Care team up to the age of 25 if required, this includes accommodation, advice and guidance for EET options and allocated personal advisors who will support all areas of their lives until their legal status is resolved.

15. Any young person who is NEET may be supported by a range of services, including the NEET service, achievement adviser, social worker, personal adviser or transitional personal adviser, in order to gain EET status.



	Available	Disabled/Disability	Pregnant/Parent	UAASC
Year 12	19	4	1	0
Year 13	36	5	3	3

University Planning

16. There are currently 17 students who have either applied for or secured university courses for September 2022. This is an increase of eight when compared with university applications for September 2021.

17. It is recognised by a number of universities including Nottingham, Nottingham Trent and De Montford (Leicester) that Nottinghamshire County Council has one of the best packages to support young people accessing university and the Leaving Care Team remains involved with those young people who require any additional support throughout their studies.

18. To encourage aspiration to attend university, young people are offered visits either on an individual basis or as a group to any of the local universities, who both the Virtual School

and Leaving Care team have close links with. Should a young person wish to attend a university further afield then visits can be arranged with these establishments through the participation teams all universities are required to have.

19. Nottingham Trent University also offers student mentoring for pupils from Year 11 upwards which provides support with academic studies, aspiration of university and general support through Year 11 to Year 13. The Virtual School has links with local universities who offer opportunities to visit and online sessions about going to university from Year 8 onwards.

20. There are 33 young people who are now studying at university who are care leavers to Nottinghamshire County Council which is a very positive picture for the outcomes of our young people.

Future actions to support the Post-16 cohort of looked after young people

21. In order to further develop the effectiveness of smooth transition for young people over the Year 11 to post-16 period, the Virtual School and Children's Social Care teams will work together to implement good practice. This will include:

- Nottinghamshire Virtual School was successful in the bid to take part in a Post-16 Pupil Premium Pilot. Analysis of outcomes and measuring impact will allow us to continue to support our young people's achievement using evidence-based interventions and practice.

- More effectively monitor progress, attainment and attendance of the post-16 cohort through the new Personal Education Plan platform.

Other Options Considered

22. No other options have been considered.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

23. The report provides an opportunity for the Committee to consider whether there are any further actions it requires.

Statutory and Policy Implications

24. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

25. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That Members consider whether there are any further actions required arising out of the information contained in the report.

Marion Clay
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Constitutional Comments (ELP 16/02/22)

26. The recommendations fall within the delegation to Children and Young People's Committee by virtue of its frame of reference.

Financial Comments (MDN 04/02/22)

27. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C1541

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Children and Young People's Committee

7th March 2022

Agenda Item: 6

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, FINANCE, INFRASTRUCTURE & IMPROVEMENT

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE CORE DATA SET - PERFORMANCE AND FINANCE FOR QUARTER 3 2021/22

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides the Committee with a summary of the performance and finance of the Council's services for children and young people for quarter 3 of 2021/22 (1st October to 31st December 2021).

Information

2. The Council's Planning and Performance Framework establishes the approach that the Council takes to planning and managing its performance to deliver effective and responsive services.

3. The Council has agreed that the key measures of its performance will be defined through a number of core data sets which are detailed in its Council Plan and each of its Departmental Strategies.

4. Performance against these core data sets is reported to Committee every three months (quarterly) to support the performance management of the delivery of services.

Performance Reporting for 2021/22

5. This report provides a summary of the quarter 3 position for the Children's Social Care and Education Core Data Set performance measures that fall within the responsibility of the Children and Young People's Committee. The full Core Data Set is included in **Appendices 1 and 2**. **Appendix 1** shows those measures which have received updates since the previous quarter. **Appendix 2** shows those measures which have not changed.

6. For each measure, the following information is provided:

- Current performance and whether a high or low value is regarded as 'good'.
- The period this current value relates to.

- An indication of whether performance has improved (+), declined (-), or remained the same (=) over the current reporting period. The most recently available annual performance and which year this relates to.
- The underlying numbers used to calculate the % for some measures is provided within the measure description.
- If a measure is cumulative, this is stated in the measure description.
- Comparator data of the national average for England, and that of the Council's children's services statistical neighbours, where this data is available.

Child and Family Assessments

7. Performance for Child and Family Assessments completed within timescale continues to be good; a very small dip can be noted in the figures but still well within target and above statistical neighbours.

Child Protection

8. The number of children currently subject to a child protection plan within Nottinghamshire is lower than previous years. The Authority remains in line with statistical neighbours, and robust processes are in place to support other complex young people who require support but may not require a child protection plan, such as specific focus safeguarding meetings for Child Criminal Exploitation/Child Sexual Exploitation (CCE/CSE). The Service continues to monitor these processes to ensure the vulnerable children in Nottinghamshire are supported.

9. Child Protection Coordinators continue to closely monitor the length of time a child has been subject to a child protection plan and there remains a robust system in place for review and monitor of those children who are over 15 months on a plan. There is also a system in place to manage drift and delay to prevent children being on child protection plans for extended periods of time. The Concerns Resolution Process is in place to raise issues around any lengthy child protection plans, or concerns of drift and delay. The Child Protection Coordinators are also using mid-way review meetings to ensure plans are progressing and to again avoid drift and delay.

10. There has been a reduction in the number of children subject to a repeat child protection plan in Nottinghamshire, however it remains a high figure. A report looking at repeat child protection plans within Nottinghamshire is being presented to the Senior Leadership Team in February 2022. This considered current processes in place to manage complex families and proposed new ways of tracking and supporting families to try and prevent repeat child protection plans.

11. The Authority remains very mindful of the need to keep conferences within the timescales provided, and the Service continues to need Children's Service Manager approval from both the Independent Chair Service and Children's Social Care service in order to move a meeting outside of timescales, which would only be done if justified and required in order to make the meeting successful for the family. Nottinghamshire remains in line with statistical neighbours and has seen an increase in our figures since last quarter, with the aim to increase this again next quarter.

Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing

12. The data for missing children this quarter remains consistent with previous quarters. The Service has noted a reduction however in the numbers of children who go missing on multiple occasions and so whilst there has been some slight increase in children who have gone missing from home for the first time, it is positive that children are going missing less frequently.

13. There has been a slight reduction in children assessed as at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) both for Quarter 2 & Quarter 3. Of interest to note however is that there has been an increase this quarter in CSE meetings held for children not looked after by the Local Authority. There has been an increased number of younger children assessed as at risk of CSE this quarter and therefore more CSE meetings have been held due to the age and vulnerability of these children. Please note that these children have been impacted by online CSE. This is reflective of Police data which has similarly recorded fewer CSE crimes but an increase in online activity. Additionally, the Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation panel has seen a reduction in numbers of children who have been assessed as at a high risk of CSE and this data is currently under review by partners.

Looked After Children

14. This measure considers children in care who have had more than three placements during the previous 12 months as a proportion of all children in care. There had been a declining trend in performance during the past 12-18 months, reflecting the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and the challenge it presents in maintaining stable placements. Despite this, the previous quarter's performance remains the only short period in which Nottinghamshire's performance dipped below the national benchmark. The scrutiny applied to the data following Quarter 2 did not evidence any other underlying long-term impacts on placement stability and in the latest data - back ahead of the target - reflects the continuing good work of many services and teams of professionals across the Children & Families Department that support our young people in care to have a stable home environment.

15. This data continues to evidence that the majority of children in care experience very stable placements over the longer term. But, like the placement stability Performance Indicator above, very much challenged by the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and performance of this Indicator has likewise fluctuated within an overall steady decline in performance during the past 12-18 months. This Performance Indicator is further challenged by the fact that older children in care aged 16+, who make up more than 25% of the total number of Nottinghamshire's children in care population, experience changes of placement as part of their normal care plan that supports their transition into adulthood. This does have the effect of distorting the overall picture around long-term placement stability.

Adoption

16. The time between a child entering care and moving in with their adoptive family continues to improve. 3 of the 4 children in this quarter were adopted by their foster carers, hence a shorter time period as they did not move on to other adopters.

17. Performance for the time between the Local Authority receiving the court authority and deciding on a match has declined as there are some children who, due to their age or

assessed needs, take longer to match with adopters. These are relatively few children and work is being done to identify adoptive placements as soon as possible.

Care Leavers

18. The current percentage of care leavers in education, employment, or training reflects the hard work of the workers within the Achievement Service which was set up in March 2021. The manager and four workers within the Service have been able to give advice, support and offer opportunities to young people in this age range in relation to training courses, work experience and work opportunities.

19. The current percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation can be attributed to three factors. Firstly, there is the continued steady growth in Staying Put provision. Secondly the Supported Accommodation model with its focus on problem solving in order to achieve placement stability and successful move-on through the core and cluster model. Finally, the continued impact of the Care Leaver Offer within the County which successfully provides care leavers with long term sustainable council tenancies.

Youth Offending

20. The rate (per 100,000 population) of First Time Entrants saw a slight increase when compared with the same period last year. The previous year's figures do, of course, coincide with the second quarter when Covid-19 restrictions really began to take a sustained hold which led to reduced custody throughput, though saw increased processing by police, leading to some irregular reporting. Nevertheless, figures remain lower when compared with longer term data trends. The proportion of weapons offences within the First Time Entrants cohort has decreased slightly when compared with the last quarter.

Performance Summary

21. In summary, the majority of measures show continuing strong performance across the Department, with measures of interest to Ofsted such as Assessment Timescales continuing to perform very well. The few measures that are not performing as well are all under close scrutiny by the Department.

Summary Financial Position

22. The Children and Families Department Revenue Budget is forecast to overspend by £1.7m (1.1%) after planned use of grant reserves and excluding redundancy costs.

23. The Annual Budget includes an adjustment of £5.4m for Covid-19 additional costs.

24. Commissioning & Resources remains the division with the highest forecast overspend. In period 9 this was £2.4m (3.0%), which is an increase of £0.3m from period 8.

25. Education Learning & Skills continues the trend of forecasting an underspend, however this has increased from 2.9% in period 8 to 3.9% in period 9.

Table 1 – Summary Revenue Position

Previous Variance £000	Change in Variance £000	Division	Annual Budget £000	Actual to Period 9 £000	Year-End Forecast £000	Under(-) / Overspend Variance £000	Variance as % of Budget %
		Children & Young People's Committee					
(324)	(79)	Youth, Families & Social Work	56,748	38,292	56,345	(403)	0.71
(187)	(64)	Education Learning & Skills	6,424	4,306	6,173	(251)	3.91
2,091	293	Commissioning & Resources	79,036	57,995	81,420	2,384	3.02
0	0	Capital & Central Charges	11,355	11,960	11,355	0	0.00
1,581	**150**	**Subtotal**	**153,564**	**112,553**	**155,293**	**1,730**	**1.13**
		Traders					
0	0	Clayfields	**(25)**	**31**	**(25)**	0	0.00
1,581	**150**	**Forecast prior to use of reserves**	**153,539**	**112,584**	**155,268**	**1,730**	**1.13**
0	0	Transfer to/(from) ear marked reserves	0	0	0	0	
0	0	Transfer to/(from) grant reserves	(873)	(195)	(873)	0	
0	0	Transfer to/(from) Traders reserves	(321)	0	(321)	0	
0	0	Redundancy Costs	0	(217)	0	0	
1,581	**150**	**Net Department**	**152,345**	**112,172**	**154,074**	**1,730**	**1.13**

Youth, Families & Social Work Division

26. The division is reporting a forecast £0.4m underspend (£0.3m period 8) after the planned use of reserves.

27. There is a £0.2m underspend (£0.1m underspend period 8) on social care staffing. The increase in underspend is due to small reductions in forecasts across all Children's Social Care teams from delays in recruiting agency workers.

28. The forecast agency spend for the Hard to Retain teams is £5.5m (2020-21 £5.7m) and is based on 87.5 FTE agency Team Managers and Social Workers by the end of March 2022. The forecast also includes 36.6 FTE non-social work qualified agency workers by the end of March 2022. A reduction for annual leave and turnover is factored into the agency forecast.

29. £1.1m overspend (£1.1m period 8) on Looked After Children placements. This is attributable to personal allowance payments to Looked After Children aged 16/17 living independently £0.3m, £0.4m for internal specialist residential Children's Homes, £0.2m in the Contact Service and £0.2m on the Fostering team.

30. £0.5m underspend (£0.5m period 8) on Non-Looked After Children placements. The underspend has arisen due to a decline in child arrangement orders and adoption financial support payments. Child arrangement order placements have decreased by 15% and adoption financial support placements by 29% since December 2020. Covid-19 has also

delayed many of these orders going to court and therefore growth in the anticipated number of Special Guardianship Orders has been delayed.

31. £0.8m underspend (£0.8m period 8) on the Children with Disabilities homes.

32. £0.2m underspend (£0.2m period 8) in School Swimming Service and Outdoor Education (Early Help & Youth Services).

33. £0.3m overspend (£0.3m period 8) on other budgets. The overspend is due to the departmental levy, the forecast cost of service reviews and leaving care support. Included is £0.1m of temporary costs for transforming the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and Early Help Unit to find more effective ways of working. This includes staffing from the Programme and Projects team.

34. £0.1m underspend (£0.1m period 8) on Adoption Services due to the decision to distribute part of the Adoption East Midlands reserve to respective partners.

Education Learning & Skills Division

35. The division is reporting a £0.3m underspend (£0.2m underspend period 8). Additional Covid grant has been allocated to fund the extra costs (£0.2m) associated with an increase in demand for Education, Health and Care Plans for children who have special education needs.

36. £0.1m underspend (£0.1m period 8) on ongoing pension enhancement payments due to the annual pensions increase percentage being lower than previously projected.

37. £0.2m underspend (£0.1m period 8) additional training income for the spring term in the Education Improvement Service (EIS) Sold Service and some other minor underspends across the division.

Commissioning and Resources Division

38. The division is reporting a forecast £2.4m overspend (£2.1m period 8) after use of reserves and £2.5m Covid budget allocation.

39. There is a £4.0m overspend (£3.5m period 8) on External Looked After Children Placements (excluding £0.7m offsetting underspends on internal foster care payments). The overspend includes £1.2m relating to children transferred from Minster View which remains closed. The remaining overspend is due to general market conditions, finite internal provision and some exceptionally high-cost individual placements driven by complex needs. The annual cost of the 10 highest cost placements has increased by over £1.7m compared with 12 months ago (£6.5m versus £4.8m).

40. £0.7m underspend (£0.6m period 8) on Internal Foster Care payments - included under Commissioning & Resources division for reporting purposes due to the inverse relationship with external placement costs detailed above. The forecast underspend increased slightly again in the month thus suggesting that internal placements are not currently increasing and are therefore adding pressure on external provision.

41. £0.3m net overspend (£0.3m period 8) across other budget heads within the division. This mainly consists of staffing budget overspends linked to the Vacancy Level Turnover and current service demands within the Independent Chair Service and Integrated Children's Disability Service (ICDS) agency staff.

42. £0.1m net overspend (£0.1m period 8) within Commissioning & Resources Service Improvement budgets incorporating departmental overheads such as Trade Union recharges which consistently exceed budget and temporary senior management costs associated with the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse project.

43. £1.3m underspend (£1.2m period 8) on Children's Centres and former contract related budgets. Approximately £0.3m is on budgets originally held for possible pay protection and other uncertainties, £0.2m increased Public Health Grant, a temporary subsidy on the NHS employers pension rate accounts for a further £0.1m and the remaining £0.7m is mainly due to vacancies against the original staffing budgets that were created on transfer. The change in the month is due to ongoing minor refinements across a range of budget heads involving many budget holders.

Clayfields

44. Clayfields is currently forecasting a deficit of £0.3m against its income target of £0.346m (temporarily reduced by £0.164m Covid budget). This takes into account a £920,700 (837 welfare bed nights @ £1,100) loss of income for the period April – December. This is due to a combination of factors, for example Clayfields is currently overspending on Education due to the need to engage external support due to recruitment challenges. Occupancy at Clayfields remains lower than in previous years and Covid has resulted in a high level of staff absences at Clayfields. The forecast includes a final loan repayment estimated at £0.1m and a contribution towards the increased cost of employer liability insurance of £0.2m. The balance on the trading reserve is £0.564m.

Other Options Considered

45. This report is provided as part of the Committee's constitutional requirement to consider performance of all areas within its terms of reference on a quarterly basis. The departmental strategy was agreed on 24th January 2018 and the format and frequency of performance reporting were agreed by the Improvement and Change Sub-Committee on 12th March 2018. Due to the nature of the report no other options were considered appropriate.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

46. This report is provided as part of the Committee's constitutional requirement to consider performance of areas within its terms of reference on a quarterly basis.

Statutory and Policy Implications

47. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below.

Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

48. There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk Implications

49. Reporting on the performance of services for looked after children and care leavers will better enable the Council to ensure that children are effectively safeguarded.

RECOMMENDATION

1) That Committee considers whether there are any actions it requires in relation to the performance information on the Council's services for children and young people for the period 1st October to 31st December 2021.

Nigel Stevenson
Service Director for Finance, Infrastructure & Improvement

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Constitutional Comments (LPW 15/02/22)

50. The recommendations fall within the remit of the Children and Young People's Committee by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (NC 14/02/22)

51. There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Children and young people core data set – performance and finance for Quarter 2 2021/22 – report to Children and Young People's Committee on 13th December 2021

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.
C1545

Appendix 1 - Indicators updated from previous report

Nottinghamshire County Council

Core Data Set for CYP
Committee Performance for Quarter Three

Key Performance Indicator	Nottinghamshire						Comparator Data	
	Current Value		Best to be	Current Reporting Period	Previous Value	Previous Annual Performance	National Average	Statistical Neighbours
Enquiries to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (Previous Value is same quarter last year)	**9,455**	**N/A**	N/A	2021/22 Q3	8,436	32,474 (2020/21)	–	–
Enquiries Referred to Assessment Teams (Previous Value is same quarter last year)	**2,992**	**N/A**	N/A	2021/22 Q3	2,837	11,197 (2020/21)	–	–
Child and Family assessments for Children's Social Care carried out within statutory timescales	**97.7%**	**-**	High	2021/22 Q3	97.8%	97.1% (2020/21)	83.8% (2019/20)	84.7% (2019/20)
Percentage of child protection cases reviewed within timescale	**93.9%**	**+**	High	2021/22 Q3	90.6%	93.4% (2020/21)	91.5% (2019/20)	91.5% (2019/20)
Children subject to a Child Protection Plan – Rate per 10,000	**38.6**	**N/A**	N/A	2021/22 Q3	40.3	42.9 (2020/21)	42.8 (2019/20)	40.9 (2019/20)
Children who are subject to a child protection plan for 2 years or more	**2.3%**	**+**	Low	2021/22 Q3	3.4%	3.9% (2020/21)	3.6% (2019/20)	3.4% (2019/20)
Children becoming the subject of a child protection plan on more than one occasion	**25.4%**	**+**	Low	2021/22 Q3	37.1%	23.8% (2020/21)	21.9% (2019/20)	22.8% (2019/20)
Total number of individual children reported missing this quarter	**324**	**-**	Low	2021/22 Q3	319	747 (2020/21)	–	–
Of the children reported missing, % missing from home (202/324)	**62.3%**			2021/22 Q3	60.5%	66.4% (2020/21)	–	–
Of the children reported missing, % missing from care placement (126/324)	**38.9%**			2021/22 Q3	41.4%	38.8% (2020/21)	–	–
Of the children reported missing, % missing from NCC LAC care placement (78/324)	**24.1%**			2021/22 Q3	27.0%	24.1% (2020/21)	–	–
Total number of missing occurrences* this quarter generated by these children	**581**	**+**	Low	2021/22 Q3	608	2044 (2020/21)	–	–
Percentage of Return Interviews completed within timescale (L) (252/360)	**70.0%**	**-**	High	2021/22 Q3	74.0%	73% (P) (2018/19)	–	–
Percentage of Nottinghamshire LAC missing from placement by individual child (L) (78/991)	**7.9%**	**+**	Low	2021/22 Q3	8.8%	24.1% (2020/21)	11% (2017/18)	10.1% (2017/18)
Percentage of children reported missing this qtr who have gone missing 5+ times in last 12 mths (67/324)	**20.7%**	**=**	Low	2021/22 Q3	20.7%	13.5% (2020/21)	–	–
Number of children reported to MASH as at risk of CSE	**94**	**-**	Low	2021/22 Q3	91	334 (2020/21)	–	–
Number of LAC children subject to CSE strategy meeting	**1**	**+**	Low	2021/22 Q3	2	3 (2020/21)	–	–
Number of non LAC children subject to CSE strategy meeting	**18**	**-**	Low	2021/22 Q3	9	47 (2020/21)	–	–
Percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training aged 19-21 (L) (134/234)	**57.3%**	**+**	High	2021/22 Q3	52.4%	52.0% (2019/20)	53.0% (2019/20)	49.0% (2019/20)
Percentage of care leavers in higher education aged 19-21 (L) (17/234)	**7.3%**	**+**	High	2021/22 Q3	7.1%	5.0% (2018/19)	6.0% (2018/19)	5.3% (2018/19)
Percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation (L) (197/234)	**84.2%**	**+**	High	2021/22 Q3	81.3%	88.0% (2019/20)	85.0% (2019/20)	85.5% (2019/20)
Percentage of looked after children placed 20 miles or more from home (L) (179/928)	**19.3%**	**-**	Low	2021/22 Q3	19.0%	16.8% (2020/21)	16.0% (2019/20)	15.6% (2019/20)
Looked after children with 3 or more placements in any one year (L)	**11.4%**	**+**	Low	2021/22 Q3	13.2%	10.9% (2020/21)	11.0% (2019/20)	10.4% (2019/20)
Percentage of looked after children remaining in long-term placements (L)	**64.8%**	**-**	High	2021/22 Q3	65.0%	68.1% (2020/21)	68.0% (2019/20)	66.1% (2019/20)

For Nottinghamshire, the performance data available at the end of quarter 3 2021/22 is reported. The most recent data for national average and children's services statistical neighbours is reported, where available. Please note, comparisons may be indicative only, as the reporting periods are not necessarily aligned. Where Nottinghamshire performance meets or exceeds the latest national performance information, this is highlighted by the emboldened boxes.
Key: (p) = provisional data; (L) = reported against the outcomes in the LAC & Care Leavers Strategy (+) = better than previous value; (-) = worse than previous value; (=) = same as previous value; (n/a) = not comparable to previous value

NB Missing definition = reported as missing to Police, includes missing no risk (absent) as well as missing

*** missing occurrences - Current value is total over 3 months, annual performance is total over 12 months**

Appendix 1 - Indicators updated from previous report (contd)

Nottinghamshire County Council

Core Data Set for CYP
Committee Performance for Quarter Three

Key Performance Indicator	Nottinghamshire							Comparator Data	
	Current Value		Best to be	Current Reporting Period	Previous Value	Previous Annual Performance		National Average	Statistical Neighbours
Percentage of school-age LAC with an up-to-date Personal Education Plan (L) (390/647)	60.3%	+	High	2021/22 Q3	53.0%	48.6% (2020/21)		–	–
Percentage of LAC who took up the opportunity to be consulted by their Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) prior to the LAC Review Meeting (L) (352/636)	55.3%	+	High	2021/22 Q3	42.5%	33.9% (2020/21)		–	–
Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for those adopted children, adjusted for foster carer adoptions (days)	77	+	Low	2021/22 Q3	349	363 days (2018-21)		285 days (2016-19)	360 days (2016-19)
Average time between a LA receiving court authority to place a child and deciding on a match to an adoptive family (days)	267	-	Low	2021/22 Q3	264	188days (2018-21)		134 days (2016-19)	162 days (2016-19)
Participation in education, employment and training (EET) aged 16-17	92.8%	-	High	2021/22 Q3	96.4%	95.7% (2020/21 Q4)		–	
Percentage not in education, employment or training (NEET) aged 16-17	2.3%	-	Low	2021/22 Q3	1.7%	1.7% (2020/21 Q4)		–	
Percentage whose destination is not known aged 16-17	4.9%	-	Low	2021/22 Q3	1.8%	2.6% (2020/21 Q4)		–	
Numbers of individual children and young people engaged in positive activities delivered by the Young People's Service (**cumulative; previous value is same quarter last year - previous is Q3 2019/20, Q3 2020/21 figures significantly affected by Covid-19 pandemic**)	7,965	-	High	2021/22 Q3	13,271	3,459 (2020/21)		–	
Numbers of children and young people accessing Outdoor and Environmental Education (**cumulative; previous value is same quarter last year - previous is Q3 2019/20, Q3 2020/21 figures significantly affected by Covid-19 pandemic**)	15,973	-	High	2021/22 Q3	23,865	4,593 (2020/21)		–	
Numbers exiting substance misuse treatment in a planned manner	93%	+	High	2021/22 Q2	89%	78% (2020/21)		79% (2020/21)	–
First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17 (per 100,000) (**cumulative; previous value is same quarter last year**)	52	-	Low	2021/22 Q2	39	147 (2020/21)		208 (2019/20)	–
Number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children Looked After	30	N/A	N/A	2021/22 Q3	26	17 (2020/21)		–	

For Nottinghamshire, the performance data available at the end of quarter 3 2021/22 is reported. The most recent data for national average and children's services statistical neighbours is reported, where available. Please note, comparisons may be indicative only, as the reporting periods are not necessarily aligned. Where Nottinghamshire performance meets or exceeds the latest national performance information, this is highlighted by the emboldened boxes.
Key: (p) = provisional data; (L) = reported against the outcomes in the LAC & Care Leavers Strategy (+) = better than previous value; (-) = worse than previous value; (=) = same as previous value; (n/a) = not comparable to previous value

Appendix 2 - Indicators that remain unchanged from previous report

Nottinghamshire County Council

Core Data Set for CYP
Committee Performance for Quarter Three

Key Performance Indicator	Nottinghamshire						Comparator Data	
	Current Value		Best to be	Current Reporting Period	Previous Value	Previous Annual Performance	National Average	Statistical Neighbours
Average Strengths and Difficulties Question (SDQ) Score per LAC (for at least 12 months) (L) (*Maximum possible score 40*)	**15.2**	+	Low	2018/19	15.9	15.9 (2017/18)	14.2 (2018/19)	14.2 (2018/19)
Percentage of LAC (for at least 12 months) with up to date immunisations (L) (589/592)	**99.0%**	+	High	2018/19	99%	98.9% (2017/18)	87% (2018/19)	85.2% (2018/19)
Percentage of LAC (for at least 12 months) who have had their teeth checked by a dentist (L) (460/592)	**78.0%**	-	High	2018/19	82%	82% (2017/18)	85% (2018/19)	80.1% (2018/19)
Percentage of LAC (for at least 12 months) who have had their annual health assessment (L) (581/592)	**98.0%**	+	High	2018/19	94%	93.9% (2017/18)	90% (2018/19)	88.7% (2018/19)
Percentage of LAC (for at least 12 months & under 5) whose development assessments are up to date (46/46)	**100.0%**	=	High	2018/19	100%	100% (2017/18)	88% (2018/19)	95.3% (2018/19)
Percentage of LAC (for at least 12 months) identified as having a substance misuse problem (L) (27/592)	**5.0%**	=	Low	2018/19	5%	5.0% (2017/18)	4% (2018/19)	3.0% (2018/19)
Percentage of LAC (for at least 12 months) convicted or subject to a final warning or reprimand (L) (0/592)	**0.0%**	=	Low	2018/19	0.0%	0.0% (2017/18)	3% (2018/19)	3.4% (2018/19)
Primary schools judged by Ofsted as having good or outstanding standards of behaviour	**93.4%**	+	High	As at Sept 2015	92.7%	n/a	94.3% (Sept 2015)	94.1% (Sept 2015)
Secondary schools judged by Ofsted as having good/outstanding standards of behaviour	**79.1%**	-	High	As at Sept 2015	83.3%	n/a	85.1% (Sept 2015)	84.2% (Sept 2015)
Percentage of children aged 0-4 living in low income areas registered with children's centres (snapshot)	**100.0%**	=	High	2018/19 Q1	100.0%	100% (2017/18 Q4)	–	
Percentage of children aged 0-4 living in low income areas seen at children's centres (**cumulative**)	**75.5%**	+	High	2018/19 Q1	72.4%	75.5% (2017/18 Q4)	–	
Breastfeeding prevalence at 6-8 weeks, incl. mixed feeding methods (Nottinghamshire NHS)	**43.4%**	=	High	2019/20 Q3	43.4%	41.9% (2018/19)	46.2% (2018/19)	45.7% (2018/19)
Percentage of LAC achieving expected standard at KS1 in Reading (L) (9/15)	**60.0%**	+	High	2018/19 academic	31.3%	31.3% (2017/18)	52.0% (2018/19)	–
Percentage of LAC achieving expected standard at KS1 in Writing (L) (7/15)	**46.7%**	+	High	2018/19 academic	25.0%	25.0% (2017/18)	43.0% (2018/19)	–
Percentage of LAC achieving expected standard at KS1 in Maths (L) (9/15)	**60.0%**	+	High	2018/19 academic	37.5%	37.5% (2017/18)	49.0% (2018/19)	–
Percentage of LAC achieving expected standard at KS2 in Reading (L) (17/33)	**51.5%**	+	High	2018/19 academic	46.9%	46.9% (2017/18)	49.0% (2018/19)	50.0% (2018/19)

For Nottinghamshire, the performance data available at the end of quarter 3 2021/22 is reported. The most recent data for national average and children's services statistical neighbours is reported, where available. Please note, comparisons may be indicative only, as the reporting periods are not necessarily aligned. Where Nottinghamshire performance meets or exceeds the latest national performance information, this is highlighted by the emboldened boxes.
Key: (p) = provisional data; (L) = reported against the outcomes in the LAC & Care Leavers Strategy (+) = better than previous value; (-) = worse than previous value; (=) = same as previous value; (n/a) = not comparable to previous value

Appendix 2 - Indicators that remain unchanged from previous report

Nottinghamshire County Council

Core Data Set for CYP
Committee Performance for Quarter Three

Key Performance Indicator	Nottinghamshire						Comparator Data	
	Current Value		Best to be	Current Reporting Period	Previous Value	Previous Annual Performance	National Average	Statistical Neighbours
Percentage of LAC achieving expected standard at KS2 in Writing (L) (19/33)	**57.6%**	+	High	2018/19 academic	37.5%	37.5% (2017/18)	50.0% (2018/19)	46.0% (2018/19)
Percentage of LAC achieving expected standard at KS2 in Maths (L) (13/33)	**39.4%**	+	High	2018/19 academic	37.5%	37.5% (2017/18)	51.0% (2018/19)	48.0% (2018/19)
Percentage of LAC achieving 9-5 grades in GCSE English & maths at KS4 (L) (8/71)	**11.3%**	+	High	2018/19 academic	6.8%	6.8% (2017/18)	7.3% (2018/19)	10.0% (2018/19)
Percentage of LAC achieving 9-4 grades in GCSE English & maths at KS4 (L) (17/71)	**23.9%**	+	High	2018/19 academic	22.7%	22.7% (2017/18)	18.0% (2018/19)	21.3% (2018/19)
Percentage of LAC classed as persistent absentees (L) (29/385)	**7.5%**	+	Low	2018/19 academic	8.9%	8.9% (2017/18)	10.9% (2018/19)	10.9% (2018/19)
Percentage of LAC permanently excluded (L) (0/365)	**0.0%**	=	Low	2017/18 academic	0.0%	0% (2016/17)	0.05% (2017/18)	–
Percentage of LAC with at least one fixed term exclusion (L) (38/365)	**10.4%**	+	Low	2017/18 academic	10.6%	10.6% (2016/17)	11.7% (2017/18)	11.0% (2017/18)
Number of primary schools in an Ofsted category (Inadequate)	**1**	+	Low	2019/20 Q4	2	n/a	_	_
Number of secondary schools in an Ofsted category (Inadequate)	**3**	-	Low	2019/20 Q4	2	n/a	_	_
Early years foundation stage attainment (Reaching a 'Good Level of Development' - at least expected in all early learning goals in all prime areas and in the specific areas of literacy and mathematics)	**70.6%**	+	High	2018/19 academic	69.7%	69.7%	71.8% (2018/19)	72.0% (2018/19)
Attainment gap for a good level of development in EYFSP between pupils taking free school meals and the rest	**23.0%**	-	Low	2018/19 academic	22.7%	22.7%	18.5% (2018/19)	–
Pupils achieving at least the expected standard in reading, writing & mathematics at age 11	**64.7%**	=	High	2018/19 academic	64.7%	64.7%	65% (2018/19)	64.7% (2018/19)
Attainment gap at age 11 between pupils taking free school meals and the rest (*FSM during past six years*)	**22.6%**	=	Low	2018/19 academic	22.6%	22.6%	19.0% (2018/19)	–
Achievement of 9-5 grades in GCSE English & maths	**45.4%**	-	High	2018/19 academic	45.6%	45.6%	43.4% (2018/19)	42.9% (2018/19)
Achievement of 9-4 grades in GCSE English & maths	**67.6%**	+	High	2018/19 academic	66.6%	66.6%	64.9% (2018/19)	65.1% (2018/19)
Attainment gap at age 16 between pupils taking free school meals and the rest (*FSM during past six years*) 9-5 grades in GCSE English & maths	**26.4%**	+	Low	2018/19 academic	28.2%	28.2%	24.5% (2018/19p)	–
Attainment gap at age 16 between pupils taking free school meals and the rest (*FSM during past six years*) 9-4 grades in GCSE English & maths	**26.7%**	+	Low	2018/19 academic	28.0%	28.0%	26.3% (2018/19p)	–
Percentage of A level entries at A*-B grades	**49.5%**	+	High	2018/19 academic	49.3%	49.3%	48.4% (2018/19)	–
Percentage of A level entries at A*-E grades	**98.2%**	-	High	2018/19 academic	98.5%	98.5%	97.2% (2018/19)	–
Percentage of young people qualified to Level 3 (2 passes at A-Level or equivalent) by age 19	**52.0%**	+	High	2018/19 academic	51.9%	51.9% (2017/18)	56.9% (2018/19)	55.4% (2018/19)
Percentage of young people who have not attained a Level 2 qualification in English & maths at age 16 who go on to attain Level 2 or higher in both by the end of the academic year in which they turn 19	**24.7%**	+	High	2018/19 academic	23.8%	23.8% (2017/18)	28.7% (2018/19)	27.4% (2018/19)
Percentage of overall absence in primary, secondary and special schools	**4.4%**	+	Low	2018/19 academic	4.5%	4.5% (2017/18)	4.7% (2018/19)	4.7% (2018/19)
Rate of permanent exclusions from school (primary, secondary and special schools)	**0.04%**	=	Low	2018/19 academic	0.04%	0.04% (2017/18)	0.10% (2018/19)	0.10% (2018/19)
Percentage of two year olds taking up their free entitlement	**68.4%**	-	High	Summer Term 2020	74.3%	74.3% (Summer 2019)	–	

For Nottinghamshire, the performance data available at the end of quarter 3 2021/22 is reported. The most recent data for national average and children's services statistical neighbours is reported, where available. Please note, comparisons may be indicative only, as the reporting periods are not necessarily aligned. Where Nottinghamshire performance meets or exceeds the latest national performance information, this is highlighted by the emboldened boxes.
Key: (p) = provisional data; (L) = reported against the outcomes in the LAC & Care Leavers Strategy (+) = better than previous value; (-) = worse than previous value; (=) = same as previous value; (n/a) = not comparable to previous value

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Children and Young People's Committee

7th March 2022

Agenda Item: 7

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION, LEARNING AND SKILLS

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS IN POST-16 EDUCATION AND EXCEPTIONAL PAYMENTS FOR SCHOOL CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR 2022/2023

Purpose of the Report

1. This report seeks approval to continue with the current arrangements for the 2022/23 financial year in respect of discretionary financial support for post-16 students following courses in educational institutions.

2. The report also seeks approval to continue to adopt an agreed scale of payments as a guide for school clothing and footwear allowances paid under the category of exceptional circumstances, subject to discretion.

Information

Financial support for students in post-16 education

3. Legislation introduced in March 1999 identified three categories of post-16 students:

   (i) school-based students

   (ii) students following courses of further education in colleges funded primarily by the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC), now the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as of 1 April 2017

   (iii) students following non-designated courses (not attracting support under the national system of student financial support) in higher education.

4. The legislation requires that local authorities should determine annually their arrangements in respect of their discretionary powers to assist students, who fall within the scope of these three categories.

5. The County Council's Formula Spending Share was reduced following the introduction of the legislation in March 1999, with the element identified to support students in further and higher education institutions (categories 2ii and 2iii above) transferred via the then Learning and Skills Council to further and higher education institutions, which now have responsibility for providing discretionary learner support to their students.

6. Local authorities continued to have a responsibility for providing exceptional financial support to post-16 students in schools, via Learner Support Funds allocated through the then Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA). However this responsibility ceased with the withdrawal of Learner Support Funds with effect from the end of the 2010/11 academic year (see **paragraph 11**). The County Council continues to have responsibility for home to school/college transport for post-16 students.

7. Local authorities retain the power to make discretionary awards to post-16 students in schools and to students in further and higher education, but the relevant regulations allow them to adopt a scheme under which no financial support would be offered to these students. Local authorities are not held to be fettering their discretionary powers as long as they make such an annual 'determination' before 31 March of the year preceding the financial year to which the determination applies.

8. Committee must therefore determine, before 31 March 2022 in respect of the financial year 2022/23, how to exercise the power granted by the regulations to make post-compulsory education awards. There are three options:

   (a) to make no such awards in any circumstances and not make any provision for considering applications; or

   (b) to make such awards generally and consider applications from all students; or

   (c) to make such awards only in respect of certain groups or categories of students.

9. The transfer of the functions of the County Council's Student Finance Service to the national provider Student Finance England with effect from 31 March 2011 meant that there was no longer an obligation upon the County Council to consider requests for funding from higher education students following non-designated courses, or in other specific circumstances, such as transfers of course or repeat periods of study.

10. Colleges of further education and universities receive funding to provide financial support for students on full-time courses. It is proposed that the County Council should continue with the existing arrangements, that is not to make any awards in any circumstances to further education (FE) and higher education (HE) students. This includes not making any provision for considering applications, other than for children and young people for whom the Council acts as corporate parent as described in **paragraph 12** below.

11. The national scheme of Education Maintenance Allowances closed to all students studying in England at the end of the 2011/12 academic year. The annual allocation of Learner Support Funds allocated to the County Council by the YPLA to assist students in post-16 education in schools was withdrawn with effect from the end of the 2010/11 academic year. These funds have been replaced by the 16-19 Bursary Fund, administered by schools,

colleges and training providers. There are also other sources of funding for post-16 students, such as the 16-18 Residential Bursary.

12. The Council reserves the right, in its role as the corporate parent for those children and young people within its care, to make an award to such children and young people where there are exceptional circumstances. Such an award will only be made when approved by the Service Director with responsibility for Children's Social Care.

Exceptional payments for school clothing and footwear 2022/23

13. School clothing allowances are discretionary and any allowance scheme must be funded by the County Council. Discretionary school clothing allowance has not been available since 2010/2011 for families living in Nottinghamshire. However, the County Council retains discretion to consider requests from families for support with clothing and footwear under exceptional circumstances. Discretionary payments of £241.25 were made during the 2021/2022 financial year (correct as at 3 February 2022).

14. The County Council must consider, under Section 510 of the Education Act 1996 and Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2002, requests for assistance from families in exceptional circumstances. This applies to all school age children and to families living outside the County if their children attend County schools.

15. Exceptional circumstances are defined as "families who have experienced and can demonstrate severe hardship which has resulted in the family being unable to afford the cost of school uniform and where this affects the ability of the children attending school". Included in this category would be families who have lost clothes in a fire, a flood, theft, have been made homeless or are fleeing domestic violence.

16. The Council includes information about the discretionary allowance on its public website https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/education/financial-support/financial-support
In addition, information is included in the Admissions to Schools: Guide for Parents in the section "school uniform".

17. In order to ensure that there is consistency and fairness in the amounts paid out under the category of exceptional circumstances, it is proposed to continue to adopt, as a guide only, a scale of payments up to a maximum allowance of £50 per qualifying pupil.

18. It is proposed to continue to apply the same scale of payments:

- 50% of the full allowance for primary age children
- 75% of the full allowance to other secondary school children.

19. This is a guide only, as the County Council must consider the circumstances of individual cases in order not to fetter its discretion.

Other Options Considered

20. It is open to the County Council not to make a determination in respect of their discretionary powers to assist post-16 students under the regulations. This would mean the Council would have to consider any applications for financial assistance on their individual merits or

through a specific scheme of support. In either case additional budget provision would have to be made available to underpin such arrangements but this is not regarded as a funding priority for the Council at the present time.

21. No other options have been considered in respect of school clothing and footwear allowances.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

22. As explained in the report, if it is to limit the use of its discretionary powers to offer support to students entering school sixth form, further education college courses or non-designated courses of higher education in the 2022/23 financial year, the County Council has to make an annual 'determination' by 31 March 2022 in accordance with the Local Education Authority (Post-Compulsory Education) Awards Regulations. In recent years the County Council has made such a determination each year, reflecting the fact that it no longer has any specific budget provision available for new cases that fall under these discretionary powers.

23. In line with the County Council's financial regulations, school clothing and footwear allowances are reviewed annually and as explained in this report it is proposed to continue to provide a fair and consistent approach for determining the amount of allowances paid under the exceptional circumstances category.

Statutory and Policy Implications

24. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Implications for Service Users

25. The proposals set out in this report limit the extent to which the County Council is able to assist with the costs students incur in following post-16 education courses. The arrangements do not, however, differ from those that currently apply and which have applied since 1999.

Financial Implications

26. The budget for Children and Families Services for 2022/23 anticipates that a determination will be made in respect of discretionary powers not to assist post-16 students as recommended in this report.

27. There may be a small amount of funding claimed to support families with the cost of school clothing and footwear under exceptional circumstances. Based on the claims made in 2021/22, the cost is likely to be under £500 (see **paragraph 13**).

Public Sector Equality Duty implications

28. The provision of clothing and footwear allowances enables the County Council to continue to consider requests for provision of clothing assistance support for pupils from financially disadvantaged backgrounds in exceptional cases.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That Committee:

1) approves the arrangements for the 2022/2023 financial year in respect of discretionary financial support for post-16 students following courses in educational institutions as set out in **paragraphs 10 - 12** of this report.

2) approves the following guide scale of payments for school clothing and footwear allowances granted under the category of exceptional circumstances, subject to consideration of the individual circumstances of each application:

- Primary age children to be eligible for 50% of the full allowance of £50 per qualifying pupil
- Secondary age children to be eligible for 75% of the full allowance of £50 per qualifying pupil.

Marion Clay
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Constitutional Comments (LPW 08/02/22)

29. The recommendations fall within the remit of the Children and Young People's Committee by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (MDN 04/02/22)

30. The budget for Children and Families Services for 2022/23 anticipates that a determination will be made in respect of discretionary powers not to assist post-16 students as recommended in this report.

31. There may be a small amount of funding claimed to support families with the cost of school clothing and footwear under exceptional circumstances. Based on the claims made in 2020/21, the cost is likely to be under £500 (see **paragraph 13**). There will be no specific budget for this but as the cost is minimal it can be contained within the overall Education, Learning & Skills budget of £6.6m.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Local Authority (Post-Compulsory Education Awards) Regulations 1999.

http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/education/financial-support/financial-support

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C1542

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Children and Young People's Committee

7th March 2022

Agenda Item: 8

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND SOCIAL WORK

PRINCIPAL CHILD AND FAMILY SOCIAL WORKER ANNUAL REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. The report outlines the key priorities for 2021 for Nottinghamshire County Council's Principal Child and Family Social Worker and the actions which have been taken to meet these objectives and goals for future work.

Information

2. The Munro Review of Child Protection (2011) recommended that each local authority designate a Principal Child and Family Social Worker to lead on developing professional practice and standards to ensure good outcomes for children and young people at an organisation and at a national level.

3. In 2018 the Department for Education in Working Together[1] determined that Principal Child and Family Social Workers have a key role in developing the practice and the practice methodology that underpins direct work with children and families and should support social workers, the local authority and partners to develop their assessment practice and decision-making skills, and the practice approach that underpins this.

4. The Local Government Association, Standards for employers of social workers in England[2] states that Principal Social Workers must understand and manage the organisational responsibility across all standards.

Recruitment and retention

5. Child and family social work is challenged by high turnover with the need for experienced workers outstripping supply. The Department for Education estimates that the average child and family social worker stays in the profession for seven years and will stay in a front-line child protection role for only three years.

[1] Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (publishing.service.gov.uk)
[2] The Standards for employers of social workers in England | Local Government Association

6. The most recent Department for Education Social Workforce Data indicates that there is an acute shortage of Experienced Children and Families Social Workers, there were 6,100 FTE children and family social worker vacancies on 30 September 2020, up from 6,000 at the same point in 2019[3] (The next annual publication will be end of February 2022). Despite national and regional challenges, Nottinghamshire County Council children's social care average vacancy and turnover rate for children and family social workers has remained lower than the national average. In February 2022 the turnover rate was 5% with 21 social work vacancies.

7. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker works closely with colleagues on a range of activities to improve the working experience and promoting recruitment and retention of social workers. This includes supporting social workers in training, newly recruited graduate social workers and social workers who are working for the department.

8. It is hoped that by increasing the number of good quality social work student placements newly qualified social workers will be encouraged to work for the Authority.

9. During the academic year 2020/21 Nottinghamshire Children's Services will have hosted a total of 54 placements for student social workers: 42 placements for students from local teaching partnership universities, and a further 12 placements for students on other training programmes (Step-up to Social Work, Open University). Although the number of student placements offered this academic year is lower than the previous year this is in line with 2018/19 which is the last year pre-pandemic.

10. In 2021, 33 of the 42 Newly Qualified Social Workers recruited had their final social work placement with the department (NB: this included 6 Step up to Social Work students).

11. In addition to supporting student social workers at local universities we also want to support existing Nottinghamshire County Council employees to gain a social work qualification and progress their career in the department.

12. In 2018 and 2019 we were able to join a local partnership (led by Nottingham City with Manchester Metropolitan University), which enabled 13 members of staff to complete a 'fast track' undergraduate degree and social work qualification, and then to move into a social worker post.

13. This programme was successful and enabled existing members of staff with aspirations for career development by getting a degree and social work qualification. Unfortunately, this option is no longer available for us as the lead local authority decided they could no longer support this programme and Manchester Metropolitan University decided not to offer this again.

14. In 2018 standards[4] for a three-year Social Work degree apprenticeship were agreed. Following this the Principal Child and Family Social Worker worked with colleagues at Nottingham Trent University to enable them to become an approved provider and in

[3] Children's social work workforce Children's social work workforce, Reporting Year 2020 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK (explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk)
[4] Social worker (integrated degree) / Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education

January 2021 our first cohort of four apprentice social workers commenced the programme.

15. Subject to final Committee approval it is proposed to have a rolling programme with five apprentice social worker posts offered each year for existing employees (permanent and temporary) offering them a route to get a degree and social work qualification. A report on this is also on the agenda of today's meeting. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker will be the lead officer for recruitment to these posts and will have oversight of the programme.

16. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker is the lead officer with oversight of the Council's engagement with the Step-up to Social Work programme[5]. This Department for Education sponsored 14-month, national fast track training programme is designed for people who already have a degree level qualification (minimum 2:1) plus experience working with children and families. Candidates are based within a local authority whilst completing their study for a post graduate diploma in social work.

17. In April 2021 cohort 6 of the Step-up programme ended with six of the seven students we hosted choosing to remain working with the Local Authority as newly qualified social workers. In January 2022, cohort 7 of the programme commenced and seven more Step-up students joined the Local Authority, who are due to complete their training in April 2023.

Assessed and Supported Year of Employment (ASYE)

18. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker is the designated ASYE co-ordinator and in this role has oversight of the programme.

19. The ASYE is a Department for Education sponsored, one year employer-led induction programme which develops the skills, knowledge and confidence of newly qualified social workers (NQSWs).

20. In 2021 32 Newly Qualified Social Workers completed the ASYE programme and there are currently 54 Newly Qualified Social Workers doing the programme.

21. In July 2021, Newly Qualified Social Workers completing the programme along with their line managers and mentors were invited to complete a national 360 analysis of the ASYE programme; the survey identified that every area of the programme was working well. The survey highlighted many strengths including NQSWs receiving regular reflective supervision as stated in the Local Government Association Employer Standards and that the outcomes for Newly Qualified Social Workers were quality assured to ensure they are accurate, valid, robust and sufficient.

22. Newly Qualified Social Workers, their line managers and mentors agreed that an area for development is the approach used for workload relief for Newly Qualified Social Workers participating in the ASYE programme.

23. Due to the Covid-19 public health emergency Newly Qualified social workers who completed the ASYE programme in 2021 received the whole of their ASYE training and

[5] Apply for Step Up to Social Work - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

most of their mentoring and supervision digitally and not face to face. Whilst social workers, mentors and managers have told us that they are satisfied with the provision made for them, there has also been a strong message that this cohort of newly qualified social workers did not get the experiences and opportunities to form relationships, learn from each other or learn from colleagues as their predecessors. In 2021 11 (18%) of Newly Qualified social workers (from a cohort of 62) left the department either before completing their ASYE programme or on completion of the programme which is much higher than the five who left the previous year. Exit interviews have not identified any specific patterns for leaving the job, reasons have included re-locating, wanting a job nearer to home, moving to a job in adult care, deciding to take a break and hoping to return at a later point. We have also recognised that more Newly Qualified Social Workers have needed additional time to complete their ASYE programme due to absence from work or due to needing additional support to gain skills and confidence.

24. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker will be working with colleagues who design and deliver the ASYE programme to ensure that we learn from the feedback and that we continue to develop the programme. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker is also leading on developing a post ASYE year of activities to try to bridge the gap from completing the ASYE programme to becoming an experienced social worker.

Social Work Career Progression

25. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker oversees the children's social work career progression process, which is aligned to the Department for Education Post Qualifying Standards for Social Workers[6].

26. With the support of their managers social workers who are able to demonstrate that they are working at the level of an 'experienced social worker' can attend a career progression panel and apply for progression to salary scale Band B.

27. In 2021 14 social workers attended the career progression panel and successfully demonstrated that they were working at the level of an experienced social worker. When compared with previous years we are aware that 2021 saw fewer social workers progress than in any other year (2018, 16 progressed, 2019, 19 progressed, 2020 25 progressed).

28. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker has explored the reasons for the decline in numbers and is assured that there are social workers who need to apply for progression, but due to the additional pressures experienced over the last 18 months have not felt able to dedicate time to complete this. New dates for progression panels have been set and managers have been provided with information to support their social workers to apply, and it is pleasing to know that so far in 2022 eight social workers have already applied for progression.

National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS)

29. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker has been our lead officer for engagement with the Department for Education in the design and delivery of the National Assessment

[6] Social work post-qualifying standards: knowledge and skills statements - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

and Accreditation System (NAAS) and in 2021 was an associate member of the national NAAS Standard Setting Panel.

30. The system was designed so that experienced childcare social workers and managers could demonstrate their proficiency by sitting a national accreditation assessment benchmarked against post qualifying standards for child and family practitioners and practice supervisors[7]. The Department for Education promoted NAAS as a vehicle for improving the quality of practice and the outcomes for vulnerable children.

31. The ambitious plan that up to 100 Nottinghamshire County Council Child Care Social Workers would complete the voluntary accreditation assessment in 2020 was disrupted by the Covid-19 public health emergency.

32. Prior to March 2020 17 of our social workers / managers had completed the NAAS. The accreditation system was then paused, only re-opening in July 2021. Between July and December 2021 18 more social workers / managers completed the accreditation until the assessment centres were again paused.

33. In January 2022 the Department for Education announced that the delivery model of assessment and accreditation will be changing and the current model, the National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS), will not be restarting.

34. The Department for Education remains committed to embedding social worker assessment and accreditation and will be working with the sector to design a more sustainable model.

35. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker will continue to be the lead officer engaging with the Department for Education as they design and roll out the revised assessment and accreditation delivery model.

Social Work England

36. On 2nd December 2019 Social Work England became the new professional regulator for social workers. Each year (by 30th November) all social workers must renew their registration with the professional regulator and complete a professional development portfolio.

37. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker has been the single point of contact with Social Work England and ensured that everyone had the information they needed to complete their re-registration.

38. Social Work England has confirmed that the re-registration process in 2021 worked well with fewer than 70 social workers nationally across all sectors being removed from the register.

39. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker will continue to be the single point of contact with Social Work England, working in partnership to ensure that our staff have the information and support they need to maintain their registration. The Principal Child and

[7] Social work post-qualifying standards: knowledge and skills statements - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Family Social Worker is also going to be the link officer with Social Work England for fitness to practice investigations.

Social Work Health Check

40. In December 2021 the Local Government Association invited all principal social workers to participate in their second national social work health check.[8]

41. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker and Adult Care Principal Social Worker completed the survey together and supported and encouraged all social workers in all teams and services in Nottinghamshire to complete the survey.

42. In February 2022 the Local Government Association provided a preliminary summary from the 2021 Nottinghamshire Children and Families Health Check which showed a 'good score/ outcome to be celebrated' against all 8 standards for employers of social workers. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker will complete a detailed analysis of the full health check.

Implementation of a strengths-based approach

43. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker is the lead officer with oversight of Schwartz Rounds, a structured forum where all staff in all roles come together regularly to discuss the emotional and social aspects of their work[9].

44. From March to July 2021, seven virtual Schwartz Rounds were arranged for colleagues in children's social care.

45. Following the positive evaluation of Schwartz Rounds it was agreed that colleagues from, adult social care would join the steering group and joint Schwartz Rounds would be held. From September to December 2021, four joint adult and children social care Schwartz Rounds were held with participants from both departments telling stories and contributing.

46. In response to specific needs there were three additional Schwartz rounds arranged for colleagues in children's social care, two for colleagues working in the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub who wanted to come together and share their reflections on their work and one for children and families social workers to offer an opportunity to reflect on how they were impacted (personally and professionally) by the murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson.

47. In 2022 the Principal Social Worker will continue to lead the Schwartz Steering group, involve as many practitioners as possible from different teams and services, establish a regular programme of rounds (some via MS Teams and where possible some in person meetings) and where needed use the model to respond to specific needs of the workforce.

48. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker is joining with peers to develop a regional community of practice, where we can share and learn from each other and maximise the impact of Schwartz Rounds for our workforce.

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[8] New social work health check 2020 | Local Government Association
[9] About Schwartz Rounds - Point of Care Foundation

49. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker has been the lead officer working with the Educational Psychology Service and the social work practice development leads to design and deliver a strengths-based training programme for social workers, with more than 450 practitioners booking places to attend.

50. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker worked with colleagues in the independent chair service to design and deliver briefings for social workers prior to the introduction of new strengths-based child protection conferences and strengths-based reviews with looked after children. These workshops were attended by more than 200 people.

51. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker and a practice development lead have continued to develop and embed Group Reflective Supervision in all social work teams. Feedback suggests that this has now been adopted as business as usual for some teams, with social workers and managers participating and learning together.

52. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker has been leading on the development of a set of strengths-based resources and tools for practitioners to use across the department to aid communication and engagement with children and young people.

53. In 2022 the Principal Child and Family Social Worker will continue to work with colleagues across the department to ensure that training and development opportunities continue to be provided and resources and tools are developed which support the strengths-based practice model.

Regional and National Principal Social Work Networks

54. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker is the chair of the Regional Principal Social Work Network. Meetings are held every month and provide an invaluable opportunity for peers from across the region to share examples of good practice and innovation.

55. The network is currently working with the Regional Improvement and Innovation Alliance on Department for Education funded ‘Build Back Better’ projects. A series of Principal Social Worker development sessions have been booked on themes which have relevance across the East Midlands.

56. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker will continue to work with colleagues across the region to develop and improve practice.

57. In 2021 the Chief Social Worker for England, and representatives from the Department for Education, Ofsted and Social Work England have hosted monthly meetings with members of the National Principal Social Work Network to share information regarding national social work reform and agendas for improvement. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker has attended and will continue to attend and participate in these meetings and ensure that information and learning is brought back to the Local Authority.

Adult and Child Care Principal Social Worker joint working

58. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker and the Adult Care Principal Social Worker work together on a number of projects to strengthen relationships and promote positive

social work practice in Nottinghamshire, including the Department for Health Workforce Race Equality Standards, a joint Social Work Health Check Action Plan, Schwartz Rounds and the education and training of social workers.

Other Options Considered

59. No other options have been considered.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

60. The report provides an opportunity for the Committee to consider any further actions arising from the information contained within the report.

Statutory and Policy Implications

61. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

62. The costs of all the initiatives are met from a combination of grant funding (DfE, What Works Network, Step-up to Social Work training), apprenticeship levy, existing staffing budget held by Children's Social Care teams, the existing budget held by the Learning & Organisational Development and Workforce Planning & Development Team.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That Committee considers whether there are any further actions it requires in relation to the information contained in the report.

Steve Edwards
Service Director, Youth, Families and Social Work

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (LW 10/0/22)

63. Children and Young People's Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of the report.

Financial Comments (LCD 14/02/22)

64. The costs of all the initiatives are met from a combination of grant funding from the (DfE £0.271m, What Works Network and Step-up to Social Work training), apprenticeship levy, the existing staffing budget £25m held by Children's Social Care teams, the existing budget held by the Corporate Learning & Organisational Development and Workforce Planning & Development Team £0.138m.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C1543

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Children and Young People's Committee

7th March 2022

Agenda Item: 9

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REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND SOCIAL WORK

SUPPORTING FAMILIES UPDATE AND CHANGES TO THE FAMILY SERVICE STAFFING ESTABLISHMENT

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide the Committee with an update on Nottinghamshire's performance on the Supporting Families Programme in 2021/22.

2. To provide an overview of the changes to the programme for 2022/25.

3. To seek approval to extend the temporary establishment of 1 FTE Supporting Families Project Officer (Grade 5) post to March 2025 and 0.5 FTE Reducing Parental Conflict Coordinator Development Worker (Grade 5) post until September 2022.

4. To seek approval to disestablish a vacant 0.5 FTE Early Help Case Manager (Band A) post and to establish a 0.5 FTE Senior Professional Practitioner (Band C) post in Family Service North.

Information

5. Nottinghamshire's Early Help services, including The Family Service and Children's Centre Service, have been delivering the government's Supporting (Nee Troubled) Families Programme since 2011. The programme incentivises engagement of families facing multiple presenting issues including unemployment, poor physical or mental health, involvement in children's social care, challenges with education and attendance, domestic violence or family members involved with the criminal justice system. The programme requires that services take a whole family approach to assessing and meeting the needs of each family member, with a focus on monitoring positive outcomes to ensure sustainability.

6. The programme has always had a 'payment by results' component, and as reported to Children and Young People's Committee in July 2021, Nottinghamshire was set a target to engage and make claims for successful outcomes for 903 families in 2021/22. Nottinghamshire is on track to exceed the target in 2021/22, bringing in a total revenue of £722,400, having achieved 88% of the target by the end of quarter 3. Each payment by

results claim made represents a family who have engaged with support from Early Help or Social Care services, and who have made significant and sustained progress in all areas of difficulty being faced by the household.

7. In addition to continuing to deliver 'business as usual' family support, this year Nottinghamshire's Family Service has been undertaking a 'Housing and Whole Family Working' pilot. The aim of this project has been to encourage housing organisations to take a whole family approach towards homelessness prevention, and to improve links between housing providers and children's services. Supporting Families Unit Leads have partnered with Mansfield and Newark & Sherwood District Councils, increasing workforce knowledge and skills and clear pathways to ensure early intervention and seamless support to families at risk of eviction.

8. Continued and increased funding for the Supporting Families Programme was announced at the Spending Review in November 2021. It was confirmed that the programme would run for another three years, and that there would be a 40% uplift in investment by 2024-25. Nottinghamshire has received notification of an increased allocation for 2022/23, with £2.52million being made available via a combination of Payment By Results and up-front funding. This is £560,000 more than in 2021/22.

9. Further information is expected in coming weeks about the conditions of the grant. The letter confirming the grant details that "*You can expect to see refreshed expectations around partner involvement and the role of the Supporting Families Co-ordinator and Senior Responsible Officer and strategies to reduce demand on children's social care through the increased investment in the programme*". Once the expectations that accompany the increased funding are known and understood, a paper proposing any required changes to the staffing structure will be provided as appropriate for approval.

Reducing Parental Conflict Workforce Development Grant

10. In 2018 the government launched the Reducing Parental Conflict Programme in association with the Supporting Families Programme. Reducing Parental Conflict aims to promote improved outcomes for children, with a focus on disadvantaged families. In July 2021 an 0.5 FTE Reducing Parental Conflict Development Worker (Grade 5) was established within the Family Service to deliver Reducing Parental Conflict awareness and practitioner training to a wide range of staff across the Early Help Partnership to embed the programme across the system. To date, the Development Worker and Relationships Really Matter Champions have delivered training to 849 practitioners across the partnership.

11. The Department for Work & Pensions has announced a three-year third phase of the Reducing Parental Conflict Programme running from April 2022, although full funding details are yet to be released.

Changes to Staffing Establishment to Ensure Continued Success of the Supporting Families Programme

12. In July 2021 a temporary 0.5 FTE Supporting Families Project Officer (Grade 5) was established to March 2022 to monitor outcomes for families supported through the programme and to maximise Nottinghamshire's income from payment by results. The

postholder has contributed to Nottinghamshire exceeding expectations for claims each quarter this year and the role will continue to be important as the target for payment by results increases. It is proposed that the temporary 1 FTE Supporting Families Project Officer (Grade 5) post is extended until March 2025.

13. It is proposed that the 0.5 FTE Reducing Parental Conflict Development Worker (Grade 5) post, currently established to March 2022, is extended for a further six months to enable continuity until full details of the fund are made available and a successful bid secured.

14. To ensure that there is a sufficient level of management oversight of work with families with complex needs, it is important that line manager to staff ratios in The Family Service are kept at a manageable level and in line with other teams in Children's Services. It is proposed that a vacant 0.5 FTE Early Help Case Manager post (Band A) in the North Family Service is disestablished and that a 0.5 FTE Senior Professional Practitioner (Band C) post be established. This will bring line manager to staff ratio back under the recommended maximum of 1:8.

Other Options Considered

15. No other options have been considered on this occasion.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

16. To inform the Committee of the performance of the Supporting Families Programme in 2021/22 and the expansion of the programme until 2025.

17. To seek Committee approval for changes to staffing establishment which will support the delivery of the Supporting Families and Reducing Parental Conflict Programme locally.

Statutory and Policy Implications

18. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

19. In 2022/23 the funding allocation from The Supporting Families Programme will increase by £560,000, however it is not yet understood what conditions will be attached to the grant which may dictate how it is spent.

20. The extension of the temporary establishment of 1 FTE Supporting Families Project Officer (Grade 5) post to March 2025 is £32,835 per annum. This will be funded through the increased Supporting Families Grant.

21. The cost of extending the 0.5 FTE Reducing Parental Conflict Coordinator (Grade 5) post for six months is £8,208. The post will be funded by £10,000 surplus in the 2021/22 workforce development grant, which the Department for Work & Pensions has agreed can be rolled over to 2022/23, and is ring fenced for spending on implementing Reducing Parental Conflict in Nottinghamshire.

22. The cost of establishing the 0.5 FTE Senior Professional Practitioner (Band C) post is £25,736. This cost will be covered by disestablishing a vacant 0.5 FTE Early Help Case Manager post (Band A) and containing the difference within existing budgets.

Human Resources Implications

23. The posts will be recruited to in accordance with the agreed Vacancy Control Process and recruitment and selection policies.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That Committee:

1) gives approval for a follow up report to be provided as appropriate in six months.

2) approves the extension of the temporary establishment of 1 FTE Supporting Families Project Officer (Grade 5) post to March 2025 and 0.5 FTE Reducing Parental Conflict Coordinator Development Worker (Grade 5) post until September 2022.

3) approves the disestablishment of a 0.5 FTE Early Help Case Manager (Band A) post and the establishment of a 0.5 FTE Senior Professional Practitioner (Band C) post in Family Service North.

Steve Edwards
Service Director, Youth, Families & Social Work

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (LW 22/02/22)

24. Children and Young People's Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of the report.

Financial Comments (CDS 22/02/22)

25. In 2022/23 the funding allocation from The Supporting Families Programme will increase by £560,000, however it is not yet understood what conditions will be attached to the grant which may dictate how it is spent.

26. The extension of the temporary establishment of 1 FTE Supporting Families Project Officer (Grade 5) post to March 2025 is £32,835 per annum. This will be funded through the increased Supporting Families Grant.

27. The cost of extending the 0.5 FTE Reducing Parental Conflict Coordinator (Grade 5) post for six months is £8,208. The post will be funded by £10,000 surplus in the 2021/22 workforce development grant, which the Department for Work & Pensions has agreed can be rolled over to 2022/23, and is ring fenced for spending on implementing Reducing Parental Conflict in Nottinghamshire.

28. The cost of establishing the 0.5 FTE Senior Professional Practitioner (Band C) post is £25,736. This cost will be covered by disestablishing a vacant 0.5 FTE Early Help Case Manager post (Band A) and containing the difference within existing budgets.

HR Comments (BC 08/02/22)

29. The staffing implications are contained within the body of the report. The 0.5 FTE Early Help Case Manager post, which this report proposes to disestablish, is vacant and therefore there are no redundancies arising from the proposal.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Supporting Families update and changes to the Family Service staffing establishment – report to Children & Young People's Committee on 26th July 2021

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C1547

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Children and Young People's Committee

7th March 2022

Agenda Item: 10

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND SOCIAL WORK

NEURODEVELOPMENTAL BEHAVIOURAL SUPPORT SERVICE

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval for the TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)) Transfer of Family Action Staff, who are engaged in delivering the activities prescribed in the contract to deliver the Small Steps Early Neurodevelopmental Behaviour Service, into the Local Authority Children's Services. TUPE Transfer will be undertaken on the basis of the eligible employees' existing terms and conditions.

2. This report also seeks approval to establish 3.0 fte Parent and Family Worker (Grade 5) posts, temporary until March 2024. These posts will be based within the existing Family and Parenting teams in the Family Service to provide additional capacity to deliver graduated family and parenting interventions for families where children present with behaviours indicative of a neurodevelopmental needs.

Information

Background

3. At the January 2022 meeting of Children and Young People's Committee approval was given for Local Authority Children's Services to enter into a formal arrangement with the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group to plan for and take on the delivery of the early neurodevelopmental behaviour support service for children aged 0-18 in Nottinghamshire (excluding Bassetlaw which currently has separate arrangements). The service is currently delivered by Family Action who, as reported in the report to Committee in January, have been struggling to successfully scale up the service to meet demand. This has resulted in a backlog and a significant waiting list.

4. In the January 2022 Committee report it was agreed that officers would provide an update in relation to proposed structures and TUPE transfer implications having had time to consult with Family Action in more detail, and with our own Local Authority corporate HR and Legal Services.

5. Corporate legal and HR advice has confirmed that TUPE transfer will apply for staff within Family Action whose job role delivers the activities outlined within Family Action's contract with the clinical commissioning group to deliver an early neurodevelopmental behaviour service. Children's services have begun initial discussions with Family Action to work through the detail and any TUPE transfer implications, taking into account their current staffing structure and any contractual considerations that we need to be aware of for relevant or eligible Family Action employees transferring to the County Council.

6. Based on information provided to the Local Authority's Children's Services by the current service provider, it is now clear that their team and service structure includes a wider range of roles and grades than initially anticipated. These include roles at Senior Practitioner level, Family Support and administration levels. There is no natural alignment with the established team and role structure in place within the Local Authority Early Help services. In addition, at this very early stage, Local Authority Children's Services have not been able to assess whether the current Small Steps team structure in place to deliver the early neurodevelopmental behaviour service is fit for purpose.

7. Transferring relevant/eligible Family Action employees into the Local Authority and onto County Council terms and conditions immediately may also be risky and open to challenge if we are not able to demonstrate that there is a robust economic, technical and organisational rationale for doing so. Therefore, following advice from corporate HR and Legal Services, this report seeks approval that TUPE transfer of eligible Family Action employees will be on the basis of their existing terms and conditions. At the point of transfer, relevant/eligible employees will remain on their existing Family Action Job Descriptions.

8. Children's Services believe that there will be opportunities following TUPE transfer to achieve additional operational and structural integration with Local Authority structures, terms and conditions and job roles once there has been time to properly assess the team structure inherited from Family Action. This includes the potential for further integration with the existing locality Early Help team structures and increased alignment with the graduated family and parenting interventions offer. Following the transfer of the service in June 2022, Children's Services will undertake a review of the team structure inherited from Family Action to determine whether it is fit for purpose to deliver the early neurodevelopmental behaviour service. Within 3-6 months of transfer it is anticipated that there will be a further report as appropriate with recommendations for restructuring the team.

9. Work will begin immediately with Family Action, Public Health, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group and other stakeholders to review the current systems and processes for delivering the early neurodevelopmental behaviour service with the intention to identify efficiencies, opportunities for integration with wider Early Help services and areas which can be streamlined.

10. The report also seeks to establish 3 fte Parent and Family Worker (Grade 5) posts, temporary until March 2024. In view of the very significant challenges facing the existing service provider, both the Local Authority and the Clinical Commissioning Group recognise that additional capacity will be required for a period of up to 21 months, until March 2024, to address the backlog in referrals and current waiting times for families. The current provider is using agency staff funded through some additional non-recurrent

funding from the Clinical Commissioning Group. Establishing temporary posts will be less costly than using agency staff and will provide some necessary stability and continuity for the service and for families. The Clinical Commissioning Group has indicated that the arrangement for additional non-recurrent funding to increase capacity can continue once the service transfers to the Local Authority and it is on this basis that the posts will be funded.

11. The new temporary Parent and Family Worker posts will be based within the existing locality Family and Parenting teams for the purpose of delivering evidence-informed workshops and programmes for families where children are referred because of a concern about a possible neurodevelopmental behaviour need. This will increase capacity for families on the Small Steps waiting list to access the wider graduated parenting and family intervention offer. The projected costs of these temporary posts from June 2022 to March 2024 will be £184,000 and recruiting to the posts will be conditional on Children's Services securing non-recurrent funding from the Clinical Commissioning Group so that there are no additional costs to the Local Authority.

12. Locating an early neurodevelopmental behaviour service within the Council's Early Help offer will bring a number of benefits for families. There is already substantial experience and expertise across Children's Centre Services and the Family Service of offering a range of evidence informed parenting interventions including for families where there are suspected, undiagnosed and/or diagnosed neurodevelopmental behaviour needs. Families will have more immediate access to a wider range of interventions available through the graduated family and parenting offer and the Children's Centres menu of interventions.

Other Options Considered

13. Consideration was given to seeking Committee approval to establish a revised team structure in advance of the TUPE transfer of relevant/eligible Family Action staff. However, following advice from corporate Legal and HR colleagues it was concluded that more time was needed to properly assess whether the existing team structure is fit for purpose and that this will be best achieved following the TUPE transfer to the Local Authority.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

14. The integration of the Early Neurodevelopmental Behaviour Support Service with the Council's Early Help Services will be beneficial for parents and families.

Statutory and Policy Implications

15. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

16. The total cost of the early neurodevelopmental behaviour service is £500,000 and will be fully covered by the Clinical Commissioning Group.

17. The establishment of 3 FTE Parent and Family Worker (Grade 5) posts to March 2024 are projected to cost £184,000 and will be covered through additional temporary non-recurrent funding from the Clinical Commissioning Group. As a result, there would be no additional financial obligation on the Local Authority.

Human Resources Implications

18. Legal and HR advice has confirmed that TUPE transfer will apply for staff within Family Action whose job role delivers the activities outlined within their contract with the Clinical Commissioning Group to deliver a neurodevelopmental behaviour service. The Local Authority has begun early discussions with Family Action to work through the detail and understand any implications.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That Committee:

1) gives approval for the TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)) Transfer of relevant/eligible Family Action staff, who are engaged in delivering the activities prescribed in the contract to deliver the Small Steps Early Neurodevelopmental Behaviour Service, into the Local Authority Children's Services

2) approves the establishment of 3.0 fte Parent and Family Worker (Grade 5) posts, temporary until March 2024 to be based within the existing Family and Parenting teams in the Family Service to provide additional capacity to deliver parenting interventions for families where children present with neurodevelopmental behaviour needs.

Laurence Jones
Service Director Commissioning and Resources

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Constitutional Comments (LW 22/02/22)

19. Children and Young People's Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of the report.

Financial Comments (NC 25/02/22)

20. The agreed total value of the early neurodevelopmental behaviour service is £507,000 and annual uplifts will apply in line with NHSE planning guidance.

21. The net Family Service budget (as reported in January) is £2,469,450.

22. The projected costs of the temporary posts from June 2022 to March 2024 is expected to be £184,000 and recruiting to the posts will be conditional on Children's Services securing non-recurrent funding from the Clinical Commissioning Group so that there are no additional costs to the Local Authority.

23. Formal approval of the transfer of the service is required. As part of the service transfer, Legal and HR advice has confirmed TUPE transfer will apply for staff within Family Action whose job role delivers the activities outlined within their contract with the Clinical Commissioning Group to deliver a neurodevelopmental behaviour service.

23. Financial risks to the Local Authority are if the value of the contract does not fund the costs associated with it. For example, covering the costs associated with TUPE such as redundancy, staffing and ICT costs. Should these costs not be met within the value of the contract the Local Authority would fund the shortfall.

24. Due diligence needs to continue in the run up to contract signing and transfer to reduce the financial risks to the Local Authority.

HR Comments (BC 23/02/22)

25. The staffing implications are contained within the body of the report. The transfer of staff from Family Action will be in accordance with TUPE regulations and the department will ensure that appropriate engagement and consultation with this staff group occurs.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Concerning Behaviours Multi Agency Pathway Webpage

Neurodevelopmental Behaviour Support Service – report to Children & Young People's Committee on 17th January 2022

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C1553

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Children and Young People's Committee

7th March 2022

Agenda Item: 11

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, TRANSFORMATION AND IMPROVEMENT

WHOLE FAMILY SAFEGUARDING PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update Members on progress made in the Whole Family Safeguarding Programme.

2. The report also seeks approval of the following:

   a) to extend the social work apprenticeship programme by establishing the following posts:

      - 10 FTE Social Work Apprentices (Hay Band A)

   b) to establish a multi-disciplinary safeguarding team in Newark and Sherwood

   c) to develop an edge of care team for vulnerable adolescents by establishing the following posts:

      - 0.5 FTE Team Manager (Hay Band D)
      - 2 FTE Parent & Family Workers (NJE Grade 5)
      - 3 FTE Youth Workers (JNC Qualified point 20-23)

   d) to develop a kinship support service by establishing the following posts:

      - 1 FTE Team Manager (Hay Band D)
      - 2 FTE Social Workers (Hay Band B)
      - 1 FTE Kinship Practitioner (NJE Grade 5)
      - 0.5 FTE Social Work Support Officer

   e) to transfer the following posts from the Transformation and Change team to the Service Improvement Group:

      - 2 FTE Project Managers

- 3 FTE Project Officers.

Information

3. In December 2021 a report was brought to Children & Young People's Committee to describe the Whole Family Safeguarding programme vision, key aims, expected benefits, and resource requirements to support the delivery of the programme. To recap, the broad aims of the programme are to achieve the following:

   - children will experience stability and consistent relationships, to enable them to feel safe and to thrive
   - families will be provided help and support from a range of professionals in integrated teams that meet parental needs as well as children's, so that more children and young people can live safely at home and in their communities
   - friends and family and foster carers will experience better training and support so that more children who are in the care of the Local Authority will experience living in homes that are family-based and local
   - teenagers and their families will receive more tailored support that recognises the risks young people may experience from outside of the family home, so that more young people are able to stay living in their community
   - those young people that do need residential care will live locally and receive care and support that effectively meets their diverse needs as individuals
   - having practitioners with different skills and expertise in teams working in a strengths-based way will enable a refocussing of the role of social workers and improve the quality of holistic support provided to families.

4. This report describes the progress that has been made since December in developing a range of proposals to enable these outcomes to be achieved, and thus seeks approval to establish a range of design sites to trial new ways of working to better support vulnerable children and families.

Stable Workforce

<u>Social Work Apprenticeship Expansion Programme</u>

5. In November 2020, Children and Young People's Committee approved the introduction of a three-year apprenticeship programme for child and family social workers. This recognised that apprenticeships offer the opportunity for people who often have extensive experience of working with vulnerable children and who have roots in Nottinghamshire, to develop a career in social work. The first cohort of four apprentices started in January 2021 and are progressing well, in placements within frontline child protection teams.

6. It is now proposed that the scheme is expanded to establish two further cohorts of apprentices, with five starting in September, and a further five the following year. This would therefore establish a rolling apprenticeship programme which upon qualification would lead to an increase in the number of qualified social workers who will graduate each year, to support with succession planning and recruitment. Training costs for the apprenticeships will be met through the apprenticeship levy. This scheme would form part

of the Skills Development and Employment Opportunities Strategy, approved by December's Personnel Committee.

7. As with the current programme, each Social Work Apprentice will replace an agency Social Work Assistant to develop a more sustainable operating model. In the longer-term agency Social Workers will be replaced by the newly-qualified Social Workers exiting the apprenticeship programme.

8. In order to deliver this sustainable model five apprentices will be recruited in 2022/23, with a further five recruited in 2023/24. The three-year apprenticeships will provide qualified Social Workers from 2025/26 onwards.

Posts to be established:

Year	Post	Grade/Band	Cost including running expenses	FTE	Total cost
2022/23	Social Work Apprentice	Hay Band A	£39,079	5	£195,396
2023/24	Social Work Apprentice	Hay Band A	£39,079	5	£195,396
					£390,790

Strengths-based Practice

Older Adolescents on the Edge of Care

9. 37% of all children becoming looked after in 2020/21 were aged between 14 and 17 compared with 24% in 2018/19. For some of these young people, coming into care has been an unsuccessful very high-cost option. Characteristics of the adolescents for whom care was not successful include:

- involvement in crime
- involvement in gangs
- adolescents who were previously regularly missing from home
- beyond parental control - involved in risk-taking behaviour
- isolated from their peer group
- not in school, college, training, or employment.

10. For many of this group of adolescents, patterns of risk-taking behaviour, missing episodes, involvement in crime and gangs continue and sometimes worsen while in care. Some adolescents have never accepted care as an option and remained in the community. For these adolescents there is the opportunity for an alternative strength-based approach.

11. In order to better meet these young people's needs, it is proposed to establish a dedicated and responsive multi-disciplinary team to work intensively with these young people, by developing creative support options that build on a young person's strengths and address risks, whilst also providing intensive support to the young person's parents/carers. There is research evidence from a number of local authorities that demonstrates that such an approach both improves young people's outcomes but also reduces the need to come into

care. Modelling indicates that by reducing the need for 12 to 16 young people to come into care, financial costs of between £1.5m and £1.8m would be avoided by 2025/26.

12. It is proposed that the following posts are established to form the edge of care team:

Post	Grade/Band	Cost	FTE	Total cost
Team Manager	Hay Band D	£55,217	0.5	£27,609
Youth Worker	JNC Qualified point 20-23	£41,594	3	£124,781
Parent and Family Worker	NJE Grade 5	£32,835	2	£65,670
				£218,060

13. It is also proposed that there is a family/activity budget of £1,000 per young person, totalling £18,000 and running expenses budget of £10,940. Therefore a total cost of £247,000.

14. The impact of the design site will be evaluated using the What Works Centre for Children's Social Care "Practice in Need of Emerging Evidence" approach. Learning from the design site will inform the ongoing development of the approach.

Multi-disciplinary Safeguarding Teams

15. The second design site proposed to be established is the implementation of a multi-disciplinary team approach to supporting children in need of help and protection. The approach is drawn from the national Family Safeguarding model introduced by Hertfordshire County Council, and involves professionals from adult substance misuse, domestic abuse, and adult mental health working together with children's social workers, to provide holistic support to children and young people at risk of harm in the family home.

16. The new model will be based on the following commitments. There will be:

- a person-centred approach which will be guided by the voice of the child
- a shared vision and plan for working with children and families
- equal recognition and respect of everyone's role
- retention of specialist roles, knowledge and skills
- information sharing between agencies
- a model of group supervision.

17. Other local authorities who have successfully implemented a similar model have seen benefits in terms of:

- improved engagement of families
- improved morale of staff
- reduction in Child Protection Plans
- reduction in children coming to care
- cost avoidance.

18. A design site will be set up as a proof of concept for the approach, and this will be located in Newark and Sherwood district, in the Newark District Child Protection Team, with a

planned go live date of April 2022. Following the evaluation of the design site, recommendations will be developed for a phased roll out of the approach across the County.

19. The new approach can be delivered within existing staffing resources.

Kinship Support Service

20. A key ambition of the Whole Family Safeguarding programme is to ensure that children and young people who need to be looked after should live in a family home wherever possible, ideally within their wider family group or by a close family friend. This is sometimes referred to as kinship care. Whilst some kinship carers in Nottinghamshire receive excellent quality support, this is not consistently the case, with prospective adopters and foster carers currently able to access a greater level of support. The proposal therefore is to develop a Kinship Support Service which will provide tailored assessments, training and support to kinship families, enabling the Local Authority to better meet statutory obligations around special guardianship orders.

21. This approach will:

- improve the assessment, oversight and support for children in care placed with family members
- ensure that sufficient support is available to kinship carers (pre- & post-order), comparable to that currently offered to foster carers & adopters, and in line with the 2005 Special Guardianship Regulations
- support more people to become kinship carers, including foster carers with existing long-term placements and Family & Friends foster carers.

22. It is therefore proposed that the following structure is established:

Post	Grade/Band	Cost	Current FTE	Revised FTE	New posts	Total cost
Team Manager	Hay Band D	£60,018	0	1	1	£60,018
Social Worker	Hay Band B	£49,179	0	2	2	£98,358
Kinship Practitioner	NJE Grade 5	£35,691	1	2	1	£35,691
Financial Responsibility Worker[1]	NJE Grade 5	£35,691	2.5	2.5	0	£0
Social Work Support Officer	NJE Grade 4	£30,284	0	0.5	0.5	£15,142
						£209,209

23. This approach has the potential to avoid cost through the reduction in numbers of children being placed in external foster care or residential care, modelled at £2.6m over the period to 2025/26.

[1] 2.5 existing FRW posts will be transferred from the Family Service

Service improvement resource in the Children & Families Department

24. A report was taken to the Improvement & Change Sub-Committee in March 2021 which set out the ambition for project professionals to be allocated directly to departments, in order that core service improvement could continue to be delivered alongside the corporate-led cross-cutting programmes such a Whole Family Safeguarding.

25. The agreed allocation was for two Project Managers and three Project Officers to support departmental service improvement priorities. To date, there has been insufficient capacity within the Transformation and Change Group to fulfil the commitment for there to be service improvement capacity available to the department to support improvement activity such as the implementation of the Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy. Given that the policy landscape around children's services is developing at pace, with the implications of the levelling up agenda, alongside the forthcoming publications of the national reviews of children's social care and support for special educational needs and disabilities, it is necessary to ensure that the department has the capacity to be responsive to such changes. As such it is proposed that these five posts are transferred from the Transformation and Change Group to the Service Improvement Group.

26. Posts to be established:

Post	Grade/Band	Cost	FTE	Total cost
Project Manager	Hay Band C	£52,591	2	£105,182
Project Officer	Hay Band A	£40,212	3	£120,636
				£225,818

Other Options Considered

27. No other options have been considered.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

28. To enable the Council to drive forward the Whole Family Safeguarding Programme at pace whilst continuing to deliver core service improvement activity in the Children and Families department.

Statutory and Policy Implications

29. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

30. The total cost of the Social Work Apprentices, edge of care team, multi-disciplinary team and kinship support service is £846,999. This will be contained within the 2022/23 Youth, Families and Social Work budget of £51.845m

31. Funding for the service improvement posts totalling £225,818 will met by the Strategic Development Fund in 2022/23.

Human Resources Implications

32. Posts to be established are listed in **paragraph 2**, and the detail of the posts is contained within the body of the report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That Committee:

1) approves the extension of the social work apprenticeship programme by establishing the following posts:

- 10 FTE Social Work Apprentices (Hay Band A)

2) approves the establishment of a multi-disciplinary safeguarding team in Newark and Sherwood

3) approves the development of an edge of care team for vulnerable adolescents by establishing the following posts:

- 0.5 FTE Team Manager (Hay Band D)
- 2 FTE Parent & Family Workers (NJE Grade 5)
- 3 FTE Youth Workers (JNC Qualified point 20-23)

4) approves the development of a kinship support service by establishing the following posts:

- 1 FTE Team Manager (Hay Band D)
- 2 FTE Social Workers (Hay Band B)
- 1 FTE Kinship Practitioner (NJE Grade 5)
- 0.5 FTE Social Work Support Officer (NJE grade 4)

5) approves the transfer of the following posts from the Transformation and Change team to the Service Improvement Group:

- 2 FTE Project Managers (Hay Band C)
- 3 FTE Project Officers (Hay Band A).

Lucy Peel
Service Director, Transformation & Improvement

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Constitutional Comments (LW 15/02/22)

33. Children and Young People's Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of the report.

Financial Comments (LCD 17/02/22)

34. The total cost of the Social Work Apprentices, edge of care team, multi-disciplinary team and kinship support service is £846,999. This will be contained within the 2022/23 Youth, Families and Social Work budget of £51.845m.

35. Funding for the service improvement posts totalling £225,818 will met by the Strategic Development Fund in 2022/23.

HR Comments (BC 23/02/22)

36. The staffing implications are contained within the body of the report. Posts will be appointed to in line with the agreed employment and recruitment procedures.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Delivering the Whole Family Safeguarding Programme – report to Children & Young People's Committee on 13th December 2021

Changes to the staffing establishment in Children's Social Care to establish a Social Work Apprenticeship Programme – report to Children & Young People's Committee on 30th November 2020

Nottinghamshire County Council Skills Development and Employment Opportunities Strategy – report to Personnel Committee on 15th December 2021

Transformation and Change, and Performance, Intelligence & Policy Teams restructure – report to Improvement and Change Sub-Committee on 22nd March 2021

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C1554

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Children and Young People's Committee

7th March 2022

Agenda Item: 12

REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND SOCIAL WORK

CHANGES TO THE STAFFING ESTABLISHMENT IN THE MULTI-AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB AND THE EARLY HELP UNIT

Purpose of the Report

1. To give Committee a progress update on improvement work in the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and Early Help Unit.

2. To seek approval for the extension of the following temporary posts for the period of one year:

   - 6 FTE Social Workers (Hay Band B)
   - 2 FTE Advanced Practitioners (Hay Band C)
   - 3 FTE Early Help Officers (Hay Band A)
   - 1 FTE Business Systems Analyst (Hay Band C)
   - 1 FTE Business Intelligence Report Developer (Hay Band B).

3. To seek approval for the establishment of the following temporary posts for the period of one year:

   - 2 FTE Advanced Practitioners (Hay Band C)
   - 2 FTE Senior Early Help Officers (subject to job evaluation).

4. To seek approval for an increase in the establishment of the Early Help Unit Manager (Hay Band D) role from 0.8 FTE to 1 FTE.

Information

Background

5. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub was established by Nottinghamshire County Council in 2012 and acts as the front door for new safeguarding concerns about vulnerable children and adults. It brings together representatives from Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, Police and Health, co-located in one place to receive and respond to safeguarding concerns with virtual links to other services, such as the Probation Trust and District

Councils. Since the start of the pandemic the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub has been working in a hybrid model, with some staff home based and the remainder working together from the Piazza.

6. As reported to Children and Young People's Committee in September 2021, enquiries to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub have grown significantly since its establishment in 2012, with the number of Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub enquiries relating to children increasing by an average of 15% per annum from just under 20,000 in 2015/16 to almost 35,000 in 2020/21. Over the last year, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has placed significant pressures on staff within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, not solely due to the volume of enquiries received, but also due to the following factors:

- the stress of working in such an intense role where pressure does not often alleviate
- where there is limited job satisfaction as it can be difficult to see the difference that you make
- where it is difficult to prioritise continuing professional development through training and development opportunities due to the operational pressures of the role.

7. The Early Help Unit was also established in 2012 and acts as a "front door" for Early Help Services in Nottinghamshire. Early Help Officers have several responsibilities:

- successfully providing advice and guidance to other agencies, often preventing referrals to early help or statutory services
- signposting referrers to other services. Advice and guidance are provided to professionals where the needs of a family would be better met by another Nottinghamshire County Council or public sector service, or by a third sector or community organisation
- managing referrals into The Family Service (early help case management, family and parenting teams and education enforcement services), Youth Justice Service (crime prevention) and Children's Centre Services
- responding to Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub enquiries which have been stepped down to the Early Help Unit where Pathway to Provision Tier 4 threshold is not met
- operating a duty phone line, taking calls from members of the public (usually parent/carers) in need of Early Help Services. Often issues can be resolved on the phone with the caller receiving advice and signposting to appropriate resources that will help address their enquiry. Where the threshold is met for the Council's Early Help Services then a self-referral will be taken over the phone and passed to the appropriate team.

8. Like the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, there has been a significant, sustained increase in demand on the Early Help Unit since it was established in 2012. The increase was more marked across 2020/2021 following schools reopening after the first Covid-19 lockdown, with an increase in referrals of above 50% since 2020/2021.

9. In September 2021, Children and Young People's Committee agreed the following additional staffing capacity for both the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and Early Help Unit, to enable the services to effectively respond to the increase in enquiries being received, and to create development capacity required to support the services to develop and transform into a most sustainable operating model:

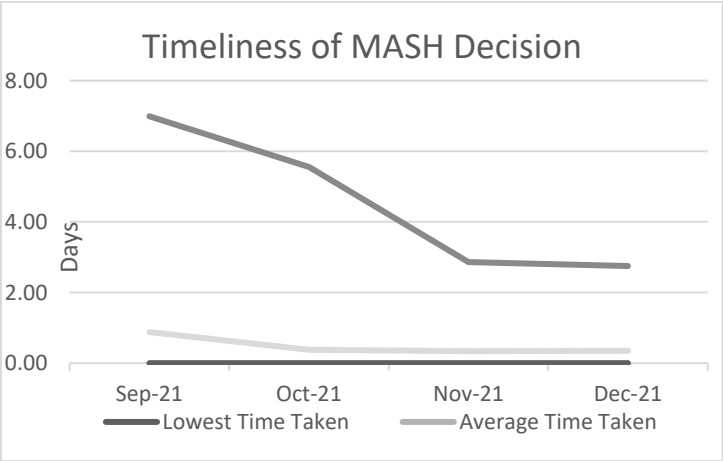
- 1 FTE Children's Services Manager (Front Door Development) (Hay Band E)
- 2 FTE Children's Social Work Team Managers (Hay Band D)
- 6 FTE Social Workers (Hay Band B)
- 2 FTE Advanced Practitioners (Hay Band C)
- *3 FTE Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub Officers (NJE 4)*
- 3 FTE Early Help Officers (Hay Band C)
- 1 FTE Project Manager (Hay Band C)
- *1 FTE Project Officer (Hay Band A)*
- 1 FTE Business Systems Analyst (Hay Band C)
- *1 FTE Business Intelligence Report Developer (Hay Band B)*

10. It was noted that the capacity would be required for an initial six months, with the potential need to extend some posts further. All posts were recruited to with the exception of those highlighted in italics, where the short-term nature of the contract led to a lack of applicants. One team manager and 6 social workers were recruited as agency workers and the remainder as Council employees.

Impact of the additional capacity

11. In terms of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, the additional capacity has enabled the following progress to be made:

- a pod model was introduced in October 2019, involving a team manager and team of social workers overseeing Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub enquiries, with different pods rota'd on duty at different times, enabling the remaining pods to focus on information sharing and decision making. This model enables a much more streamlined approach to receiving and responding to safeguarding enquiries, with team managers having clearer oversight and accountability. The pod model has led to a significant and sustained improvement in the timeliness with which Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub enquiries are being progressed as demonstrated below:



- focussed work is taking place with the police to improve the quality of enquiries they are making to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and reduce the number of non-safeguarding enquiries. This includes joint triaging of enquiries and training for staff

- a regular Wednesday “team time” session has been introduced for Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub staff, enabling focussed time for continuing professional development. This has contributed to an improvement in staff morale and wellbeing
- a social work consultation and advice line was introduced at the beginning of February. This is intended to support professionals with concerns about a child to think through the range of support options available and determine the most appropriate response, and whether this is through Early Help or Children’s Social Care
- a threshold panel has been introduced within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, to support reflective learning around decision making and ensure that managers feel supported with holding risk.

12. In terms of the Early Help Unit, the additional capacity created has enabled a backlog of referrals that had developed due to the sustained increase in referrals to be progressed, with new referrals now able to be assessed and progressed within 2½ weeks.

13. Further work that has been initiated to generate further improvements, but which has not yet been implemented, includes simplifying the workflow used within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub case recording system (Mosaic), integrating the online referral forms used for both the Early Help Unit and the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, and improving the pathway between the Customer Services Centre, Early Help Unit and Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub.

Practice Diagnostic

14. In parallel with the internal improvement work, a two-day practice diagnostic of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub was completed by Essex Sector Led Improvement Partnership in November 2021. Essex is a Partner in Practice authority designated by the Department for Education, providing sector-led improvement to a range of authorities across the country. The diagnostic assessed the quality of practice within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, considered strengths and areas for development. They concluded that the practice in the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub was sound, with no areas that caused concerns. They also found that staff were able to articulate the strengths-based model of practice and that this was evident in practice, that the introduction of the pod model was felt to have created consistency in threshold decision-making, improved accountability and management oversight, and that senior managers were sighted on pressure in the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and being responsive to try and reduce pressure and ensure an effective, timely response to need.

15. The diagnostic identified some challenges, which they recognised were already known to Nottinghamshire, including:

- an increase in referrals to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, with significantly fewer referrals being made to the Early Help Unit
- within this, an increase in non-safeguarding referrals and poor quality referrals
- families presenting with more complex needs
- pressure on practitioners in the wider partnership to refer to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
- further work to do to develop practitioners in the wider partnership’s understanding of safeguarding.

16. The diagnostic confirmed the direction of travel already agreed in principle in Nottinghamshire, which is to move to a multi-agency, needs-led front door incorporating both early help and social care referrals, alongside providing a more focussed and coherent approach to supporting partner agencies to develop their confidence in responding to families with emerging needs.

Capacity requirements moving forwards

17. There is a need to maintain operationality stability within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and Early Help Unit to continue to respond effectively during a period of uncertainty in respect of the ongoing impact of the pandemic. As such, it is proposed that the following posts that were originally established on a temporary basis for six months, are extended for a further year:

- 6 FTE Social Workers (Hay Band B)
- 2 FTE Advanced Practitioners (Hay Band C)
- 3 FTE Early Help Officers (Hay Band A).

18. In addition, it has been identified that the following posts are now required for a period of one year, rather than the more senior posts that were originally necessary to implement the changes outlined at **paragraph 9**:

- 2 FTE Advanced Practitioners (Hay Band C)
- 2 FTE Senior Early Help Officers (subject to job evaluation).

19. Given the growth in capacity within the Early Help Unit, there is a need to increase the management oversight on a permanent basis from 0.8 FTE to 1 FTE Early Help Unit Manager (Hay Band D).

20. The posts proposed to be established on a temporary basis are done so given the intention to design a multi-agency needs-led front door moving forwards, which will require some reconfiguration of staffing structures. This transformational change will be progressed as part of the Improving Residents Access programme and will involve full engagement and consultation with staff and recognised trade unions.

21. Project resource for the change programme will be met through the Transformation and Change Group resources, however there will be a need for additional capacity for systems change and reporting developments, to progress the work outlined in **paragraph 13**. As such it is proposed that the following posts are extended for one year:

- 1 FTE Business Systems Analyst (Hay Band C)
- 1 FTE Business Intelligence Report Developer (Hay Band B).

Other Options Considered

22. An alternative option would be to reduce the staffing levels to the original establishment, however this capacity level would be insufficient to meet the current levels of need, and would risk a deterioration in the Council's ability to respond effectively to safeguarding referrals.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

23. For the Committee to understand progress made and agree the further investment needed to meet increased need and develop a more sustainable front door operating model.

Statutory and Policy Implications

24. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Data Protection and Information Governance

25. The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) require the Council to put in place appropriate technical and organisational measures to ensure that data protection principles and individual's information rights are built into everything the Council does. Legal Services and Information Governance colleagues within the Council will provide guidance on how to progress any new initiatives described to ensure Council obligations are met.

Financial Implications

26. A breakdown of the total costs for the required staffing is detailed below:

Post	Pay Band	Budget Requirement NCC	Agency Top up	FTE	Annual Cost NCC
Social Worker	B	£46,228	£19,690	6	£395,511
Advanced Practitioner	C	£52,591	£0	4	£210,364
Senior Early Help Officer	B*	£46,228	£0	2	£92,456
EHO's	A	£40,212	£0	3	£120,636
Business Systems Analyst	C	£52,591	£0	1	£52,591
Business Intelligence Report Developer	B	£46,228	£0	1	£46,228
Early Help Unit Manager	D	£56,417	£0	0.2	£11,283
Total				**17.2**	**£929,069**
Running expenses					£20,000
TOTAL STAFFING COST					**£949,069**

*for indicative purposes only – this is subject to job evaluation

27. The total cost for all temporary posts is £937,786 and this will be met through the Covid-19 grant reserve. The cost of the permanent 0.2 FTE Early Help Unit Manager is £11,283 and this will be contained within the 2022/23 Youth, Families and Social Work budget of £51.845m.

Human Resources Implications

28. Recruitment to posts will be undertaken in line with the Council's Human Resources procedures and with engagement as appropriate from trade unions. Due to the short time contract duration of some posts to be established there may be a need to recruit agency staff to ensure that all necessary posts are filled.

Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk Implications

29. The proposals contained within this report will further strengthen the Council's ability to safeguard vulnerable children by ensuring that the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub is able to operate effectively within the context of increasing need.

Implications for Service Users

30. The proposals contained within this report will improve the quality of service received by vulnerable children and families, and referring professionals.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That Committee;

1) approves the extension of the following temporary posts in the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and Early Help Unit for one year:

- 6 FTE Social Workers (Hay Band B)
- 2 FTE Advanced Practitioners (Hay Band C)
- 3 FTE Early Help Officers (Hay Band A)
- 1 FTE Business Systems Analyst (Hay Band C)
- 1 FTE Business Intelligence Report Developer (Hay Band B).

2) approves the establishment of the following posts for one year:

- 2 FTE Advanced Practitioners (Hay Band C)
- 2 FTE Senior Early Help Officers (subject to job evaluation).

3) approves an increase in the establishment of the Early Help Unit Manager (Hay Band D) post from 0.8 FTE to 1 FTE.

Steve Edwards
Service Director, Youth, Families and Social Work

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (LW 15/02/22)

31. Children and Young People's Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of the report.

Financial Comments (LCD 17/02/22)

32. The total cost for all temporary posts is £937,786 and this will be met through the Covid-19 grant reserve. The cost of the permanent 0.2 FTE Early Help Unit Manager is £11,283 and this will be contained within the 2022/23 Youth, Families and Social Work budget of £51.845m.

HR Comments (BC 23/02/22)

33. The staffing implications are contained within the body of the report. Any new posts will be recruited to in line with agreed employment and recruitment procedures. The post of Senior Early Help Officer is subject to job evaluation.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Changes to the staffing establishment in the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and the Early Help Unit – report to Children and Young People's Committee on 13th September 2021

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C1551

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Children and Young People's Committee

7th March 2022

Agenda Item: 13

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, COMMISSIONING AND RESOURCES

CHANGES TO THE STAFFING ESTABLISHMENT IN THE INDEPENDENT CHAIR SERVICE

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval to establish 3 FTE posts within the Independent Chair Service: 1 FTE Child Protection Co-ordinator (Hay Band D), 1 FTE Independent Reviewing Officer (Hay Band C) and 1 FTE Fostering Independent Reviewing Officer (Hay Band C) from 1st April 2022 to meet the activity and cost pressure within the service.

Information

2. The Independent Chair Service provides statutory interventions that are a legal requirement of the Local Authority under the Children Act 1989 and Working Together 2018 (updated 2020).

3. The national and local context is one of increasing demand on services for children in need of help and protection or care.

4. The work with this specific group of children and young people is increasing in its complexity particularly in respect of contextual safeguarding and children in care.

5. In March 2019, Children and Young People's Committee approved the proposed implementation of a strength-based approach to practice. The Independent Chair Service has been instrumental in its implementation including an expansion of its primary offer to contribute to practice improvement and outcomes. This approach has recently been endorsed by the government's review into Children's Social Care and additional funding will enable Nottinghamshire to be practice leaders within the region.

6. This enhanced offer will respond to feedback from Ofsted in 2019 that the service was not always closing the loop in terms of concerns regarding practice. This is identified in the current Ofsted Improvement Plan

7. The offer will also provide more robust oversight and quality assurance of children's plans and of Local Authority Foster Carers, in line with the recommendations of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse.

8. The Independent Chair Service is crucial in providing a regulatory focus to drive practice improvement, outcomes for children in need of help and protection and care which is inextricably linked to cost reduction and avoidance.

9. Through this function standards are improved leading to a reduce in demand as work is progressed more efficiently.

10. The current establishment does not take account for these additional responsibilities as outlined above.

11. The cost of the three posts is £161,599, which is around 10% of the overall Independent Chair Service budget. This financial year it is currently predicted that there will be an overspend of £241,118 which is 14% of the overall Independent Chair Service budget. This in the main is due to the cost of agency social workers to cover work related absence and increasing demand. Increasing the overall budget by this year's predicted overspend would allow for a permanent increase in capacity at a lower cost and would address the issues of staff wellbeing within the service. This would increase efficiency, quality, and outcomes.

Demand and Forecasting

Child Protection Co-ordinators

12. Child Protection Plans fluctuate and have decreased in the last reported year: April 2020 (797) – April 2021 (693). Child Protection Co-ordinators also chair several other meetings in addition to child protection conferences including child criminal exploitation, child sexual exploitation, allegations against professionals, harmful sexual behaviour and supervision order reviews. The number of these additional meetings has increased in the last reported year from an average of 36 per month to 68 per month, an increase of 88%. A Child Protection Co-ordinator has capacity to chair 6-7 meetings per week including preparation before the meeting and administrative tasks following the meeting. They cannot do more than two meetings per day. This increase equates to an additional 3.2 meetings per day, 16 per week which would require 2 FTE Child Protection Co-ordinators. This does not consider a workforce that is already struggling with capacity or cover needed for Vacancy Level Turnover and absence. An additional 1 FTE Child Protection Co-ordinator would enable more flexibility in this regard and reduce agency spend.

Independent Reviewing Officers

13. The number of Looked After Children is predicted to continue to rise by nearly 7% by the end of 2022. This is an increase of around 110 Looked After Children. The Independent Reviewing Officer Handbook gives statutory guidance of a case load of between 50 and 70. This does not consider the factors mentioned in the 'Information' section of this report. To be able to have capacity to manage this increase a minimum of 1.5 FTE Independent Reviewing Officers would be needed. This does not consider a workforce that is already struggling with capacity or cover needed for Vacancy Level Turnover and absence. An additional 1 FTE Independent Reviewing Officer would enable more flexibility in this regard and reduce agency spend.

Fostering Independent Reviewing Officers

14. There are currently 3 FTE Fostering Independent Reviewing Officers. One of these is a temporary post. They have caseloads of around 90 Foster Carers and currently undertake 5-6 meetings per week. Without the additional temporary post each Fostering Independent Reviewing Officer would have about 140 Foster Carers each and would have to undertake around 10 meetings per week. This is not possible due to the administrative responsibilities around each meeting and does not consider any absence or annual leave cover arrangements. The additional temporary post which was recruited to initially due to long term absence has addressed the capacity issues within this part of the service and is needed on a permanent basis. The capacity within this service since it was put in place around five years ago has never been able to meet demand.

Recruitment

15. The Independent Chair Service seeks to establish 3 FTE posts within the Independent Chair Service as follows from 1st April 2022 to meet the activity and cost pressure within the service as outlined in this report:

- 1 FTE Child Protection Co-ordinator (Hay Band D)
- 1 FTE Independent Reviewing Officer (Hay Band C)
- 1 FTE Fostering Independent Reviewing Officer (Hay Band C).

Other Options Considered

16. This is a statutory duty conferred upon the local authority by the Children Act 1989 and Working Together 2018 (updated 2020). Without changes to legislation, or a significant change to the demographic of the population of Nottinghamshire, there is very limited scope for other options to be considered.

17. There is evidence in outstanding local authorities that increased capacity will improve the quality of the interventions through strength-based practice, thus reducing the number of children on child protection plans and those who are looked after due to improved quality of plans and the needs of complex children and young people being met more effectively thus reducing costs and improving outcomes in the longer term.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

18. The recommendation is made in order that the service can meet its statutory duty conferred upon the Local Authority by the Children Act 1989 and Working Together 2018 (updated 2020).

Statutory and Policy Implications

19. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below.

Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

20. The establishment of the 3 FTE posts within the Independent Chair Service: 1 FTE Child Protection Co-ordinator (Hay Band D) and 1 FTE Independent Reviewing Officer (Hay Band C) and 1 FTE Fostering Independent Reviewing Officer (Hay Band C) from 1st April 2022, with on-costs, has a maximum cost of £161,599 per annum.

Human Resources Implications

21. The post will be recruited to in accordance with the agreed Vacancy Control Process and recruitment and selection policies.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That Committee approves the establishment of the following posts in the Independent Chair Service from 1st April 2022.

- 1 FTE Child Protection Co-ordinator (Hay Band D)
- 1 FTE Independent Reviewing Officer (Hay Band C)
- 1 FTE Fostering Independent Reviewing Officer (Hay Band C).

Laurence Jones
Service Director, Commissioning and Resources

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (KK 11/02/22)

22. The proposal in this report is within the remit of the Children and Young People's Committee.

Financial Comments (CDS 10/02/22)

23. The cost of the three posts would be approximately £161,599 p.a. and has been factored into the draft budget for 2022-23 (subject to approval at Full Council in February). The budget for this service area is currently £1,647,320.

Human Resources Comments (BC 11/02/22)

24. The staffing implications are contained within the body of the report. Recruitment will be subject to the vacancy control and recruitment procedures.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Youth, Families and Social Work Framework for Practice – report to Children & Young People's Committee on 18th March 2019

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C1552

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Children and Young People's Committee

7th March 2022

Agenda Item: 14

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, TRANSFORMATION AND IMPROVEMENT

CHANGES TO THE STAFFING ESTABLISHMENT IN THE INFORMATION AND SYSTEMS TEAM

Purpose of the Report

1. The report seeks approval of changes to the staffing establishment of the Information and Systems Team which supports the information and systems management function within the Children and Families department. The report also seeks approval for a budget virement to fund the posts.

Information

2. The Information and Systems Service was established in April 2015 following a restructure and budget reduction. The Information and Systems Service is responsible for the support, maintenance and development of all departmental systems, as well as the management of data within those systems. Since the establishment of the team there has been an increase in demand for the services the team offers. The Service is an integral part of the department, providing the platforms required for front line practitioners to undertake their role effectively and efficiently as well as supporting the implementation of the department's digital transformation plan.

3. Since the establishment of the team, there has been a big increase in the userbase, particularly for Mosaic. With the expansion of system use to include the Family Service, Integrated Children's Disability Service and Children Centres, as well as education and youth service staff, there has been an increase of 700 users, taking the userbase to approximately 2,000, an increase of 35%. With additional workers, there is an increase in the data management, support and training required.

4. It has been recognised that there is a shortfall in support, data management and development capacity in the Information and Systems Team and temporary posts have been established to manage the demand for this service.

5. To manage this going forward it is proposed that the functions undertaken by 1 FTE Senior Practitioner – Support and Implementation post (Hay Band C) are divided between 1 FTE Senior Practitioner – System Design (Hay Band C, indicative grade) post to lead on

programme management, system development and implementation activities and 1 FTE Senior Practitioner – Support (Hay Band B, indicative grade) post to lead on system support and training for the department. Additionally, 2 FTE Data Management Officer (Grade 4) posts are required to undertake system support and data management activities associated with the increase in the userbase and requirements related to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

6. It is therefore proposed that the Senior Practitioner – Support and Implementation (Hay Band C) post is disestablished and the following posts established from 1st April 2022 on a permanent basis:

- 1 FTE Senior Practitioner – System Design (Hay Band C, indicative grade)
- 1 FTE Senior Practitioner – Support (Hay Band B, indicative grade)
- 2 FTE Data Management Officers (NJE Grade 4).

Other Options Considered

7. The change in structure of the Information and Systems Team has emerged from an assessment of the current service provision. Without additional resource statutory functions in relation to GDPR would be unable to be fulfilled within the existing establishment.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

8. The proposals outlined in this report will help to ensure that the front-line services across the department will continue to receive the range of data management and system support that they require at a cost that remains affordable

Statutory and Policy Implications

9. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

10. These proposals will cost £100,967 which can be met from within departmental budgets.

Human Resources Implications

11. The additional post identified within this report has been subject to job evaluation and, where appropriate, staff will be enabled using the Council's enabling procedure. All staff affected have been and will continue to be subject to the Council's agreed consultation processes.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That Committee:

1) approves the disestablishment of 1 FTE Senior Practitioner – Support and Implementation (Hay Band C) post from the Information and Systems Service

2) approves the permanent establishment of the following posts in the Information and Systems Service from 1st April 2022:

- 1 FTE Senior Practitioner – System Design (Hay Band C, indicative grade)
- 1 FTE Senior Practitioner – Support (Hay Band B, indicative grade)
- 2 FTE Data Management Officers (NJE Grade 4).

3) approves a budget virement of £100,967 from a permanent underspend in the teachers pension enhancements budget to Information & Systems to fund the above posts.

Lucy Peel
Service Director, Transformation and Improvement

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (KK 11/02/22)

12. The proposals in this report are within the remit of the Children and Young People's Committee.

Financial Comments (CDS 21/02/22)

13. The cost of the staffing proposals would be approximately £100,967 p.a. (net of the deleted post) and could be met from within the department budgets, subject to budget virement approval by this committee. The base budget for Information & Systems staffing is currently £688,429.

HR Comments (BC 23/02/22)

14. The staffing implications are contained within the body of the report. New posts have been subject to job evaluation and where appropriate the Council's enabling process will be utilised to appoint to vacant posts.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Information and Systems Team Restructure – report to Children and Young People's Committee on 20 June 2016

Information and Systems Team Restructure – report to Children and Young People's Committee on 16 November 2015

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C1549

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Children and Young People's Committee

7th March 2022

Agenda Item: 15

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION, LEARNING AND SKILLS

ESTABLISHMENT OF A TEMPORARY DEPUTY PRINCIPAL EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST POST

Purpose of the Report

1. This report seeks approval to establish a 0.8 FTE Deputy Principal Educational Psychologist post (Soulbury 6-10 + 3 SPA) on a temporary basis until 31st August 2023.

Information

2. This proposal is presented in the context of the government's high needs review due to be published in the first quarter of 2022. Early indications suggest that the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities review will increase the focus on the 'graduated response' of mainstream schools to ensure that more children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities can access their education and have their needs met in a mainstream setting, in their local community. As such, there is an urgent need to work with publicly funded schools and other providers to ensure that parental confidence in the wider system, and particularly mainstream schools is strengthened.

3. At this time, the Council's education services are working with schools to develop a locality model whereby the wider Special Educational Needs and Disabilities system can more effectively work together across districts with the intention of ensuring that more children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities can access their education near to where they live.

4. The rationale for this proposal to establish a temporary Deputy Principal Educational Psychologist is to increase leadership capacity for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities by releasing the Principal Educational Psychologist to work across the Leadership Team within Education, Learning and Skills in order to provide the necessary additional leadership to progress this development work. The newly created post of Deputy Principal Educational Psychologist would assume day-to-day responsibility for the Education Psychology Service, as well as some other responsibilities of the current Principal Educational Psychologist.

5. With better inclusive practice within mainstream schools, there should be less of a reliance on costly independent specialist placements. As from January 2022, the Integrated

Children's Disability Service has transferred to the Education, Learning and Skills Service area under the leadership of the Service Director. This additional leadership capacity will ensure that all services which provide support to learners, families and schools regarding Special Educational Needs and Disabilities can be further strengthened to meet the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in their communities.

Other Options Considered

6. Other options considered have included the appointment of a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities consultant. This has been considered but rejected; the changes which are likely to be needed will require a comprehensive knowledge of existing services, and the confidence of these services to accept the leadership through change.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

7. In the current structure within Education, Learning and Skills, the Principal Educational Psychologist has assumed responsibility for leadership across an increasing number of education teams. Given the need to prioritise leadership capacity across Special Educational Needs and Disabilities services, it is proposed that there should be the establishment of a temporary 0.8 FTE Deputy Principal Educational Psychologist post until 31st August 2023.

Statutory and Policy Implications

8. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

9. The establishment of the 0.8 FTE post within the Education Psychology Service, Deputy Principal Educational Psychologist (Soulbury 6-10 + 3 SPA) with on-costs would be £69,542 per annum. There is some uncommitted High Need Strategic grant (£110,000) that will fund this post until 31st August 2023 (including funding for pay related increases).

Human Resources Implications

10. The implementation of the proposals in terms of recruitment and staffing will be made subject to advice from Human Resources.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That the Committee approves the establishment of a temporary 0.8 FTE Deputy Principal Educational Psychologist (Soulbury 6-10 + 3 SPA) post until 31st August 2023.

Marion Clay
Service Director, Education, Learning and Skills

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Constitutional Comments (EP 11/02/22)

11. The recommendation falls within the remit of Children and Young People's Committee by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (MDN 16/02/22)

12. The establishment of the 0.8 FTE post within the Education Psychology Service, Deputy Principal Educational Psychologist (Soulbury 6-10 + 3 SPA) with on-costs would be £69,542 per annum. There is some uncommitted High Need Strategic grant (£110,000) that will fund this post until 31st August 2023 (including funding for pay related increases).

HR Comments (BC 23/02/22)

14. The staffing implications are contained within the body of the report. The new post will be recruited to in line with the Council's recruitment procedures.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C1546

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Children and Young People's Committee

7th March 2022

Agenda Item: 16

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION, LEARNING AND SKILLS

LOCAL AUTHORITY GOVERNOR APPOINTMENTS TO SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES DURING THE PERIOD 30TH SEPTEMBER 2021 TO 1ST FEBRUARY 2022

Purpose of the Report

1. To update the Committee on the appointment of Local Authority (LA) governors to school governing bodies for the period 30th September 2021 to 1st February 2022 in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution.

Information

2. Under the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended by the School Governance (Constitution and Federations) (England) Amendment Regulations 2014, governing bodies of maintained schools were required to reconstitute to a skills-based model of governance by September 2015, and are allowed one Local Authority governor on the reconstituted governing body. For this model of governance, governing bodies may set eligibility criteria for, and appoint, the Local Authority governor.

3. Under these Regulations the County Council is responsible for nominating individuals as prospective governors. Nominations are made by the County Council, in accordance with the eligibility criteria provided by the governing body. When nominating new governors or re-nominating existing governors, the County Council must consider the skills and experience the governing body needs in order to be effective.

4. Local Authority governors nominated by the County Council and appointed by school governing bodies during the period 30th September 2021 to 1st February 2022 are as follows:

ASHFIELD	
Selston Bagthorpe Primary School	Miss Liz Kitts **Re-appointment to the category of LA Governor**

Bracken Hill	Mr Phil Lakin **Re-appointment to the category of LA Governor**
Abbey Hill Primary	Mr Karl Simpson **Re-appointment to the category of LA Governor**
BASSETLAW	
Elkesley Primary School	Mr Michael Moss **New appointment to the category of LA governor**
BROXTOWE	
Greasley Beauvale Primary School	Reverend Denise Dodds **New appointment to the category of LA governor**
GEDLING	
Coppice Farm Primary	Mrs Elizabeth Terzza **New appointment to the category of LA governor**
MANSFIELD	
Asquith Primary	Sandra Towson **Reappointed to the category of LA governor**
Blidworth Oaks Primary School	Angela Penney **Reappointed to the category of LA governor**
Farmilo Primary and Nursery	Leanne Rodgers **New appointment to the category of LA governor**
NEWARK	
John Blow Primary School	Reverend Mandy Cartwright **Reappointed to the category of LA governor**
RUSHCLIFFE	
Gotham Primary School	Mr Andrew Howard **New appointment to the category of LA governor**
Costock C of E Primary School	Mrs Sarah Smith **Reappointed to the category of LA governor**
Lady Bay Primary School	Mr Martin Holden **Reappointed to the category of LA governor**

Other Options Considered

5. No other options have been considered.

Reasons for Recommendation/s

6. The constitution requires the Corporate Directorate to report governor appointments to Committee on a quarterly basis.

Statutory and Policy Implications

7. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Data Protection and Information Governance

8. The information contained within this report is already within the public domain and a privacy impact statement is therefore not needed.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That further updates regarding future appointments be provided as appropriate in accordance with the Constitution.

Marion Clay
Service Director, Education, Learning & Skills

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (EKH 23/02/22)

9. Children and Young People's Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments (MDN 22/02/22)

10. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None.

Electoral Divisions and Members Affected

Ashfield	
Selston	Councillor David Martin
Kirkby North	Councillor Andy Meakin
Bassetlaw	
Worksop South	Councillor Nigel Turner
Broxtowe	
Greasley and Brinsley	Councillor Elizabeth Williamson
Gedling	
Arnold North	Councillor Pauline Allan
Arnold North	Councillor Michael Payne
Mansfield	
Blidworth	Councillor Tom Smith
Mansfield South	Councillor André Camilleri
Mansfield South	Councillor Stephen Garner
Mansfield West	Councillor Sinead Anderson
Mansfield West	Councillor Paul Henshaw
Newark	
Collingham	Vacancy
Rushcliffe	
Leake and Ruddington	Councillor Matt Barney
	Councillor Reg Adair
Keyworth	Councillor John Cottee
West Bridgford North	Councillor Penny Gowland

C1544

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Children and Young People's Committee

7 March 2022

Agenda Item: 17

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CUSTOMER, GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEES

RESPONSE TO THE GOVERNMENT'S CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE SCHOOL ADMISSION APPEALS CODE

Purpose of the Report

1. To agree the Council's response to the Government consultation on proposed changes to the School Admission Appeals Code which opened on 7 February 2022, with a closing date of 3 April 2022.

Information

2. The Council has a statutory requirement to provide an opportunity for parents to appeal any refusal of an application for a school place at its own community and voluntary controlled schools.

3. The Democratic Services Governance Team manages this process independently on behalf of the Council as Admissions Authority for community and voluntary controlled schools, following the requirements of the School Admission Appeals Code. The team also provides this service for some academies who have agreed a contract with the Council.

4. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government brought in temporary regulations to enable a relaxation of certain aspects of the current rules within the School Admission Appeals Code. These regulations aimed to ensure that appeals could continue to be held, albeit virtually.

5. The regulations were subsequently extended up to September 2022 and the Government has recently published proposals to enable the flexibilities offered by the temporary regulations on a permanent basis.

6. The virtual hearing approach brings a number of advantages, most of which are recognised within the Government's consultation document, including:

   a. greater levels of engagement from appellants (possibly through the reduced time commitment required due to not having to travel to venues);
   b. reduced time commitments for clerks, admission authority presenting officers and Panel Members
   c. reductions in some of the costs (for example, venue hire and travel time).

7. It is recognised that there are some additional staffing impacts as a result of holding appeals virtually, as the regulations currently require appellants to be phoned in advance to explain how their appeal hearing will operate virtually. If such calls were no longer required going forward, the intention would be to still follow this approach as it is felt to be good practice and may have contributed towards the increased engagement and reduced level of complaints.

8. The Appeals Team is also having to deploy staff to help facilitate calls to ensure that all attendees remain connected (which can be particularly problematic in the case of multiple hearings).

9. It should be noted that not all Panel Members have favoured a virtual approach but the vast majority have remained active and as committed as previously, embracing the new ways of working in a positive and effective manner.

10. The proposal about Panels being able to continue with two Members instead of three, is unlikely to have a big impact within the Council's service and there are inherent risks, as well as benefits, in adopting such an approach. However, any flexibility that assists appeals to be concluded in a fair and timely manner is welcomed as long as this does not impact negatively on fairness and transparency.

11. Officers have drafted an initial response to the Government's proposals (see **Appendix A**) and seek the Committee's views on the draft answers.

Other Options Considered

12. Democratic Services are active participants in the National Association of School Admissions Clerks. In previous years it has been possible to input into the development of composite responses to such consultations on a regional basis. However, on this occasion the timing of the consultation period in relation to the Committee's meeting cycle prevents such an approach. Officers will continue to feed into the Association and share best practice wherever possible.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

13. To enable the Council to agree a formal response to this Government consultation.

Statutory and Policy Implications

14. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Data Protection and Information Governance

15. Appeals held in a virtual setting have continued to follow Data Protection and Information Governance rules.

Financial Implications

16. Financial savings can continue to be made from holding hearings on a virtual basis, although it should be noted that some of the cost savings are offset by some increased operational burdens on the Appeals Team as outlined above.

Public Sector Equality Duty implications

17. The Governance Team feels that the telephone conference approach adopted so far offers the fairest and most inclusive means of holding an appeal currently. This is borne out by the lack of complaints about this approach. The option of moving to video as well as audio has been considered and will be kept under review if it is felt that we have reached a moment in time where every appellant would have easy access, the ability and the means to join a hearing via Microsoft Teams.

Smarter Working Implications

18. Virtual hearings enable officers and external clerks to organise the process in line with the Council's wider smarter working ambitions.

Implications for Service Users

19. Appellants are contacted in advance of hearings to explain the process and how the technology will work. These calls are a new development since virtual hearings began and although these bring a resource implication for the Governance Team, it is felt that these calls have had a positive impact overall.

Implications for Sustainability and the Environment

20. Virtual hearings have seen a significant reduction in travel associated with the appeals process from Panel Members, clerks, presenting officers and appellants.

RECOMMENDATION

That Members agree the draft response to the Government consultation on proposed changes to the School Admission Appeals Code, as detailed in Appendix A, for submission by the closing date of 3 April 2022.

Marjorie Toward
Service Director, Customers, Governance and Employees

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Keith Ford, Team Manager, Democratic Services Tel: (0115) 9772590 E-mail: keith.ford@nottscc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments (CEH – 21/02/22)

21. The recommendation falls within the remit of the Children and Young People's Committee under its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (RWK 24/02/2022)

The report presents proposed changes to the Schools Admission Appeals Code. The financial implications are set out in paragraph 16 of the report. It is estimated that the proposed changes may result in small financial savings.

Background Papers

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All

Department for Education

Changes to the School Admission Appeals Code

Government consultation

Launch date 7 February 2022
Respond by 3 April 2022

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Introduction

This consultation seeks views on the Department for Education's proposal to revise the School Admission Appeals Code 2012 (the Appeals Code[1]). The Appeals Code applies to admission appeals for all maintained schools and academies (including free schools, University Technical Colleges and Studio Schools) in England. The Appeals Code does not apply to any maintained or academy special school, alternative provision or stand-alone 16-19 provision.

There are two separate categories of admission appeals dealt with under the Appeals Code:

a) Parents have the right to appeal to any maintained school or academy (subject to the exceptions listed above) which has refused their child a place. An appeal hearing provides parents with an opportunity to set out the reasons why their child should have a place at their chosen school.
b) Appeals by the governing bodies of community or voluntary controlled schools against a decision by the local authority (their school's admission authority) to admit a child who has been permanently excluded from two or more schools.

The rules on admission appeals are set out in the School Admission (Appeal Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012[2] and the statutory School Admission Appeals Code 2012. The Appeals Code imposes mandatory requirements on admission authorities to ensure the appeals process is fair and transparent. The admission authority (academy trust, governing body or local authority, depending on the type of school) is responsible for establishing the appeal panel. The appeal panel is independent of the admission authority and it should come to its own independent conclusion about whether the school should admit the child. The panel considers the case presented by both the admission authority and the parent and its decision is binding. The panel is supported by a fully trained clerk.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not always possible to meet all of the statutory requirements of the Appeals Code for holding appeal hearings. For example, COVID-19 restrictions at some points made it impossible to hold hearings in person (face to face). We, therefore, introduced the School Admissions (England) (Coronavirus) (Appeals Arrangements) (Amendment) Regulations 2020[3] (the "temporary regulations") in April 2020. This provided admission authorities, local authorities and admission appeal

[1] School Admission Appeals Code
[2] School Admission (Appeal Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012
[3] School Admissions (England) (Coronavirus) (Appeals Arrangements) (Amendment) Regulations 2020

panels flexibility to enable appeal hearings to continue to be heard in a timely way. These temporary arrangements are:

- disapplying the requirement in the Appeals Code that appeal hearings must be held in person where it is not reasonably practicable to follow the normal appeals process due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and instead give flexibility for them to take place either in person or by telephone or video conference, or where none of those options are possible through a paper-based appeal where all parties can make representations in writing;
- relaxing the rules with regards to what happens if one of the three panel members withdraws (temporarily or permanently for reasons due to COVID-19) to make it permissible for the panel to continue with and conclude the appeal as a panel of two; and
- amending the timescales relating to appeals by referring to calendar rather than school days and replacing a fixed deadline with '*as soon as reasonably practicable*'.

The temporary regulations were extended, most recently through the School Admission (England) (Coronavirus) (Appeals Arrangements) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2021[4] and are due to expire on 30 September 2022 (subject to certain exceptions for ongoing appeals). As things stand, when the temporary regulations expire the requirements relating to appeals will revert to the rules under the Appeals Code and the 2012 regulations (without amendment).

During the academic year 2020 to 2021, while the temporary arrangements were in effect, a total of 41,110 appeals were heard, of which 7,823 were successful. The flexibilities provided by the temporary regulations have been essential to enable so many appeals to continue during the COVID-19 pandemic and these figures demonstrate how well local authorities and other admission authorities have adapted to hearing appeals remotely.

We reviewed the operation of the temporary regulations with local authorities, admission authorities, diocesan bodies and appeal clerks in August and October 2020 and in July 2021 before extending them in January 2021 and September 2021. We received 32 responses to our last survey in July 2021 – from 21 local authorities, 8 diocesan bodies, 1 multi-academy trust and 2 independent appeals services. All 32 responded that they supported the temporary arrangements and 30 indicated that remote hearings should be a permanent option. The feedback suggested that the temporary arrangements were working well and provided benefits for local authorities, admission authorities, schools and appeal panels in both time and cost savings. 27 respondents also provided some

[4] School Admission (England) (Coronavirus) (Appeals Arrangements) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2021

feedback they'd had from parents with 25 of those reported parents being positive about the remote arrangements. There was also a perception, confirmed in some cases by feedback to local authorities by parents, that the arrangements were enabling parents to more easily access the appeals system without, for example, having to take significant time off work and/or incur any other additional costs, such as arranging additional childcare. Admission authorities also reported a significant drop in the number of hearings where parents had failed to attend. Through the consultation, we hope to gather more evidence on the direct views of parents of these arrangements. A number of stakeholders have requested that some of the flexibilities are retained and made permanent. We are therefore consulting on changing the Appeals Code to add an option for holding appeal hearings remotely and allow for the possibility of a panel of two members to continue hearing and making decisions on appeals, in the event that a third panel member needs to withdraw.

It would be our intention to bring these changes into force immediately after the expiry of the temporary regulations on 1 October 2022. However, we will keep this under review in light of the continuing impact of COVID-19. We may need to make some changes to the way the temporary regulations expire to ensure that the two sets of rules align in the most sensible way.

This consultation is limited and we are only seeking views on these proposed changes and not on any wider issues in relation to school admission appeals.

Who this is for

This consultation is for anyone with a role or interest in school admission appeals, including:

- Appeal panels
- Local authorities
- Schools, including academies and free schools
- Governing bodies and academy trusts
- Parents/carers
- Other interested parties

Issue date

The consultation was issued on 7 February 2022.

Enquiries

If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact the team by email at: AdmissionAppeals.CONSULTATION@education.gov.uk

If your enquiry is related to the DfE e-consultation website or the consultation process in general, you can contact the DfE Ministerial and Public Communications Division by email: coordinator.consultations@education.gov.uk or by telephone: 0370 000 2288 or via the DfE Contact us page.

Additional copies

Additional copies are available electronically and can be downloaded from GOV.UK DfE consultations.

The response

We will aim to publish the results of the consultation and the department's response on GOV.UK in due course.

About this consultation

The Department for Education is considering revising the School Admission Appeals Code 2012 (the Appeals Code). Accompanying amendments would also be made to associated regulations.

The aim of the changes we are proposing to make to the Appeals Code is to enable some of the flexibilities, currently permitted through the temporary regulations, to continue (with suitable adaptations) from the point at which the temporary regulations expire on 30 September 2022.

This consultation document makes two proposals:

- To allow appeal hearings to be held remotely or in person; and
- To allow a panel of two to decide appeals in some circumstances where the third member has to withdraw.

The proposal is that these changes will apply to both sorts of admission appeal hearings dealt with under the Appeals Code (appeals against an admission authority's refusal to admit a child and appeals by governing bodies against a local authority's decision to admit to their school a child who has been permanently excluded from two or more schools). We also propose to make a number of minor technical drafting changes to certain provisions of the current Appeals Code, including to update references to legislation and the School Admissions Code – these changes are identified in Annex A.

This consultation only seeks views on these proposed changes which are being made in response to feedback about the benefits of the flexibilities introduced through temporary appeals regulations.

We are not at this stage seeking views on wider changes to other elements of the Appeals Code.

A draft version of the revised Appeals Code, which includes the proposed changes described in this document, is available alongside this consultation.

A number of these changes will also require associated amendments to underlying regulations, which are identified in Annex B.

Respond online

To help us analyse the responses please use the online system wherever possible. Visit www.education.gov.uk/consultations to submit your response.

Other ways to respond

If, for exceptional reasons, you are unable to use the online system, for example because you use specialist accessibility software that is not compatible with the system, you may download a PDF document version of the consultation document and respond either via email or post.

If you are not responding via the online system, please can you ensure you complete the form at Annex C.

By email

- AdmissionAppeals.CONSULTATION@education.gov.uk

By post

School Admission Appeals Code Consultation
Department for Education
Admissions, School Organisation and Transport Division
Ground Floor, Bishopsgate House
Darlington
DL1 5QE

Deadline

The consultation closes on 3 April 2022.

Section 1: Constitution of appeal panels - membership

Background

The Appeals Code requires that an independent appeal panel consists of a chair and at least two other panel members. The panel must consist of at least one lay person and one person with experience of education. If a panel member has to temporarily withdraw (for example because of illness), the panel must postpone the remaining hearings until the panel member returns. If they are unable to return, the admission authority must appoint a replacement and the new panel must rehear any appeals which have been part heard before the withdrawal of the panel member.

The temporary regulations relaxed these Appeals Code requirements and made it permissible for the panel to continue with and conclude the appeal as a panel of two in circumstances where it was not reasonably practicable for an admission authority to comply with these requirements of the Appeals Code for a reason related to COVID-19.

Where a panel member has to withdraw before or part way through an appeal hearing, finding a replacement appeal panel member or rescheduling an appeal can delay the outcome of appeals. It can also create additional cost for the admission authority, school and panels. We propose making changes to the Appeals Code to retain some flexibility for a panel to continue to consider and decide the appeal(s) where a panel member has to withdraw before or part way through an appeal hearing where it would otherwise cause an unreasonable delay to the determination of the appeal.

Proposal

The specific changes we propose to the Appeals Code are:

- To make it permissible for the panel to continue with and conclude appeals as a panel of two where a third panel member needs to withdraw and where postponing or reorganising the appeal or appeals would cause unreasonable delay to the determination of the appeal. This may result in the remaining panel of two being comprised of either two lay people or two people from an educational background, rather than at least one from each category.

- To allow the admission authority (or the clerk to the appeal panel acting on behalf of the admission authority) to appoint one of the remaining members as the chair, in circumstances where the chair is the panel member who has withdrawn. In circumstances where the two panel members disagree, the chair has the casting vote.

See paragraphs 1.9 – 1.13 in the draft Appeals Code for changes to panel composition.

Questions

Question 1.1 Do you agree that admission authorities should have flexibility to allow a panel of two to continue hearing and making decisions on appeals in the event the third member has to withdraw either before or part way through an appeal or group of appeals?

Yes ✓

No

Don't know

Whilst recognising that such an approach could be open to abuse and could essentially result in the Panel Chair having the final say, we are confident that clerks and Panel Members used by Nottinghamshire County Council would only ever use such powers available in a proportionate, fair and transparent manner.

If you disagree or don't know please explain why.

Question 1.2 Do you believe that allowing a panel of two to continue hearing and making decisions on appeals is beneficial and means that appeal hearings can continue without unreasonable delay?

Yes ✓

No

Don't know

The benefit of this additional flexibility is welcomed although in reality the need to reconvene due to one of the Panel Members having to drop out of a hearing once it has commenced has proven to be a very rare occurrence in Nottinghamshire, partly due to the commitment of our Panel Members.

Please explain your response.

Question 1.3 In circumstances where a panel member has to withdraw do you believe that the appeal(s) will continue to be heard in a fair and transparent way by the two remaining panel members, even if this means both members are either lay people or people with an education background?

Yes ✓

No

Don't know

As per the response above, we are confident that Panels arranged by Nottinghamshire County Council would only use this option in circumstances where it was in the best interest of the parties to continue with 2 Members.

Please explain your response. For example, if you disagree can you explain why?

Question 1.4 Do you believe that this flexibility should only be permitted where either postponing or rearranging the appeal(s) would cause unreasonable delay to the determination of the appeal?

Yes ✓

In order to lessen the potential for abuse of this greater flexibility being afforded.

No

Don't know

If you disagree or don't know, can you explain why?

Please provide any further comments on these changes.

The additional flexibility available through the offer of virtual and hybrid hearings will also hopefully lessen the need to utilise this potential approach.

Observation re para 2.14 in the Code - it states parents must not allow representatives ….. should this not be panels?

es

Section 2: Attendance and representation

Background

The Appeals Code currently requires that appellants[5] are given the opportunity to appear in person and make oral representations. The admission authority must also provide a presenting officer to present the decision not to admit the child and to answer detailed questions about the case being heard and about the school. This means that all appeal hearings must be held in person (face to face) or, in limited circumstances, decided on the basis of the written information submitted.

Due to the social distancing restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic in person appeal hearings could not go ahead in the normal way so we introduced temporary arrangements to allow appeals to be conducted remotely, by telephone or video conference, if it was not reasonably practicable for them to happen in person for a reason relating to COVID-19. A number of admission authorities, local authorities and appeal panels told us about the benefits these temporary arrangements have had. These include cost and time savings as parents, presenting officers, panel members and clerks have not had to travel to venues but have instead been able to participate from home or their place of work. Local authorities and schools have also made savings on the cost of hiring venues for multiple hearings.

We have also received feedback from local authorities that remote hearings have allowed parents to more easily access the appeals system without having to take significant time off work and/or incur additional costs, for example childcare costs. Local authorities also told us there have been fewer instances of parents not attending appeals on the day, helping to ensure that parents are able to fully present their case to the panel.

Appeal hearings are not public meetings, and there is no need for them to take place in a public forum as a consequence.

We propose to make changes to the Appeals Code to introduce a permanent change to also allow appeals to be conducted remotely.

[5] An appellant could be either a parent or a young person who is refused admission by a sixth form attached to a school. It could also be the governing body of a community or voluntary controlled school appealing a decision by the local authority to admit a child who has been excluded from two or more schools.

Proposal

The specific changes we propose to make to the Appeals Code are:

- To introduce the ability for appeal hearings to be held remotely as well as in person;
- To give admission authorities flexibility to make the decision whether to offer appeal hearings in person or remotely or a choice of either;
- To continue to allow appeals to be determined on the written information submitted only where the presenting officer and/or appellant is unable to attend and not in other circumstances.

These changes will provide further flexibility around how appeal hearings are held. Many admission authorities have already made use of the temporary regulations and have put in place the necessary technology for remote appeals. We expect that the resulting benefits to appeal panels, schools and parents will continue to offset the costs of any necessary technology or time spent on providing any additional support.

See paragraphs 2.11 to 2.20 in the draft Appeals Code for changes to appeal hearings.

Questions

Question 2.1 Do you agree that the Appeals Code should include an option for holding appeals remotely?

Yes ✓

No

Don't know

If you disagree or don't know, can you suggest alternative proposals or provide further feedback?

Question 2.2 Do you believe the following formats allow for a fair and transparent appeal hearing?

Face to face – Yes ✓ / No / don't know

Remote (telephone) – Yes ✓ / No / don't know

Remote (video conference) – Yes ✓ / No / don't know

Written submission – Yes ✓ / No / don't know

Type text here

We have chosen telephone conference calls as the most accessible and cost effective and least intimidating option for appellants. We recognise that a wholesale written submissions approach could favour those appellants and admisson authorities who are more skilled in such communication methods and gives less opportunity for Panels to properly explore any issues and concerns being raised. Appeals will continue to be heard fairly and transparently in an appellant's absence based solely on written submissions if that is the appellant's preference but Panels would always prefer to have the opportunity to speak to an appellant where possible.

Question 2.3. Do you agree that admission authorities should make the decision on whether to offer appeal hearings in person, remotely or a choice to attendees of either?

Yes

No ✓

Don't know

The Admission Authority, as the overall organiser of the appeals process, should be free to decide (and review) the most appropriate overall approach, taking into accoount the rules of natural justice, costs and impact on appellants. It would be helpful for Clerks, who are tasked with arranging the appeals in the Code, to retain some flexibility to adopt other approaches in certain circumstances where a demonstrable benefit for all parties can be evidenced.

If you disagree, who should make the decision?

What factors should be taken into account in reaching this decision?

Question 2.4 Do you agree that appeals should only be considered on the basis of the written evidence submitted where either:

a) **The presenting officer does not attend and the appeal panel is satisfied that it can resolve the case by using evidence submitted by the admission authority if the appellant will not be disadvantaged in doing so; or**
b) **The appellant fails or is unable to attend and it is impractical to offer an alternative date?**

Presenting officer – Yes ✓ / No / Don't know

Appellant – Yes ✓ / No / Don't know

If you disagree or don't know, can you provide further feedback?

Question 2.5 Do you believe that hybrid appeal hearings should be an option? By 'hybrid' we mean where one or more participants join remotely (by video and/or telephone) and one or more attend in person.

Yes ✓

No

Don't know

Yes but only in those circumstances where it does not disadvantage either party, or gives advantage to some appellants over others.

Please explain your response.

Question 2.6 Do you believe that a hybrid appeal hearing can be conducted in a fair and transparent way which enables the appellant and presenting officer an opportunity to present their case? *In the case of hybrid appeal hearings, the Appeals Code would still require that one party must not be left alone with the appeal panel (either in person or remotely) in the absence of the other.*

Yes ✓

Councils have become used to working fairly and transparently in virtual settings, including hybrid arrangements and the rulees of natural justice can still be followed with such an approach.

No

Don’t know

Please explain your reason

Please provide any further comments on these changes.

Having been one of the Councils that has experienced an increase in attendance and a reduction in costs (and, possibly coincidentally, a decline in complaints) whilst holding virtual hearings we welcome the proposed additonal flexibility of retaining such arrangements for the reasons set out in the proposals. We recognise that virtual hearings can bring both benefits and disadvantages for Panel Members themselves and we commend our own Panel Members for their positive approach to making these work in an inclusive, fair and efficient manner.

Section 3: Minor technical drafting changes

Minor technical drafting changes will also be made to ensure that the new Appeals Code is up to date. Further details about these changes are included within Annex A but include, amongst other things, updates to refer to the relevant sections of the School Admissions Code which came into force in September 2021.

Questions

Question 3.1 The purpose of the minor technical drafting changes, as set out in Annex A, is mainly to update references to legislation, Codes and departmental names.

Please provide any comments you have on the proposed changes.

Section 4: Impact assessments

Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Public authorities include the Department for Education, admission authorities, local authorities, governing bodies and academy trusts.

The protected characteristics are:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex; and
- sexual orientation.

Questions

Question 4.1 Do you have any comments about the potential impact of our proposals on individuals on the basis of their protected characteristics?

Please provide any comments you have.

New Burdens Assessment

The department is required to consider whether any policy or initiative would increase the cost of providing local authority services, and this includes revised guidance. As part of this process, a New Burdens Assessment is required.

This assessment should include considerations of 'one off' implementation costs as well as recurring cost elements, alongside any estimated savings that local authorities could make – *questions 4.2 - 4.5 are solely for local authorities to answer*.

Although the New Burdens Assessment is only required in relation to the impact on local authorities, we would also be interested to hear views from schools who incur appeals costs – *questions 4.6 – 4.9 are solely for schools to answer*.

Questions

Question 4.2 (for local authorities) Do you believe the proposed Appeals Code will result in any new operational burdens for local authorities?

Yes ✓

No

There are some unquantified additional staffing impacts from operating hearing virtually (e.g the use of 'facilitators' on calls to ensure Panel members, Clerk and the parties remain connected and the requirement to make pre-hearing calls to appellants). However, it is felt that these costs are largely balanced out by the benefits of other savings and the greater levels of engagement from appellants.

If yes, please explain why and what these burdens may be.

Question 4.3 (for local authorities) Do you believe the proposed Code will result in any new costs for local authorities?

Yes ✓

No

See the point above regarding additional operational burdens on the Appeals Team. Balanced against those additional demands is a 30% reduction in other related 'external' costs of appeals between 2019-20 and 2020-21, including clerks, travel expenses, venue hire, refreshments. There are also time savings for local authorities' presenting officers due to lack of travel that helps offset those additional burdens.

If yes, please explain why and what estimation can be made of these additional costs. This may include, for example: organisational, staffing, venue and technology.

Question 4.4. (for local authorities) Do you believe the proposed Code will result in any reduced operational burdens for local authorities?

Yes ✓

No

See above - currently the Appeals Team is not having to source and book external and internal venues, refreshments and deal with travel claims etc. Virtual appeals also means that clerks, officers, Panel Members and presenting officers can make better use of any time freed up when an appellant withdraws their appeal at short notice.

If yes, please explain why and what burdens will be reduced.

Question 4.5 (for local authorities) Do you believe the proposed Appeals Code will result in any savings for local authorities?

Yes ✓

No

See above - it is felt that there are some savings to be achieved which offset the additional burdens. Overall it is felt that this approach offers a more efficient way of conducting hearings and has the added benefit of reduced time and money for the parties and other participants, which we believe accounts for the increased levels of engagement and may have contributed to the reduction in complaints.

If yes, please explain why and what estimation can be made of these additional savings. This may include, for example: organisational, staffing, venue and technology.

Question 4.6 (for schools) Do you believe the proposed Appeals Code will result in any new operational burdens for schools?

Yes

No

If yes, please explain why and what these burdens may be.

Question 4.7 (for schools) Do you believe the proposed Appeals Code will result in any new costs for schools?

Yes

No

If yes, please explain why and what estimation can be made of these additional costs. This may include, for example: organisational, staffing, venue and technology.

Question 4.8 (for schools) Do you believe the proposed Appeals Code will result in any reduced operational burdens for schools?

Yes

No

If yes, please explain why and what burdens will be reduced.

Question 4.9 (for schools) Do you believe the proposed Appeals Code will result in any savings for schools?

Yes

No

If yes, please explain why and what estimation can be made of these additional savings. This may include, for example: organisational, staffing, venue and technology.

Annex A: Minor technical drafting changes

Background

We propose making additional technical drafting changes to the School Admission Appeals Code. The vast majority of changes update references to Codes, regulations and departmental names. We propose making amendments to:

Location	Minor Change	Reason for change
Para 2	Wording added: '(not including any maintained or Academy special school, alternative provision or stand-alone 16-19 provision)'	Added clarity that the Appeals Code does not apply to any maintained or Academy special school, alternative provision or stand-alone 16 – 19 provision.
Footnote 1	New footnote explaining the changes made by the temporary regulations: 'The School Admissions (Appeals Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 were amended by the School Admissions (England) (Coronavirus) (Appeal Arrangements) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 which came into force in April 2020 and brought in provisions that enabled appeals to continue to be heard in view of the impact and restrictions relating to COVID-19. The regulations were due to expire on 31 January 2021 but were extended, first by the School Admissions (England) (Coronavirus) (Appeals Arrangements) (Amendment) Regulations 2021, and then by the School Admissions (England) (Coronavirus) (Appeals Arrangements) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2021. This Code comes into effect immediately after the temporary COVID-19 regulations expire.'	To account for the changes to the appeals process made by the temporary regulations
Footnote 2	Changed wording to 'Academies are defined in Section1A of the Academies Act 2010'.	Footnote out of date.
Footnote 5	Changed wording to 'paragraph 6 of the Schedule to the Education (Specified	Out of date regulations.

	Work) (England) Regulations 2012.'	
Para 2.27	Changed wording to 'Data Protection Act 2018'.	Out of date legislation.
Footnote 14	Changed paragraph numbers to '3.14 to 3.22 of the School Admissions Code'.	New School Admissions Code paragraph numbers.
Para 3.20	Wording removed:'In considering whether a child was refused admission because of their disability, panels must have regard to the Equality and Human Rights Commission's Code of Practise for Schools when it comes into effect (as of 1 December 2011, the draft Code of Practice is expected to be laid before Parliament in Spring 2012. For the latest information: http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/equality-act/equality-act-timeline/) . In the interim, non-statutory guidance is available on the Equality and Human Rights Commission's website.' Also removed reference to this paragraph within paragraph 4.3.	Wording out of date.
Para 3.20	Wording on 'Children with statement of Special Educational Needs' updated to 'Children with Education, Health and Care plans'.	Wording out of date.
Para 3.22	Changed paragraph number to 'Paragraph 2.15 of the School Admissions Code'.	New School Admissions Code paragraph numbers.
Para 3.23	Changed paragraph numbers as follows: Paragraph 3.9 to '3.14'; Paragraph 3.12 to '3.16'.	Updated paragraph numbers and amended wording to align with new School Admissions Code.
Footnote 16	Changed paragraph numbers to 'paragraphs 1.43 and 1.44 of the School Admissions Code'.	New School Admissions Code paragraph numbers.

Footnote 17	New footnote: ‘”Challenging behaviour” is defined in footnote 76 of the School Admissions Code 2021.’	Added to signpost to definition included in new School Admissions Code.
Footnote 20	Changed paragraph number to ‘paragraph 2.16 of the School Admissions Code’	New School Admissions Code paragraph numbers.
Footnote 24	Changed paragraph number to ‘paragraph 2.17 of the School Admissions Code’.	New School Admissions Code paragraph numbers.
Para 5.4 Appendix 2 (title) Appendix 2 (1) Appendix 2 (3)	Changed organisation name to ‘Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman’.	Name change.
Appendix 1 (7)	Wording deleted on ‘Equality and Human Right’s Commissions Code of Practise for Schools’.	Out of date.
Appendix 2 (4) Appendix 2 (5)	Updated references to ‘Young People’s Learning Agency’ to ‘Education and Skills Funding Agency’. Updated contact details to include reference to ESFA’s online form instead of email.	Name change.

Annex B: Regulation changes

The table below lists the amendments we may need to make to various regulations in order to make the proposed changes to the Appeals Code. The changes would be to:

- The School Admissions (Appeal Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012
- The School Admissions (England) (Coronavirus) (Appeals Arrangements) (Amendment) Regulations 2020
- The School Admissions (England) (Coronavirus) (Appeals Arrangements) (Amendment) (No.2) Regulations 2021

Changes to Regulations	Comments
The School Admissions (Appeal Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012	These regulations would be amended as necessary to give effect to any confirmed changes to the regulations relating to appeals.
The School Admissions (England) (Coronavirus) (Appeals Arrangements) (Amendment) Regulations 2020	Regulations will expire or be revoked. We may need to make some changes to the precise way these regulations expire to ensure the new rules align as sensibly as possible.
The School Admissions (England) (Coronavirus) (Appeals Arrangements) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2021	Regulations will expire or be revoked.

Annex C: Your details

If you are completing a paper version of this consultation then please provide the following information:

1. **Your name**

2. **Email address**

3. **Are you responding as an individual, or as part of an organisation (please circle)?**

Individual / local authority / admission authority / governing body / appeal panel member (including clerk) / other organisation (if other please specify)

4. **If you are responding on behalf of an organisation what is your role?**

5. **If you are responding as an individual, are you a:**

Parent / Carer / Guardian / Child or young person / None of the listed (please circle)

6. **Are you happy to be contacted about your response (please circle)?**

   Yes* / No

**If Yes, please provide your preferred contact telephone number or email (if different to the email given in Q.2)*

7. **How did you hear about the consultation?**

Email / GOV.UK / Internet / Word of mouth / Social media / Other (please specify)

Information provided in response to consultation, including personal data, may be subject to publication or disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018, or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. If you want all, or any part, of a response to be treated as confidential please explain why you consider it to be confidential. If a request for disclosure of the information you have provided is received, your explanation about why you consider it confidential will be taken into account, but no assurance can be given that confidentiality can be maintained. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department. The Department for Education will process your personal data (name and address and any other identifying material) in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, and your personal information will only be used for the purposes of this consultation. Your information will not be shared with third parties unless the law allows it. You can read more about what the Department for Education does when we ask for and hold your personal information in our personal information charter.

8. **Do you wish for your response to remain confidential (please circle)?**

   Yes / No

If yes, please provide a reason

Department for Education

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Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Children and Young People's Committee

7 March 2022

Agenda Item: 18

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEES

WORK PROGRAMME

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider the Committee's work programme for 2022.

Information

2. The County Council requires each committee to maintain a work programme. The work programme will assist the management of the committee's agenda, the scheduling of the committee's business and forward planning. The work programme will be updated and reviewed at each pre-agenda meeting and committee meeting. Any member of the committee is able to suggest items for possible inclusion.

3. The attached work programme has been drafted in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman and includes items which can be anticipated at the present time. Other items will be added to the programme as they are identified.

4. As part of the transparency introduced by the new committee arrangements, committees are expected to review day to day operational decisions made by officers using their delegated powers. It is anticipated that the committee will wish to commission periodic reports on such decisions. The committee is therefore requested to identify activities on which it would like to receive reports for inclusion in the work programme. It may be that the presentations about activities in the committee's remit will help to inform this.

5. The meeting dates and agenda items are subject to review in light of the ongoing COVID-19 period.

Other Options Considered

6. None.

Reason for Recommendation

7. To assist the committee in preparing its work programme.

Statutory and Policy Implications

8. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION

1) That the Committee considers whether any amendments are required to the Work Programme.

Marjorie Toward
Service Director, Customers, Governance & Employees

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Martin Gately
Democratic Services Officer
T: 0115 977 2826
E: martin.gately@nottscc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments (HD)

7. The Committee has authority to consider the matters set out in this report by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (NS)

8. There are no direct financial implications arising from the contents of this report. Any future reports to Committee on operational activities and officer working groups, will contain relevant financial information and comments.

Background Papers

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME 2021-22

REPORT TITLE	BRIEF SUMMARY OF AGENDA ITEM	LEAD OFFICER	REPORT AUTHOR
25 April 2022			
Best Start Strategy Progress six month update		Laurence Jones	Irene Kakoullis
Outcomes of Ofsted inspections of schools		Marion Clay	Diane Ward
Supporting the sustainability of Small Schools		Marion Clay	Karen Hughman
Establishment of additional Health Related Education and Education Other Than at School staffing		Marion Clay	Karen Hughman
Elective Home Education update	Six-monthly update	Marion Clay	Sarah Whitby
Tackling Emerging Threats to Children Team		Marion Clay	Sarah Lee
Establishment of posts for the Holiday Activities and Food Programme		Steve Edwards	Pom Bhogal
Harmful Sexual Behaviour by children – annual report		Laurence Jones	Claire Sampson
Commissioning and Contracts Board annual report	Annual report from the Board	Laurence Jones	Jon Hawketts
Early Years & Schools Forum and Education Trust Board officer group report	Annual officer group report	Marion Clay	Marion Clay
Corporate Parenting items:			
Children Looked After Governance Board – six month update		Laurence Jones	Laurence Jones
Contact Service annual report	Annual report	Steve Edwards	Devon Allen
Foster carers items		Steve Edwards	Steve Edwards