Nottinghamshire County Council

Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee

Monday, 22 September 2014 at 14:00

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

AGENDA

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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 Christine Marson (Tel. 0115 977 3887) 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	CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMITTEE
Date	Monday 9 June 2014 (commencing at 2.00 pm)

Membership
Persons absent are marked with an 'A'

COUNCILLORS

Liz Plant (Chairman)

John Allin		Kate Foale
Alan Bell	A	Philip Owen
Steve Carroll		Sue Saddington
Boyd Elliott		Jacky Williams

Foster Carer

Dawn Clements
Sarah Maiden

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Rachel Coombs	-	Group Manager, Children, Families and Cultural Services Department
David Ebbage	-	Assistant Democratic Services Officer, Policy, Planning & Corporate Services Department
Linda Foster	-	Team Manager, Support to Schools Service
John Slater	-	Service Director, Education Standards and Inclusion
Wendy Rylands	-	After Care Team Manager
Philippa Milbourne	-	Business Support Assistant, Children, Families & Cultural Services Department.
Sharon Thompson	-	Designated Nurse, Children in Care & Adoption
Jayne Austin	-	Service Manager, Fostering
Helen Daft	-	Service Manager
Yvonne Cottingham	-	Team Manager, CAMHS Children Looked After and Adoption team

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

That the appointment of Councillor Liz Plant as Chairman of the Sub-Committee by the County Council of 15th May 2014 for the forthcoming year be noted.

TO NOTE THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

That the membership of the Sub-Committee as listed below be noted:-

Councillor John Allin
Councillor Alan Bell
Councillor Boyd Elliott
Councillor Kate Foale
Councillor Colleen Harwood
Councillor Philip Owen
Councillor Sue Saddington
Councillor Jacky Williams

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 2014, having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

Councillor Steve Carroll replaced Councillor Colleen Harwood for this meeting only.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

SUMMER TERM REPORT FOR THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

John Slater, Service Director, Education Standards and Inclusion, and Linda Foster, Team Manager, Support to School Services, gave the Sub-Committee the latest figures for the summer term.

During their presentation, the following points were made:-

- That the proportion of Nottinghamshire Looked After Children achieving at least level 2 is above the national average in each of reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1.

- The proportion of Nottinghamshire Looked After Children achieving at least level 4 in each of reading. Writing and mathematics is below the national average for Looked After Children in Key Stage 2.

- At the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion of Looked After girls making expected progress across Key Stage 2 is higher than the proportion of Looked After boys making expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics, which indicates that Looked After Children need to make more than expected progress across Key Stage 2 in order to increase the proportions making age related expectations and an increasing proportion of Looked After boys need to make at least expected progress.

- The proportion of Notts' Looked After Children making 3 levels of progress in English and 3 levels of progress in mathematics from Key Stage 2 to 4 is below the proportions making 3 levels of progress nationally.

- The progress of Looked After Children needs to be accelerated across Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 to ensure that more looked after children reach age related expectations at the end of Key Stage 4. Transition plans are essential for any LAC obliged to move schools.

- The Library Service and Virtual School work together to offer the 'Letterbox Club' to Looked After Children in Years 3, 5 and 7. This aims to provide enjoyable educational support for LAC. Children will receive personalised parcels to their direct address which contain books and educational games.

- The Virtual School has written to every school asking for their Year 6 to 7 transition plans and has carried out on site visits to primary and secondary schools to support the planning process.

- Follow up visits to secondary schools will be arranged in the autumn term 2014.

The Chair thanked John and Linda for their informative presentation as previously the Sub-Committee has not had that sort of data. There is a real rigour there now regarding finding out why schools are not achieving.

Following questions from Members, the following points were made:-

- That the schools which are chosen for LAC are wherever possible good or outstanding. The main priority is that the school allocated is safe for that individual to attend. Moving a LAC to different schools on a regular basis can affect their performance.

- Each school should have a strategy with reference to LAC.

- Members were impressed with the Letterbox Club idea and thought it was vital to provide enjoyable educational support for Looked After Children.

- The report states (paragraphs 15/16) that 7.1% of LAC attend a school that Ofsted had judged as inadequate. This data will be updated at the end of this year with the recent Ofsted inspections. Also, a new tracking system is being piloted regarding this; the feedback makes the system rigorous.

The Chair thanked them both for their presentation.

RESOLVED 2014/008

That the update on the virtual school for the summer term 2014 term be noted.

FOSTERING SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

Jayne Austin, Service Manager Fostering, provided information to Members on the activity and performance of the fostering service from April 2013, highlighting the following:

- Nottinghamshire saw a rapid increase in the number of children in care during the period 2008 to 2012.

- The average weekly cost of an independent fostering placement is £829, a residential placement is £2,149, and Nottinghamshire's foster care provision is £414.

- The authority has to find a way to spend their money differently with an ambitious saving target of £6,59m over the next three years (2014-2017) and plans to do are already taking place reducing reliance upon high cost independent fostering and residential provision.

- To help achieve this, the authority needs to recruit 160 new foster households over the next three years.

- The changed advertising and marketing approach has resulted in positive outcomes. In 2013/14 46 new foster households were approved compared with 32 in the previous year which is an increase of 40%.

- The retention of foster carers was less positive in 2013/124 with 36 foster households in 2013/14 compared with a loss of 10 foster households in 2012/13. Reasons for people ceasing to foster were choosing to retire, a change in circumstance or for safeguarding reasons.

- The service has strengthened its support strategy to foster carers and birth children. In 2013/14 the first Countywide Sons and Daughters event took place and a future one is planned in October 2014.

- The service has a good reputation to help support foster carers. The support strategy helps to increase the level of engagement and participation for carers. It also helps with their involvement in the recent recruitment activity, media interviews, and with the web site.

The Chair thanked Jayne for her informative update and expressed how positive the report was.

Following questions from Members of the Sub-Committee, the following points were made:-

- Members were very pleased with the Sons and Daughters initiative.

- Members thought that foster carers helping and getting involved in the recruitment process was very positive.

RESOLVED 2014/009

That the information on the activity and performance of the fostering service from April 2013 to March 2014 be noted.

IMPROVING HEALTH OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE CARE OF LOCAL AUTHORITY

Sharon Thompson, Designated Nurse for Children in Care and Adoption, informed the Sub-Committee about the role and purpose of the Children in Care and Adoption Health Team.

During her presentation the following points were made:-

- The Children in Care and Adoption Team is made up of Clinical Care Specialists, Community Paediatricians and designated professionals, based in three locations across the County.

- There is clear evidence indicating that children and young people who enter into the care system often have worse levels of health than their peers, which can in turn have long term impacts on their future outcomes. This can be though parent behaviours, drug and alcohol use or neglect.

- The service is performance monitored against a number of key performance indicators as follows:

    1. Initial health assessments completed within statutory timescales.
    2. Review health assessments completed
    3. Registration with a dentist
    4. Registration with a GP
    5. Immunisation data
    6. The voice of the child is recognised

- The team is actively involved in the Looked After Children Strategy meetings and the development of improving health targets. They are currently working on raising the profile of the health needs of children in care with all health partners.

- An information sharing agreement, information on placement notifications such as admissions/discharges is now in place between health and social care. This ensures that the key information is shared with health partners about key placement information pertaining to children in care

- The team receives notifications regarding children and young people who go missing from care; this notification is shared with the children in care nurses and with health visitors/school nurses.

- A nurse within the team attends the Children in Care Council meetings to discuss with the children and young people any leaflets the team are developing and any other health issues as appropriate. Also the team are closely linked to the safeguarding colleagues in health and they also attend all relevant forums.

- The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) in partnership with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and LAC helps inform the health assessments and identifies to CAMHS LAC children who have emotional health issues of concern.

Following questions from Members, the following points were made:-

The electronic systems used by Health are not compatible to the Local Authority systems, but the health team have got mobile working which they can log on to other health systems which can be helpful.

Members were extremely encouraged by the report and how satisfying it is to hear that healthcare professionals are working closely together with others to help improve the service.

The Sub-Committee agreed to have a further update in six months' time.

RESOLVED 2014/010

That the role and purpose of the Children in Care and Adoption Health Team be noted.

COUNTY CAMHS LOOKED AFTER AND ADOPTION TEAM – SERVICE PROVISION AND DEVELOPMENTS 2013/14

This report provided an update to the Sub-Committee on the work and service developments of the County CAMHS Looked After and Adoption Team

The following points were made during the presentation:-

- The number of referrals to the team during the past six months was 188 from September 2013 – March 2014 but there are currently 261 cases open to the team.

- Residential consultations are more focused and are working a lot better.

- Nottinghamshire County Council has three mainstream children's residential homes within the County (Lyndene, Westview and Oakhurst). They have recently reviewed the monthly consultation sessions at each home to match the CAMHS service offered to the Fostering and Adoption Service.

- The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire has been incorporated by the CAMHS Children Looked After and Adoption Team into their referral process.

- The team has developed a six week training course for residential staff from the three mainstream residential homes.

- In partnership with colleagues in the Children in Care Health Team, the Looked After team have been successful in initiating a Community of Interest for Children in Care. They have hosted two events, one in September 2013 and one in March 2014, at which the Foster Carers Liaison Advice Group (FLAG) and the Virtual School both gave presentations. Both events were well received.

Following questions from Members, the following points were made:-

Most new referrals are of school age and stay in contact with the school regarding any noticeable change in behaviour etc.

Foster carers are supported to manage the emotional difficulties of children in care and the demands that living with a child whose behaviour is not age appropriate can make on family life.

Members wanted reassurance that paragraph 24 of the report regarding a course being made available much earlier in their fostering career was taken on board. This was confirmed: internal training is provided, three family workers who work with foster carers help with the training and a package regarding physical aggression with a child is given to carers.

RESOLVED 2014/011

That the update on the work and service developments of the County CAMHS Looked After and Adoption Team be noted.

WORK PROGRAMME

The updated work programme was considered by Members.

RESOLVED 2014/012

That the Committee's work programme be noted.

FOSTER CARERS ITEMS

In response to concerns/issues raised by Foster Carers, the following points were clarified:-

- blood borne virus checks of adopters were only carried out when indicated as medically necessary during assessment;
- carers were advised to provide multi-vitamins for under 5s but these did not need to be prescribed by a GP;
- the issue of Foster Carers being sent breast milk in containers would be explored further and the outcomes before the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 3.50pm

CHAIRMAN
9 June 2014

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee

22 September 2014

Agenda Item: 4

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

END OF YEAR REPORT FOR THE INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER SERVICE

Purpose of the Report

1. To update Members of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee about the activities within the Independent Reviewing Officer Service during April 2013 to March 2014.

Information and Advice

2. The annual report, which is attached as **Appendix 1**, informs the Sub-Committee about the activities undertaken in order to improve the Independent Reviewing officer (IRO) service to children and young people in Nottinghamshire. It also takes into consideration how well the Service is doing and identifies areas for development in the coming year 2014-15. **Appendix A** to the annual report identifies the progress made from the last annual report for 2012-2013.

3. The report focusses on the key functions of the Independent Reviewing Officers and highlights the work undertaken in respect of children and young people. Over the past year, due to the looked after population stabilising, this has enabled the IROs to discharge their distinct responsibilities in scrutinising the care plans and seeking the wishes and feelings of children and young people more in order to improve outcomes.

4. Further work will take place during 2014-15 to gain the views of children and young people over the age of nine years regarding the service they receive along with strengthening the contact between the IRO and young person between formal reviews. As the dispute resolution process is now embedded an evaluation of the effectiveness of this will be undertaken to explore the impact this has on improving outcomes for looked after children.

Other Options Considered

5. The report is for noting only.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

6. The report is for noting only.

Statutory and Policy Implications

7. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That the activities of the Independent Reviewing Officer Service from April 2013 to March 2014 be noted.

Steve Edwards
Service Director, Children's Social Care

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Izzy Martin
Service Manager, Independent Chair Service
T: 01623 433157
E: izzy.martin@nottscc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments

8. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (KLA 28/08/14)

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

Background Papers and Published Documents

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C0482

Nottinghamshire County Council

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
Annual Report of Independent Reviewing Officer [IRO] Service

April 2013 – March 2014

Independent Chair Service vision statement (June 2012)

"To ensure that, through the independent review process, protection and care plans for children meet their individual needs and secure better outcomes for children and young people"

1. Introduction

The Independent Chair Service (ICS) covers Nottinghamshire County and sits within the Safeguarding and Independent Review service area. The ICS is responsible for quality assuring practice in relation to children in public care or children subject to a child protection plan, and to promote effective interagency working. The Independent Chairs have continued to contribute to the development and promotion of good practice by addressing concerns regarding care planning for children, identifying areas for development and highlighting good practice.

There are two groups of staff that chair meetings and this report will focus on the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) part of the service. A separate report will be available in respect of the Child Protection Coordinator part of the ICS.

The IRO Handbook notes that the IRO Manager is responsible for the production of an annual report for scrutiny by members of the Corporate Parenting Board. This report will also be available as a public document on the County Council's website.

This report will;

- describe activities undertaken in order to improve our service to children and young people in Nottinghamshire
- consider how well we are doing
- identify areas for development for the service in the coming year

Progress against actions identified in last year's annual report will be addressed in the body of this report but are also detailed in **Appendix A**.

2. The role of the IRO

Independent Reviewing Officers were introduced across England and Wales to represent the interests of looked after children. Statutory guidance (The IRO Handbook) was introduced in April 2011.

The role of an IRO is to ensure the child's care plan fully reflects the child's needs, and that their wishes and feelings are sought. The IRO also has a duty to monitor the local authority's

performance and to challenge any poor practice in the care planning process. If the IRO is unable to agree the plan for the child or young person then they can refer their concerns to the Children and Family Court Advisory Service (CAFCASS).

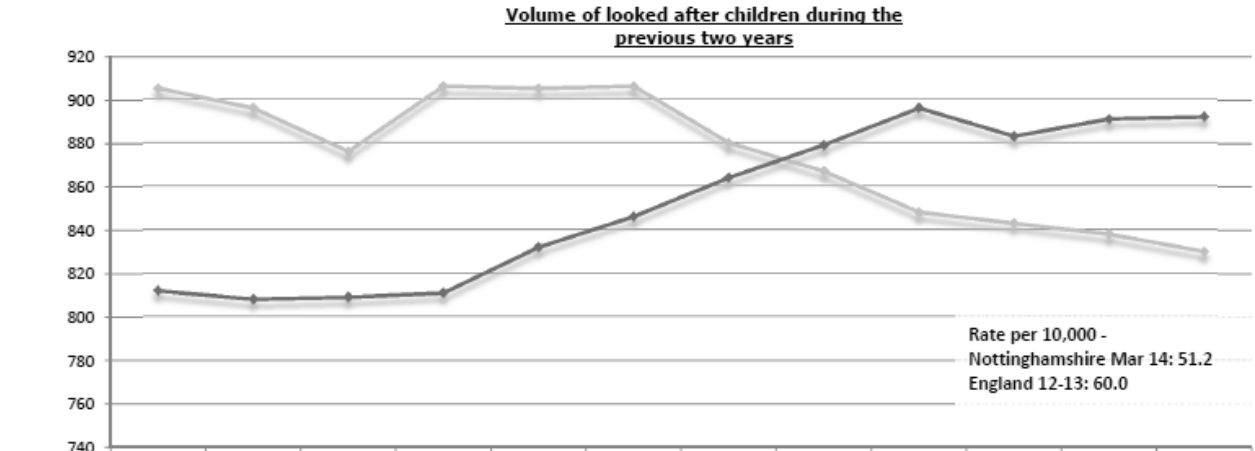
The IRO is responsible for making sure the child has access to an advocate and understands how they can support them during the review meeting. IROs have been identified to take a lead role in specific areas, for example looked after children with disabilities and those who have involvement with mental health services, in order to promote expertise and good practice in those areas.

3. Structure of the service

Over the past year there has been continued focus to increase the number of permanent staff within the service. There are currently 13.1 IROs; 10.5 FTE are permanent staff and 2.6 FTE are agency. Due to the increased LAC population over the last few years, it had been necessary to increase the number of IROs. However, during 2013-14, LAC numbers have stabilised in Nottinghamshire which has enabled the service to meet demands and expectations within current capacity.

On 31st March 2013, there were 892 Looked after Children in Nottinghamshire. The total number of LAC reviews chaired by IROs between April 2013 and March 2014 was 2,722, with 95% (2,579) being held within timescale.

As can be seen from the chart below, there was a notable increase in the number of LAC from July to December 2012, with numbers stabilising from January to September 2013. LAC numbers have then been decreasing in the period October 2013 to March 2014.



	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2013-14	905	896	876	906	905	906	880	867	848	843	838	830
2012-13	812	808	809	811	832	846	864	879	896	883	891	892

It has been noted by the IROs that there has been a significant increase in the number of children and young people who have been made subject to guardianship orders to former foster carers. During 2012-2013, 8.4% of children left care due to a Special Guardianship Order (SGO) being made, compared to 15.9% in 2013-2014.

The work undertaken by IROs is supported by a team of Business Support staff who complete some of the review minutes for the IROs. They also assist in distributing the minutes in a timely way. Consideration is being given to the use of electronic devices to aid and increase the efficiency of minute taking within the service as a whole.

The Service Managers observe IROs in reviews to promote consistency and individual development; and feedback sought from agencies as part of this process has been positive about the chairing skills of the Nottinghamshire IROs.

4. Key functions of IROs

The IRO role is pivotal in making sure permanency plans are in place for each Looked after Child and that adoption is being progressed as quickly as possible where applicable. A review for a Looked after Child forms part of a continuing planning process for that child, and is held to make plans to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

In most cases where a child who is the subject of a child protection plan becomes looked after they will no longer need to remain on a child protection plan. IROs liaise regularly with the Child Protection Coordinators to ensure children and young people are only subject to one planning and review process. At the end of March 2014, 12 children were recorded as 'dual status' i.e. being both looked after and subject to a child protection plan.

IROs recognise that some children and young people are particularly vulnerable. These include those who live outside the local authority area, those who go missing and those at risk of sexual exploitation. IROs therefore take extra care in understanding the risks posed to these children. They track what is happening with these cases, and make sure the social worker and involved agencies are adhering to required expectations of visits and meetings to ensure these children and young people are not further disadvantaged by a delay in response to their needs. The IROs recognise their role in ensuring these children and young people are placed in the most appropriate placement to meet their needs. IROs also promote positive and effective contact with agencies and family.

As part of their quality assurance role, IROs gather information and offer feedback in respect of the involvement and contribution of social care and external organisations. Where there are significant concerns relating to practice or drift, the IRO will initiate an alert to the social care team manager or raise the practice issue with the relevant external organisation. During 2013-2014, a total of 190 alerts were raised. This is a significant increase over the previous two years and evidences that the IROs are being more robust in challenging the local authority where appropriate about concerns relating to practice, including any delay in progressing recommendations.

The following were the key themes noted with regard to the alerts processed:

- incomplete assessments causing delay in decisions about planning
- permanence options for young person not fully explored
- pathway plan not completed fully
- delay in requesting initial LAC Review when child placed in a Regulation 24 placement with family
- delay in making application for court proceedings to be initiated to secure permanence for children
- lack of preparation for young person leaving care
- absence of appropriate paperwork; Personal Education Plan, health assessment and essential information

More recently the service also introduced a system for raising practice issues with external organisations where there are concerns about their contribution to the needs identified in the child or young person's plan.

In conjunction with the virtual head two such issues have been raised relating to education matters. These were both related to the young persons' access to appropriate education and both were resolved satisfactorily The use of the dispute resolution process with external organisations and within the Local Authority has been strengthened with greater Service Manager oversight and a robust system put into place to track and monitor responses in a timely way.

It is important to note that IROs also feedback on positive practice to social workers and other organisations in respect of the work undertaken with looked after children, for example positive direct work with young people

Independent legal advice can be accessed by IROs when required in relation to issues around care plans. This has been formalised in the last year and has been accessed on one occasion, resulting in a clear view on whether a young person who was in receipt of short breaks was eligible for a leaving Care Service.

Following a LAC review, IROs input information onto the child's electronic record which provides information about a number of tasks in relation to the LAC process. Notable information includes:

- Was the LAC report received 3 days before LAC review?
- Have all the appropriate agencies been invited/ consulted with?
- Was the child/young person seen alone by the IRO?
- Was the child/young person consulted with by the IRO prior to the review meeting?
- Has the "Listen to me" document been completed?
- Was the young person consulted about the venue?
- Was the young person asked who they would like to attend the review?
- Did the child/young person attend their review and how were their views obtained?

Key themes identified from the data recorded include:

- There has been some improvement in LAC review reports being received prior to the review. The vast majority of LAC review processes involve all relevant people.
- IROs make every effort to see the child/young person alone, however young people sometimes decline to meet. The wishes and feelings of children and young people are sought through "Listen to me " documents, visits, telephone contact, letters, interactive play, pictures and through the use of advocacy. If the child/young person attends the review then the IRO will consult with them prior to the meeting starting.
- The IRO will make every effort to hold the meeting at the venue of the child/young person's choice, but this is not always achievable.
- The IRO will consult with the young person about whom they want to attend their review once they have established a good working relationship with them.

A detailed report will be provided with this information for social care teams external organisations to comment on good practice within the next 6 months.

5. Participation and engagement of children and young people

Young people's engagement in the review process

During the year a 'Signs and Symbols' leaflet has been developed for 0-18 year olds. This work involved young people from the Children in Care Council, service providers, specialist schools and two IROs with specialist knowledge of working with children with disabilities. This has now been finalised and is now being printed.

The following are examples of how IROs have helped to engage young people in their reviews:

- A 17 year old young person co-chaired their own review. This worked well as she has attended her reviews since she came into care when she was 12 and she has ongoing support from Children in Care Council of which she is a member. The IRO was impressed as the young person took control of her own care planning whilst discussing current achievements and what she intended to do in the future once she had left care.
- A sibling group of three girls ranging from 7 to 12 years of age chose not to attend the review meeting, but the IRO visited them in their foster home to see them alone and they also completed the Listen To Me document for the review.
- A 12 year old young person who is deaf and has complex emotional needs was visited by his IRO both at school and foster home to gain a better view of his current situation and needs. His foster carer and teacher provided sign language support. For future visits the IRO will be seeking an independent sign language worker to accompany them.
- An 11 year old young person completed a Listen to Me leaflet, spoke with his IRO prior to his LAC review and fully participated in the meeting. He has a very positive view about how being in care has helped him and is making good progress.

There are some excellent examples of engagement with children and young people by their social worker and in particular the methods used by residential units to convey young people's wishes and feelings have been noted as positive practice by IROs.
The information provided has been of great value and provides a story about the child or young person's progress and achievements in school and where they live.

Children with complex communication needs are provided with an IRO who has developed skills and has specialist knowledge in working with children with disabilities. IROs strongly advocate for these children, and use more creative ways to allow them to express their wishes and feelings and participate in their plan.

Young People's achievements

IROs embrace the achievements of children through LAC reviews. The following are some examples:

- As a consequence of early life experiences, two young people were lacking in confidence and self-esteem. Both have thrived in their foster placement, took up street dancing classes and have performed at numerous venues. One of them has a passion for computers and is studying with the view to get into forensic technology.
- A young person attended a celebration event at County Hall in November 2013; they invited numerous adults who were involved in their life including their IRO. The young person was interviewed along with others by the local press and undertook a presentation. It was a proud occasion to see all the people involved with the young person offering her support at this event.
- A 13 year old recently took part in the National Roller Hockey competition and reached the semi-final in which she received a bronze medal. The young person also played for the women's team where she reached the final and won the cup. Given these achievements the young person is due to go to the Youth Olympics in Las Vegas in July this year to compete in roller hockey.

How the IROs have advocated on behalf of young people;

IROs are now attending the 'No Labels' Children in Care Council meeting where they seek to help a group of looked after children and young people express their views as to how services could be improved and strengthened. These views are then shared with the rest of the IRO team so that all have a clear understanding about any particular issues that need addressing either during reviews or when IROs are in contact with children and young people between reviews.

In one specific example, a placement was at the risk of breaking down and the IRO negotiated a planned period of respite with the support of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) so that the placement continued as it was in the best interests of the young person. The young person remained in placement and is planning to leave care later this year.

6. Key areas for further development for 2014-2015

- More work will take place aimed at gaining the views from children and young people over the age of 9 years regarding the service they receive from the IROs.
- Additional specific work, in conjunction with the No Labels group, (the Children in Care Council) will take place to engage with younger children (aged 5-9). Work with the No Labels group is planned to explore other creative ways of involving children and young people in their reviews and to consider the possibility of how the record of a LAC review can be produced in a more child-friendly way.
- The contact between the IRO and young person between formal reviews is to be strengthened and developed.
- An evaluation of the effectiveness of the dispute resolution process is to be undertaken in order to further demonstrate the impact on improved outcomes for Looked after Children.
- Further feedback to be sought on the IRO service from carers and professionals to identify further opportunities for improvement.

Izzy Martin and Hilary Turner
Service Managers
Independent Chair Service
Safeguarding and Independent Review
Children, Families and Cultural Services
Nottinghamshire County Council

May 2014

APPENDIX B

Progress on areas for development identified in annual report 2012-2013

- **Complete a questionnaire with children and young people to ascertain their views about the service they receive from the IROs and respond to any areas where improvements are required.**

  Progress: Views of children and young people have been sought when LAC reviews have been observed and when the ICS Service Manager attended the No Labels Children in Care Council on 16/01/14 young people provided feedback on the service provided by IROs which was positive.

- **Complete and disseminate the Signs and Symbols 'Listen to Me' leaflet**

  Progress: This has now been completed and will be circulated to children and young people.

- **Linking identified IROs with the Children in Care Council**

  Progress: An IRO has been identified to attend future meetings and also promote communication between CICC and FLAG (Fostering Liaison group) meeting

- **Ensure children and young people have sight of their care plan prior to the review**

  Progress: There has been some improvement in this and IROs have continued to promote good practice in this area.

- **As far as possible promote reviews being held at venue of choice of young person**

  Progress: It is not always possible to hold reviews at the young person's choice of venue but IROs continue to discuss with young people.

- **Explore further the opportunities for a young person to be involved in chairing their review**

  Progress: With the support of the IRO more young people are being encouraged to chair or co-chair their reviews**.**

- **Ensure that the level of IRO caseloads enables the exercising of their quality assurance role adequately.**

  Progress: Over the past year the IROs caseloads have reduced which will enable them to see children and young people more and to ensure tasks identified between reviews are being acted upon by social workers and other agencies.

- **Link IROs with specific social work teams to promote quality feedback regarding key issues and exchange of information**

  Progress: All the IROs have links with a specific team or agency or have a lead for an identified specialism

- **Strengthen the links with the Family Justice Board and CAFCASS in order to promote the role of the IRO.**

  Progress: IRO and CAFCASS managers meet on a quarterly basis – a revised IRO/CAFCASS protocol has been agreed. An IRO representative attends meetings of the Family Justice Board.

- **Improve the quality of LAC review minutes to ensure they are outcome focussed and expressed within a SMART framework.**

  Progress: There has been improvement made in ensuring the record of LAC reviews and the recommendations made are more specific and outcome focused.

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee

22 September 2014

Agenda Item: 5

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

ADOPTION SERVICES BI-ANNUAL REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide a six-monthly update on activity in the adoption service from March to August 2014.

Information and Advice

2. The Government continues to drive improvement of performance in the adoption sector, with a range of legal, policy and organisational changes.

3. A national Adoption Leadership Board has been established, chaired by Sir Martin Narey, with representatives from the Association of Directors of Children's Services, the voluntary sector and academics. Mark Owers, Chief Executive of the Council of Voluntary Adoption Agencies, is vice-chair. The Leadership Board now monitors performance and drives change. There is a regional link to the national Board – Janice Spencer, Assistant Director in Lincolnshire, is the link for the East Midlands and she in turn links to Annie Hudson, from the College of Social Work who sits on the national Board.

4. The quarterly survey reports on all significant dates for all children with an adoption plan, and from 2014, for all adults who have completed a Registration of Interest in adoption, and has a number of targets for timescales.

5. In addition it allows national and local analysis of number and demographic of children waiting for adoption, and adopters available to take placements of children.

6. The Government continues to stimulate growth in the voluntary sector by making available adoption grant monies, which Voluntary Adoption Agencies (VAAs) can bid for, to enable schemes to increase recruitment. There have been two major Government initiatives to support the voluntary sector to recruit more adopters.

7. In 2013-14 the growth in the voluntary sector was approximately 17%, which was below the desired target.

8. In the same period, the growth in the local authority (LA) sector was 27%, the largest for some time. The experience in the East Midlands consortium (9 Las) is of growth such that there is now a pool of adopters available for young, single children.

9. However there continues to be a mis-match between the children waiting: siblings, older children, those with complex backgrounds, developmental delay, and approved adopters.

10. Nottinghamshire performance is as follows:

	2011-12	**2012-13**	**2013-14**	**April - July 2014**	**2014-15 estimate**
Adult approvals	31	45	58	19	57
New adoption plans	81	104	67	19	57
Children placed	51	86	91	23	69
Children adopted	42	40	88	39	117

11. Of the matches made in 2013-14, 60 children were placed with 52 Nottinghamshire families, and 31 children placed with 20 families from other agencies. It should be noted that the number of new plans in 2013-14 fell to 75, and is now steady, thus children placed and adopted in the coming years will fall correspondingly.

12. The number of adopters that Nottinghamshire County Council recruits continues to be approximately 60 per annum, thus performance has improved by almost 100% since 2011-12. This, coupled with the high numbers of children placed means we now have very few children waiting; we have now matched children who have waited a substantial period of time. Those now waiting have complexities which make them harder to place.

13. In addition we are now able to place children from other local authorities with our adopters. This impacts positively on national performance on numbers of children waiting.

14. The adoption quarterly data is now returned to the Adoption Leadership Board, and includes data regarding adults in assessment, or approved adopters. For adults the information had not been reported by all local authorities, but the first national reporting showed an increase in adopters and only about 30-40% of assessments being within six months (national figures). Nottinghamshire's Adoption Service currently processes approximately 60% of assessment within six months.

15. For children, Nottinghamshire performance using a three year average remains off target, however using a tool provided by the Department for Education (DfE) which measures current performance only, Nottinghamshire is closer to target.

16. Adoption support continues to be an area of development for the Government. There is a current pilot of 10 local authorities, and VAAs, of personal budgets, for adopters to purchase support packages. There is also a piece of research to map existing services as the current choice and quality is variable. This is part of the challenge to ensure all adopters can access services.

17. In addition, 2013-14 was the first year all local authorities were required to report on adoption disruptions. The Government commissioned research into disruption was published in 2013 and showed that adopters valued the support of social workers who understood adoption and attachment and that support which questioned parenting style was not helpful. It also showed that violence towards parents was a common feature of unstable placements and this is an area that will be investigated further by the Government.

18. The new process for assessing adopters has been in place a year, from July 2013 to June 2014. The team has vastly improved their performance in time taken to approve adopters with 66% meeting the six months timescale, from January to June 2014. Matching is also much speedier now, with many adopters application to match within nine months, a timescale which is in fact challenging to adopters.

19. Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) continues to utilise all home finding opportunities for children – publicity, adoption activity days, adoption register events, local profile sharing events and this consistent activity across the range does produce matches, for most children. There is no one activity proving more successful than another.

20. New regulations allow children to be placed in a fostering placement which will become adoption. This is not the same as foster carers who may then choose to adopt (about 15% of all adoptions of children from care are by foster carers) but relates to approved adopters who are also temporarily approved as foster carers for a named child, to enable a child to be placed with them at an earlier point. This is then a foster placement until it becomes adoption.

21. There is an element of risk for the adopters in this type of placement, but the advantage is that the child is settled in a permanent placement at a much younger age, usually an adoption placement can only be made after a child is subject to a Placement Order, and the adoption panel have recommended a match which the agency decision maker approves. However a foster to adopt placement can be made at any point in the time before the Placement Order.

22. Increasingly adopters are considering foster to adopt. Nottinghamshire have seen one child placed at under three months of age and adopted at nine months of age. There are a further four placements in progress currently.

23. The partnership with a local Voluntary Adoption Agency, Adopt Together, continues to provide placements for Nottinghamshire children, 11 to date. In addition, we are now exploring joint provision of some adoption support services, such as groups for adopters, or children, and networks for adopters. We are also working together where capacity becomes an issue for either agency, directing potential adopters between the agencies as necessary.

24. Future plans include:

- consolidating learning and practice for foster to adopt
- exploring the possibility of specifically recruiting foster to adopt carers, particularly for older children
- reviewing the process to identify any delay in the Placement Order to match process

- awaiting the result of the pilot projects of personal budgets for adoption support, and review of implications for NCC
- building on the reputation of NCC when placing children to enable NCC adopters to adopt children from other Local Authorities.

Other Options Considered

25. The report is for noting only.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

26. The report is for noting only.

Statutory and Policy Implications

27. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That the six-monthly update on activity in the adoption service from March to August 2014 be noted.

Steve Edwards
Service Director, Children's Social Care

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments

28. As this report is for noting only no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (KLA 28/08/14)

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

Background Papers and Published Documents

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C0479

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee

22 September 2014

Agenda Item: 6

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN STRATEGY UPDATE

Purpose of the Report

1. To update the Sub-Committee on the progress of the action plan for the Looked After Children Strategy.

Information and Advice

2. It was identified that our approach to Looked After Children would benefit from the development of an over-arching strategy which outlines the commitment of the Council and our partner agencies to supporting children in care. The strategy has been developed based on what young people have told us is important to them in The Pledge for Looked After Children, published in October 2010.

3. Nottinghamshire's commitments to Looked After Children, as set out in The Pledge, underpin our Looked After Children Strategy which was published in August 2012. This strategy identifies the Council's ambition for its Looked After Children and young people, ensuring that they receive placements that meet their needs, have access to high quality education and enjoy positive activities that support them to achieve their full potential. For those children who require permanent alternative families it means ensuring that effective plans are made so that they achieve permanence as quickly as possible.

4. The LAC Strategy action plan, a summary of which is attached as **Appendix 1**, had a number of work streams which included piloting new panel arrangements for entry to care, reviewing the support in place for kinship care and care leavers, and the wider range of options for permanency available to children and young people in the care system.

5. Key actions in all priority areas have been completed which include:

   - a review of The Pledge for Looked After Children to ensure it continues to reflect the priorities of children in care in Nottinghamshire
   - the establishment of a Permanence Panel to ensure greater scrutiny of permanent placements and ensure robust support arrangements are in place
   - production of a new review booklet to ensure young people's voices are heard and that they shape their own care plans

- a new guide to adoption is available for older children and young people to help them understand the opportunities and challenges this presents, and how they can influence the process
- all new Looked After Children and existing Looked After Children with significant changes to circumstance will have a designated Educational Psychologist
- two additional Looked After Children Achievement Officers have been recruited to the Virtual School
- most district councils are now offering free or reduced cost sports and leisure activities for Looked After Children and young people
- a new data sharing system is in place between Health and Children's Social Care that will assist in identifying health concerns of Looked After Children
- the number of salaried carers for young people in need of specialist foster care placements has increased
- a new Family Assessment and Contact Service has been established which provides a consistent approach to contact across the County
- increased leave is available for Nottinghamshire County Council staff who are taking on the care of a child through a special guardianship order

6. In order to enable better communication and networking with young people, intentions were to set up a Facebook page specifically for Looked After Children. Unfortunately, due to issues regarding security and access, the LAC Strategy steering group has agreed that there will be no further action on this.

7. The LAC Strategy steering group continues to identify and monitor further work which supports the Council's commitment to children in care. Following the publication of the '*From a Distance'* Ofsted thematic inspection report in April 2014, the steering group agreed to conduct an audit of all cases of Looked After Children who are living at a significant distance from their home area. The findings of the audit will be reported to the steering group in September 2014, and any additional areas identified for improvement will be monitored through the action plan.

Other Options Considered

8. The report is for noting only.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

9. The report is for noting only.

Statutory and Policy Implications

10. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working 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

11. Looked After Children will benefit from clear commitments from the County Council and partner agencies which support them, based on what young people in care have told us is important to them in The Pledge.

Public Sector Equality Duty Implications

12. The Strategy commits Council and partner services to giving Looked After Children the same opportunities as any other group of children and young people.

Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Implications

13. The Strategy strengthens the commitment of the Council and partners to effectively safeguarding this vulnerable group of children and young people.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That the update on the progress of the action plan for the Looked After Children Strategy be noted.

Steve Edwards
Service Director, Children's Social Care

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Constitutional Comments

14. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (KLA 28/08/14)

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

Background Papers and Published Documents

Looked After Children Strategy – report to Policy Committee on 18 July 2012
Looked After Children Strategy update – report to Policy Committee on 16 January 2013
Looked After Children Strategy update - report to Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee on 17 March 2014

‘*From a Distance’* Ofsted thematic inspection report - April 2014

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.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C0485

Appendix 1

LAC Strategy Action Plan Monitoring

Theme	Number	Action	Achieved?
Participation & Joining In	1	Work with young people to produce a new review booklet to ensure their voices are heard	Yes
	2	Ensure reviewing officers use the consultation booklets with children and young people prior to every review	Ongoing
	3	Create a Facebook page to enable better communication and networking with young people	NFA
	4	Continuously review 'The Pledge' to ensure it continues to reflect the priorities of all age groups in care	Yes
	5	Ensure that care planning decisions such as placement changes are not made outside the review process, and that children are always involved in these decisions	Ongoing
	6	Ensure children who live in independent sector placements can access the same opportunities and services as those who are placed within NCC	Partially
	7	Ensure care planning is inclusive and reflects the views of parents and carers	Yes
	8	Produce a new guide to adoption for older children and young	Yes
	9	Develop a participation strategy that outlines how agencies will gather and promote the views of children looked after	Ongoing
	10	Ensure that all children looked after will have a link educational psychologist	Yes
	11	Monitor LAC in below floor target schools and also those LAC in satisfactory schools	Ongoing
	12	Improve the timeliness and quality of Personal Education Plans	Yes
	13	Ensure that teacher assessment data is robust and good quality	Ongoing
Education	14	Review funding mechanisms that currently support the education of looked after children	Ongoing
	15	Minimise the number of times looked after children need to move to a different school during their education	Ongoing
	16	Remove barriers to school admissions for Looked After Children	Ongoing
	17	Ensure that the staffing and resources available to the Virtual School are sufficient	Yes
	18	Improve the Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) support to Looked After Children at the end of Key Stage 4	Yes
Health	19	Work with District Councils to improve access to council-run sport and leisure facilities for looked after children	Yes
	20	Ensure that social care and health systems work more closely together to provide accurate and timely information	Yes
	21	Ensure commissioning arrangements for health services for LAC and care leavers are prioritised and maintained in the light of health reforms	Yes

Appendix 1

Theme	Number	Action	Achieved?
Safe & Stable Placements	22	Consultation exercise to review the experience of children and young people in placements, to understand where we can improve	Ongoing
	23	Pilot a Creative Solutions Panel	Yes
	24	Ensure that disruption meetings are held in a consistent way in all types of placement	Yes
	25	Continue to expand the number of salaried carers for young people in need of foster care	Yes
	26	Explore ways of better managing the challenges that social media bring to placements	Yes
	27	Maintain our commitment to inclusive adoption planning and support	Yes
	28	Develop our support to children and young people in permanent kinship placements	Ongoing
Relationships	29	Establish a new Family Assessment and Contact Service which will provide a consistent approach to contact across the county	Yes
	30	Develop a training and information pack for social workers in the throughcare team	Yes
	31	Delegate more authority to foster carers to make day to day decisions about contact plans with family and friends	Yes
	32	Continue to recruit foster carers from a wide range of diverse backgrounds	Ongoing
	33	Review of internal and external provider services to ensure that placements are VFM and are providing the best possible experience for LAC, their birth families and carers	Partially
	34	Further develop our support to children and young people in permanent placements to ensure that these remain stable and continue to meet their needs	Yes
	35	Ensure that all LAC with permanent fostering plans have life story work completed	Ongoing
Moving to Adulthood	36	Scope the viability of an integrated transitions service for children with disabilities	Yes
	37	Continue to recruit foster carers under the 14+ scheme to support the Staying Put Policy	Ongoing
	38	Develop supported lodgings and extend accommodation options for care leavers	Yes
	39	Increase availability of apprenticeships within NCC for care leavers	Yes
Emotional Wellbeing	40	Services to looked after young people will all contribute to the emotional wellbeing of our looked after children and young people	Ongoing
	41	Identify new ways of measuring positive progress in emotional resilience and wellbeing of our looked after children and young people	Ongoing
	42	Further assess mental health and emotional needs of Looked After Children through the refresh of the CAMHS needs assessment	Yes
	43	Increase leave available for NCC staff who are taking on the care of a child through a special guardianship order	Yes
Additional actions	44	The involvement of looked after children and young people in a two year self-harm research project through CAMHS	Ongoing
	45	Children's Transformation Programme - Review of the Children's Disability Service.	Ongoing
	46	CSC representation on the Children and Young People's Participation and Positive Activities co-ordination group	Ongoing
	47	Monitor progress of the 'From a Distance' action plan for LAC placed at a significant distance from their home area	Ongoing

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee

22 September 2014

Agenda Item: 7

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

LEAVING CARE SERVICE UPDATE

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members with an update on the Leaving Care Team. The team is part of the Throughcare Service and provides advice, support and guidance to young people who have left the care of the local authority and are over the age of 18 years.

Information and Advice

2. There has been no change to the team structure or specification since the previous report to this Sub-Committee in March 2014. The staff group of 1.6 Team Managers, 13 Personal Advisers and 2 Achievement Advisers remains stable and there have been no vacancies during this period.

3. Since the previous report in March the numbers of young people the team is working with has increased from 290 to 316 (July 2014). An increase had been predicted due to the higher numbers of looked after young people, especially the growing number of 16 and 17 year olds in care. There has also been an increase in young people returning for services after the age of 21 years due to returning to education and requiring support. The average Personal Adviser caseload is now 24.

4. The following tables show the ethnicity, gender and age breakdown of the young people currently open to the Leaving Care Team. The number with a disability is also shown.

Ethnicity	Count
Asian or Asian British Any other Asian Background	**10**
Black or Black British African	**3**
Black or Black British Any other Black background	**1**
Black or Black British Caribbean	**1**
Mixed Any other mixed background	**2**
Mixed White and Asian	**2**
Mixed White and Black African	**2**
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	**13**
Other Ethnic Groups Any other ethnic group	**26**
White Any other White background	**3**
White British	**251**

Age	Count
17	**46**
18	**84**
19	**82**
20	**72**
21	**22**
22	**5**
23	**2**
24	**3**
Total:	**316**

Gender	Count
Male	**132**
Female	**184**
Total:	**316**

Disability	Count
No	**292**
Yes	**24**
Total:	**316**

White Polish or other Eastern European		**2**
	Total:	**316**

5. 64 of the 270 (or 23%) over 18 year olds open to the team live outside of Nottinghamshire. The majority are in adjoining areas with only 14 living outside a 50 mile radius of the County. These include young people who are at university and young people who have chosen to remain with foster carers over the age of 18 years.

Performance Data

6. An annual performance report is provided to the DfE annually. 2013/14 has seen a change in how and what is reported. Overall, of 235 care leavers (aged 18 to 21 years) 82% were in suitable accommodation and 38% were **not** in education, employment or training. It is not possible to compare these outcomes with previous performance due to the changes made by Government to the data collection criteria.

7. Information from the Who Cares Trust informs us that nationally one third of care leavers are **not** in education employment or training compared with 13% of all young people.

Accommodation

8. The looked after children service will begin to consider accommodation options post 18 with young people from the age of 16 years. At 17.5 years, when the Personal Advisers are introduced to young people, the search for more permanent, stable and affordable accommodation begins in earnest. At 18 years the statutory duty of the local authority to provide accommodation ends and so the focus of activity is to support young people with applications for housing as adults. The choices young people make will be determined by their support needs, location choice, property availability and cost. Options include: private rented tenancies, council tenancies or supported semi-independent accommodation if still needed. Some young people will return to live with family or friends at this stage. A snapshot of the current circumstances of 19 year olds and above revealed that:

   - 16% are living with friends or family
   - 49% are living independently
   - 9% are in semi-independent accommodation.

9. This is a positive picture with the majority of care leavers over the age of 19 years living in the community either in or preparing for their own tenancies or living with friends and family.

10. 4% (8) of the 193 19 to 21 year old care leavers we are currently supporting are in prison. Nationally 23% of the adult prison population has been in care and almost 40% of prisoners under 21 years were in care as children. Only 2% of the general population spend time in prison.

11. There are only 9 young people in the Supporting People accommodation accessed through the Targeted Support Service; it is not clear as to why this number appears to be small. One would expect care leavers in particular to need this type of accommodation. In order to increase the access to this provision for care leavers, a member off the

Targeted Support Service has been tasked with meeting with Leaving Care Team managers regularly to ensure that young people are identified early and prioritised by Targeted Support Service. Each young person is now allocated a Targeted Support Service worker at 17.5 years who is responsible for fast tracking and progress chasing their applications for this provision.

12. Three young people are in bed and breakfast or emergency accommodation placed by District Housing Teams. District councils face a huge challenge in discharging their duties in regards to housing and homelessness. Whilst bed and breakfast should not be used for those under 18 years, it is used by district councils in discharging their duties towards homeless adults. The Leaving Care Team has also funded bed and breakfast for over 18s for short periods where they may be in a crisis to prevent rooflessness.

13. The Staying Put policy which allows young people to remain with foster carers over the age of 18 up to 21 years is proving to be very successful. According to financial records 19 young people are currently in a Staying Put arrangement. The weekly cost to the Authority for these arrangements in July 2014 was £3,200. Government expectations regarding this are high and there is now a legal requirement on local authorities to advise, assist and support both the young person and their foster carer when they wish to stay living together after the young person's 18th birthday. There are financial implications attached to this policy and implications for placement availability for looked after children under the age of 18 years if young people do not move on from foster placements at 18. Central Government has announced £40m funding for Staying Put across the country and Nottinghamshire's allocation is £67,058. At current running costs this will lead to a deficit of £99,342.

14. These positive housing outcomes have been achieved at a time of housing shortages, higher rents and less social housing provision. A great deal of Personal Adviser time is spent supporting young people with housing issues. Activity includes taking young people to register with district councils, advocating with district councils to ensure that young people are given maximum priority for housing, and supporting young people with appeals where negative decisions are made. This is made more difficult due to the number of district councils we are working with. Personal Advisers also negotiate with estate agents to obtain private rented accommodation, support young people with tenancy issues to prevent debt and eviction as well as physically supporting young people to move and establish their homes.

15. Whilst some young people move to their own accommodation smoothly, for many their accommodation experiences may be characterised by a number of moves – often in crisis. We are currently contributing to the review of Placement Options for young people aged 16 years and above which will include how to improve the pathway to independent living post 18 years.

Education, employment and training (EET)

16. 62% of the 19 year plus age group are engaged in some form of EET including 11 young people in higher education. In April 2011 the law was amended to allow young people over the age of 21 years and closed to the service to request support including financial support to return to studies. This is a positive step which addresses the fact that many care experienced young people may not be ready or able to access learning until they

are older than their peers. 13 young people are currently being supported and we are keen to ensure that young people are aware of their rights in this respect when we end our involvement at 21 years.

17. We have applied to be considered for the Government funded From Care2Work Quality Mark. This is awarded to local authorities who aspire to improve the employability options for young people leaving care. We have submitted a work plan and have had positive feedback. Our submission includes our work with Futures Nottingham to provide an annual apprenticeship workshop, additional support for care leavers who are entrenched in unemployment from the Inspire and Achieve Team at West Nott's College and a commitment from the Procurement Team to build in employability opportunities for care leavers to the social value statement included in all new contracts from September 2014.

18. The Achievement Advisers have identified a small group of hard to engage young people who are entrenched in unemployment due to their complex needs. These young people are at risk of benefit sanction due to non-compliance with Department for Work and Pension (DWP) requirements regarding job search. Discussions are taking place to improve DWP assessments of these young people and it is hoped that greater use of a joint assessment approach will support these young people in engaging with the DWP work programmes and prevent sanctions.

Participation and Young People's Views

19. In June 2014, the Leaving Care Service, as part of our ongoing partnership with Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum, organised an event for Post-16 students from Refugee and Asylum Seeking backgrounds to explore Nottingham Trent University's City Campus, talk to current students and get a taste of university life.

20. The event saw 26 young people from Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and Peterborough Leaving Care Services given the opportunity to find out about university life from current student ambassadors, have a tour, and also heard from a student, who had come to the UK as an Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child (UASC) and was now studying at the University.

21. The day also saw a number of different workshops including a session on the current funding for asylum seekers/refugees when accessing higher education, signposting to various support agencies for further advice and guidance. The afternoon session focused on the development of either a personal statement and/or curriculum vitae.

22. The Leaving Care Team staff are aware that unresolved asylum cases can be one of the many barriers certain young people face when it comes to accessing further education, but the University is keen to work with partner agencies in breaking down barriers and giving as much support and information as possible to young people from all backgrounds and inspire them to pursue their goals and potential either now or in the future.

23. In the near future, the Leaving Care Team will continue working in partnership with Refugee Action to support a 'Money Matters' course which will run every Thursday for 6 weeks (run by Advice Nottingham) open to UASC young people. The course outline will include budgeting, debt, and benefits advice etc.

24. Recent positive feedback and comments from ex care leavers supported by the Leaving Care Team were as follows:

"Thank you for all the help with my education even though I didn't stick at it. Once I move and get settled I'll go back to college then I'll let you know how it goes! Thank you so much"

"Thank you, I can't believe after 4 years were saying goodbye thank you for everything"

"You'll never forget me and I'll never forget you"

"Dear Care Leaver Team,

I would like to thank you all guys, for your support one by one. You have been a great team, which provided me with all I was needed to get me here. Without you guys I wouldn't be here today and could never reach here. University wasn't just my dream, it was my hopes, wishes, aims, goals and everything. With all hard work and difficult way. Finally, I found myself where I always hoped to be and surely this is where you wanted me to be.

The help, support and believe that you had on me. It pushed me to work harder and harder all way through to get myself here. And it made a significant change to my life and made me to be even more confident. Today, is a time to say thank you a lot for all the support and hard work you did on me.

After I have considered my future I believe that, it is a time to make some changes. I have been relying on (Care Leaver Team) for long time. And now it is a time to stand by myself and to take the responsibilities for my future. Little bit arrogant but don't worry, I will be fine, because you made me to be this strong and confident. I believe that, I have had more than I was expecting from you guys.

I am ready to stand by myself and I believe that, it is time to give that opportunity to someone else who needs that help and support more than I do. As we all know, I have got more ways to get financial support and can pay it back, after I graduate and getting a job. I want to start to take responsibility and make decisions regarding my future. To be someone who you guys wanted me to be, not just rely on (Nottinghamshire County Council) (Care Leaver Team), which I have been for long time." (Care leaver asylum seeker supported as a UASC who has entered higher education).

Other Options Considered

25. This report is for noting only.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

26. This report is for noting only.

Statutory and Policy Implications

27. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That the update on the Leaving Care Service be noted.

Steve Edwards
Service Director, Children's Social Care

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Michelle Lee
Children's Services Manager, Leaving Care
T: 01623 433433
E: michelle.lee@nottscc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments

28. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (KLA 28/08/14)

29. 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.

Leaving Care Service update – report to Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee on 17 March 2014

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C0472

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee

22 September 2014

Agenda Item: 8

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

HOUSE OF COMMONS EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT ON RESIDENTIAL CHILDREN'S HOMES

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an update on a report issued by the House of Commons Education Committee which makes a series of recommendations in relation to Residential Children's Homes.

2. To outline activity which is underway or planned in Nottinghamshire to address issues highlighted in the report.

Information and Advice

3. The House of Commons Education Committee published the findings of their inquiry on Residential Children's Homes in June 2014.

4. The Committee received over 30 written submissions in additional to receiving evidence over the course of three oral sessions. The focus of the inquiry was to consider the Government's proposed reforms to Residential Children's Homes, which were proposed in response to the recent Rochdale sexual exploitation case.

5. The main themes of the report relate to:

Ensuring children's homes are located in safe and suitable areas

6. The report noted that there are significant concerns relating to children being placed far away from where they came in to care from. National analysis has highlighted that some homes are located in close proximity to risks such as drug crime, registered sex offenders and prison releases.

7. It also noted that the market was made up of a relatively small number of large providers, and so Government needed to consider the impact if a children's home went bankrupt. The report drew a parallel to the collapse of care operator Southern Cross in 2011.

8. Finally, in relation to this theme the report suggested that some local authorities were not having enough regard to the sufficiency duty placed upon them, to ensure there is suitable accommodation for looked after children in their area.

9. Within Nottinghamshire, 72% of looked after children are placed within 20 miles of the address they came in to care from. This is above average when compared with other county councils and when compared to our statistical neighbours.

10. Where children are placed further than 20 miles, it is often because they are placed in residential care due to a current lack of residential care provision in the north of the County.

11. Through Nottinghamshire's Looked After Children Strategy, there is currently an action plan in place to minimise the use of out of county placements.

12. In May 2014, the Children and Young People's Committee agreed a proposal for the fixed-price purchase of residential care placements which would reduce cost by securing provider's income over a longer period, and will set targets for providers to open up new homes in Nottinghamshire. This will ensure they can stay at the same school wherever appropriate, are closer to their family networks, and can receive better support from police and health through better information sharing.

13. In addition, Nottinghamshire continues to operate five residential children's homes that provide 23 looked after children placements. These homes are all rated good or outstanding by Ofsted, are within the Nottinghamshire borders, and have particular expertise in managing behaviours of our most complex looked after children.

Encouraging commissioning consortia

14. The Committee concluded that when local authorities have worked together to improve outcomes for looked after children and achieve value for money, they have been more successful than when they commissioned in isolation. It noted that joint commissioning strategies maximise economies of scale across regional areas.

15. Nottinghamshire is currently part of the East Midlands Regional Framework for the commissioning of independent fostering placements. This has helped to standardise costs across the region and share best practice in relation to all elements of placement commissioning. This is due to come to an end in 2015, and so discussions are currently ongoing to clarify whether there is a regional consensus to proceed with the current arrangement.

16. Nottinghamshire has its own framework for the commissioning of residential care placements (NAPL) and works closely with neighbouring local authorities where appropriate to share information and commissioning approaches.

17. A fixed-price purchase of residential care placements is currently being developed in collaboration with Nottingham City Council, with tender processes being twin-tracked so that the market is approached concurrently.

Ensuring children are listened to

18. Sector leaders noted that while much progress had been made in ensuring that children are listened to, more could be done. Dr Maggie Atkinson, the Children's Commissioner for England, gave evidence at the Committee on this point. It was argued that listening to children's concerns about their lives and supporting them to overcome these concerns can reduce the chances of children running away from care and decrease other risky behaviours.

19. The Committee noted the essential role of staff within children's care homes in ensuring a children's home is running effectively. It was recommended that local authorities and children's homes providers give children in care a greater role in selecting their care workers.

20. Nottinghamshire has a Children in Care Council which comprises currently looked after children and care leavers. This forum meets regularly to talk about the issues that matter to children in care.

21. At present staff will meet young people currently in residential care as part of their interview process. There is also currently an effective model in place at Clayfields Secure Unit that ensures young people's views are fully embedded in interview processes. Given the success of this model, the plan is to extend this to all internal residential children's homes from October 2014.

Other Options Considered

22. The report is for noting only.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

23. The report is for noting only.

Statutory and Policy Implications

24. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Sub-Committee:

1) notes the recommendations made by the House of Commons Education Committee in relation to Residential Children's Care
2) notes the activity taking place in Nottinghamshire to address the issues highlighted in the House of Commons Education Committee report.

Steve Edwards
Service Director, Children's Social Care

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments

25. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (KLA 28/08/14)

26. 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.

House of Commons Education Committee Report on Residential Children's Homes – June 2014

Nottinghamshire County Council Looked After Children Strategy 2012-2015

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C0471

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee

22 September 2014

Agenda Item: 9

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

CONTACT SERVICE UPDATE

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an update on the changing role of the Contact Service with regard to looked after children and the progress that has been achieved throughout a review of the Service.

Information and Advice

2. The local authority has a statutory duty to provide and promote contact – unless it is not in the best interests of the child. The legal and procedural framework that underpins the Contact Service can be quite confusing as there are references to contact in all legislation, standards and guidance relating to looked after children.

3. The primary law and key reference documents emphasise the need for the child to be at the centre of planning contact arrangements. The Children Act 1989 and case law (decisions of the higher courts) identifies contact as 'a right of the child' - birth parents, relatives and others do not have a 'right' to contact, although local authorities must provide and promote contact, providing evidence to court if they are planning to change or withdraw contact.

4. The 'Good Practice Guidance Note ADCS/CAFCASS-2013' also emphasises the need for contact to be in the best interests of the child and in particular; the level of contact must be based upon observation of the contact and the need to adjust the plan if contact is detrimental to the child. This is fundamental to the new service model.

5. The Contact Service currently provides a County-wide service and has been operational since June 2012, following an 18 month pilot project. The Service has grown and developed incrementally in response to increasing and changing demands. For example, in August 2013, 476 children were having contact arranged by the Contact Service compared with 269 in August 2012 – an increase of 77% in terms of caseloads.

6. As a consequence of the rapid growth and a number of concerns regarding the quality of contact, the Service was deemed to be no longer fit for purpose and it was recognised that changes would be required in order to provide a more cohesive, responsive and child centred service moving into the future.

7. The Service had developed incrementally to meet a range of needs and it was acknowledged that the child should remain the focus of all decision making and key processes in the new service model.

8. In July 2013 the Transformation/Improvement Team was therefore asked to review the Contact Service in order to address the pressing concerns, relating to issues of service capacity in both the arrangement and operation of contact and associated issues relating to safeguarding and reputational risk.

9. A Position Statement was submitted to the Programme Board in September 2013, with a series of recommendations. The decision was made to launch a project to explore some of the recommendations made and the project was initiated and an Interim Service Manager was appointed.

10. The project identified specific service areas that required improvement and which aimed to achieve the following objectives:

- to ensure that contact sessions remain a safe and productive environment for looked after children to maintain and develop relationships with their birth family
- to ensure that the service capacity, processes and procedures are robust enough to deal with the increase in demand whilst remaining value for money
- to ensure that all staff have sufficient training and qualifications in order to do the job to the best of their ability
- to reduce the average travel time for Contact Support Workers and the resulting cost in mileage
- to create a flexible and responsive service
- to ensure measurements are in place to evaluate outcomes
- to adapt relief staffing arrangements to ensure that relief staff are used in a relief capacity and not to cover business as usual
- to listen to and take into consideration the views of key stakeholders, including Looked After Children, Fostering and Adoption Social Workers, Foster Carers, and Birth Families
- to ensure that the service is targeted at families and children who are most in need
- to ensure that the service is tailored and time-limited appropriately, depending on the regular reviews and risk assessments carried out
- to increase availability of suitable venues
- to ensure that contact documentation is robust enough to support court proceedings, where applicable.

Consultation:

11. Children and young people have been consulted through the Children in Care Council and reported that:

- 24% would prefer evening sessions (6-8pm)
- 33% would prefer weekend sessions
- they wanted venues which have activities they enjoy doing, are safe and are close to where they live.

12. Foster Carers – via phone consultation, Fostering in Nottingham newsletter, Fronter and Foster Carer Liaison and Advisory Group (FLAG) meetings:

- contact hours to be more flexible to include evenings and weekends
- consistency in worker and transporter for the child as paramount to the child's needs and ability to form a relationship
- acknowledgement of Foster Carer as transporter as an ideal role to ensure consistency for children during travel to and from contact
- request for additional transport allowance and training and support for Foster Carers to transport children.
- *'Is it not time that correctly equipped and strategically placed places were found that would make a contact a happier time?'.*

Venues

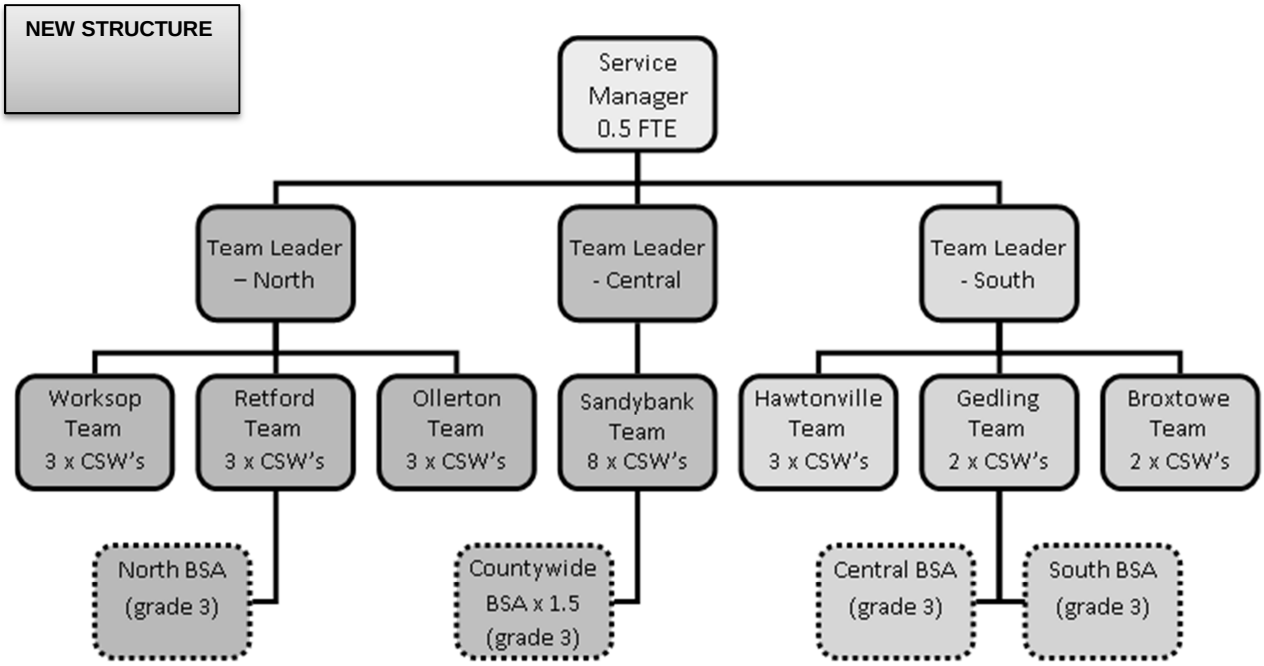
13. The new service model was accepted by Divisional Leadership Team (DLT) and proposes a radically different service. The County is split into three areas; north, central and south districts. The greatest concern identified at the beginning of the review period was the lack of exclusive use of venues in each district. This created a reliance on the ad hoc bookings of alternative venues which the service has no control over in terms of scheduling and ensuring rooms are age appropriate, safe and clean for children.

14. We have now secured exclusive use of specific venues across the County and staff will be based at these venues from 1 September 2014 (see **Appendix 1**). This will provide a number of significant benefits:

- children can access sessions outside of school times without being restricted by external venue opening times which will reduce the time pressures on staff
- increased safety for Contact Support Workers (CSWs)
- fit for purpose and age appropriate accommodation
- ability to control infection and keep rooms clean
- control over booking contact rooms
- reduction to changes and cancellations outside the service's control
- better consistency of worker for the child, which contributes to safeguarding priorities and best outcomes for the child
- reduction in CSW travel time will lead to increased capacity to supervise more sessions and upload notes in a timely manner
- a reduction in mileage spend by CSWs travelling between venues
- the service will have extra capacity and flexibility to deal with any increase in referrals or in case of staff absence.

Staffing

15. We have reviewed the current staffing and the role of the Contact Support Worker (CSW). Part of this review has also removed the role of the Contact Co-ordinator who provides a business support function. Other changes proposed within the model mean that the CSWs will now arranged their own contacts and therefore we are proposing a reduction in business support posts. The new structure is as follows:



16. This provides a number of significant benefits:

- CSW team numbers now vary in size and reflect the geographical demand for supervised contact sessions in each area
- there will always be one member of staff at each venue as cover in case of emergencies, to greet new families and to upload their supervision notes
- staff will complete 2½ - 3 sessions each per day on a caseload model, which equates to 1,260 – 1,512 sessions per month. This ensures that the service has enough flexibility built in to be able to cope with any potential increase in demand in LAC numbers and reliance on relief staff will reduce
- relief staff will be allocated to a specific venue but may be expected to work across the service, where necessary
- a pool of sessional staff will be retained for use in emergencies
- service delivery hours have been extended to Monday – Friday, 8.30am - 7pm and some weekend working will be required
- the job description has been revised and now reflects what is required of the CSW. This has been approved by the Job Evaluation Team.

17. In addition, we have proposed a number of changes to staff working arrangements to ensure that staff are available to deliver the service in the most efficient and cost effective way. This process has been subject to HR oversight and we are continuing to seek agreement with individual staff.

Transport

18. Staff have historically been required to transport children across large geographical areas, This has been a very costly and inefficient use of resources and has led to a £64,624 spend on staff mileage during the first nine months of financial year 2013/14, with more than half of this being spent in the Newark and Bassetlaw areas. Travel time seriously limits CSW capacity to supervise more than two sessions on average and record supervision notes onto Framework in a timely manner.

19. The alternative model, which has been approved by the Divisional Leadership Team (DLT), proposes that, where possible, foster carers transport children to contact. This would replicate what would happen within any family and therefore will generally be in the best interests of the child. This is particularly so when the permanency plan has been agreed and they are in foster care until adulthood. However, there will inevitably be some exceptions and we will consider these on an individual basis.

20. Where a foster carer is unable to transport a child, we are seeking to provide a volunteer driver. We are anticipating that the volunteer will be a named driver and will be consistent throughout the duration of the contact arrangements.

21. Negotiations are underway with Bassetlaw Action Group in the North of the County and Nottingham City for the South, to develop this service in partnership. This will be a pilot for six months and is planned to start from 1 October 2014. The pilot will be reviewed and evaluated with clear recommendations for the future.

A service that is 'fit for purpose'

22. In order to ensure that the service is fit for purpose, a number of other significant changes have been made. All systems, processes and procedures were reviewed using the Lean2 model. The service was very inefficient and overly bureaucratic. As a consequence of this a number of significant improvements have been made:

    a) Mobilisation: all CSWs have been provided with a mobile tablet (IPad). This enables staff to record their observations of contact and upload them immediately to Framework. Social Workers, who have case responsibility, will now have instant access to these records for the purpose of care planning and applications to court as they will be uploaded to the case file within 24 hours of the contact session. The second stage of this process will enable Team Leaders to electronically access all workers timetables and oversee their commitments and is anticipated to be in place by the end of September 2014.

    b) Systems improvements: the paper referral form has been replaced with an electronic form that is completed through Framework. The referral form has also been revised and better reflects the information that is required by the service. The Team Leaders now have oversight of all cases and allocate directly to the CSW. This means that they are able to respond quickly and efficiently to problems or concerns.

    c) Criteria: clear criteria have been established to ensure that those children and young people who are the subject of proceedings or at risk of significant harm are prioritised.

    d) Review of cases: all existing contact arrangements have been reviewed to determine whether they fit the new service model. These have been further reviewed and an action plan has been developed to monitor the progress of those cases that remain open.

    e) Monitoring and audit: moving forward, greater emphasis will be placed upon planning and reviewing contact arrangements. Improved reporting through Business Objects will mean that new cases are now regularly reviewed by the management team every three months. A formal review process has been proposed that fits with the LAC

Review process, however, this is not yet embedded into practice and requires further work. The Improvement Team will continue to have oversight of the service over the next two years and it is anticipated that further improvements can be made.

f) Case records have been reviewed and a new audit system has been incorporated into the quarterly monitoring programme. The Contact Service was not previously included.

g) Training has been reviewed: core skills training has been delivered to all staff by the management team and we can now be confident that staff are equipped to perform their duties. Further training is planned and will be delivered in October and November 2014. All CSWs will now require QCF level 3 (previously NVQ level 3 (Child Care) as the minimum entry qualification. All current CSWs will complete this qualification over the forthcoming year. This will ensure that we have a suitably qualified workforce.

Economic benefits:

23. Whilst not the original objective of the review, there have been some significant savings predicted from the review as outlined below. For the current year, it will be necessary to invest in new buildings, resources and equipment however, it is anticipated that there will be overall savings in the future.

PROJECTED SAVINGS		PROJECT SPEND	
Staffing	£199,518	**Staff training**	£27,300
Activities spend	£12,000	**New venue costs**	£30,000
CSW mileage for transporting children to contact	£15,000		
	£226,518		**£57,300**
TOTAL SAVINGS	**£169,218**		

Plus predicted contribution to Business Support Review Savings of <u>£66,079</u>

24. Savings have been accounted for in the Looked After Children Outline Business Case and will be monitored by the Transformation Team in liaison with the appropriate Finance Business Partner.

Conclusion:

25. A communication plan was agreed at the beginning of the project and has been regularly reviewed. As with any change process there has been some resistance to change. We have tried to respond in a positive and proactive way in an attempt to resolve concerns as they have arisen. We have however recently revised our communication plan to ensure that the right message is communicated consistently across the County and we have identified those individuals or groups that require further support to manage the transition. We have throughout the process welcomed feedback, views and opinions and will continue to do so as we are confident our new service model provides significant improvements to the Contact Service and ensures that all arrangements are in the best interests of the child.

Other Options Considered

26. The report is for noting only.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

27. The report is for noting only.

Statutory and Policy Implications

28. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That the update on the changing role of the Contact Service with regard to looked after children and the progress that has been achieved throughout a review of the Service be noted.

Steve Edwards
Service Director, Children's Social Care

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments

29. As this report is for noting only no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (KLA 05/09/14)

30. The financial implications of the report are included in paragraphs 23 and 24 above.

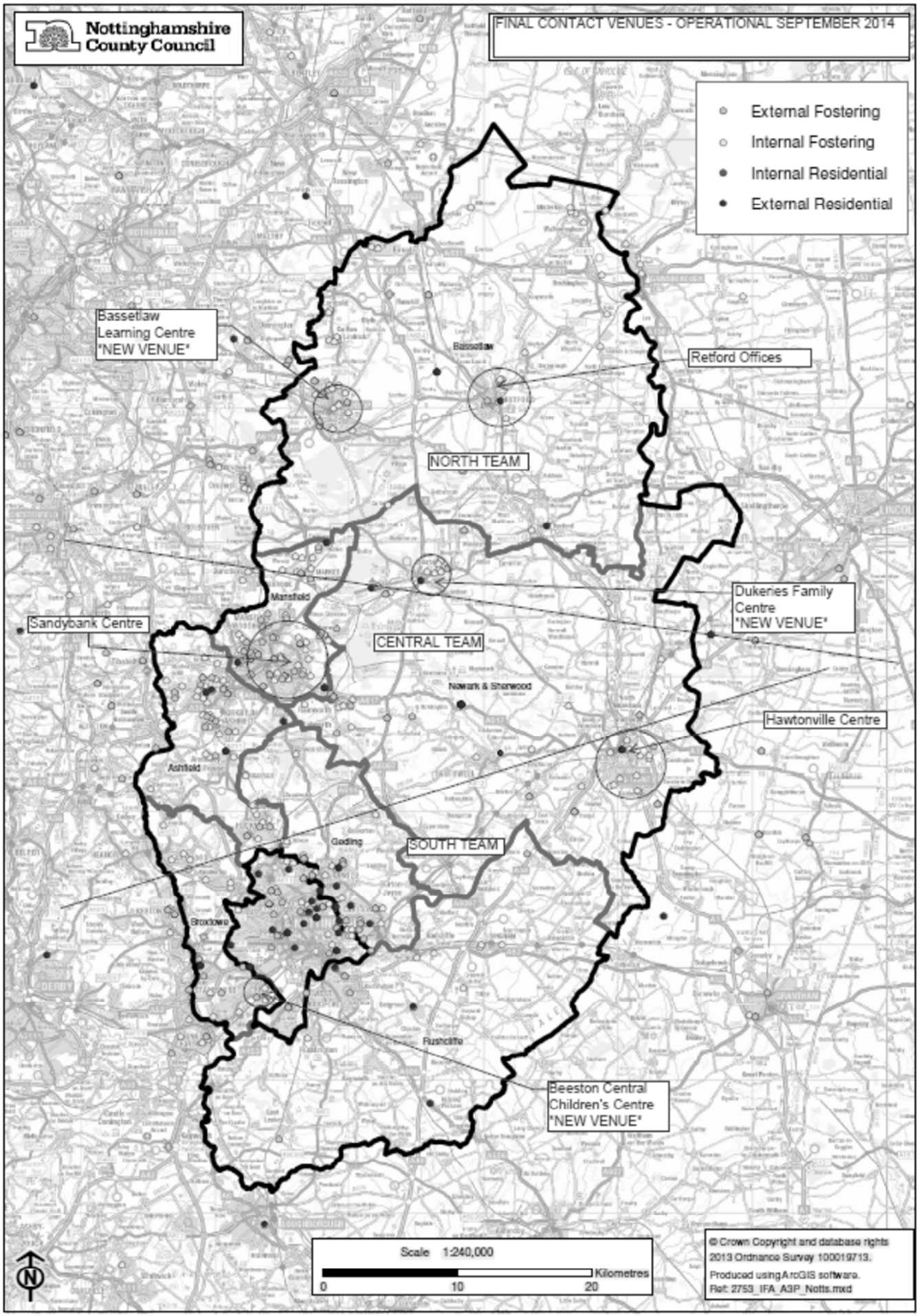
Background Papers and Published Documents

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C0477


Nottinghamshire County Council
FINAL CONTACT VENUES - OPERATIONAL SEPTEMBER 2014
External Fostering
Internal Fostering
Internal Residential
External Residential
Bassetlaw Learning Centre 'NEW VENUE'
Retford Offices
NORTH TEAM
Dukeries Family Centre 'NEW VENUE'
Sandybank Centre
CENTRAL TEAM
Hawtonville Centre
SOUTH TEAM
Beeston Central Children's Centre 'NEW VENUE'
Scale 1:240,000
0
10
20
Kilometres
© Crown Copyright and database rights 2013 Ordnance Survey 100019713.
Produced using ArcGIS software.
Ref: 2753_IFA_A3P_Notts.mxd

Nottinghamshire County Council

Report to Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee

22 September 2014

Agenda Item: 10

REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR, POLICY, PLANNING AND CORPORATE SERVICES

WORK PROGRAMME

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider the Committee's work programme for 2014/15.

Information and Advice

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 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.

Other Options Considered

5. None.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

6. To assist the committee in preparing its work programme.

Statutory and Policy Implications

7. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of

children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) That the committee's work programme be noted, and consideration be given to any changes which the committee wishes to make.

Jayne Francis-Ward
Corporate Director, Policy, Planning and Corporate Services

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Assistant Democratic Services Officer -
David Ebbage
Tel: 0115 977 3141

Constitutional Comments (SLB)

8. The Committee has authority to consider the matters set out in this report by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (PS)

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

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.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All

CORPORATE PARENTING SUB-COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME 2014-15

Report Title	Brief summary of agenda item	Lead Officer	Report Author
1 December 2014			
Advocacy Service – NYAS	Presentation/information.	Steve Edwards	Mary Jarrett
LAC Strategy – children who self-harm		Steve Edwards	Rachel Coombs
Autumn Term report for the Virtual School for Looked After Children		Steve Edwards	Sue Denholm
Work Programme		Steve Edwards	
2 March 2015			
Spring Term report for the Virtual School for Looked After Children		Steve Edwards	Sue Denholm
Adoption Service	Six monthly report	Steve Edwards	Shelagh Mitchell
Looked After Children Strategy update	Six monthly report	Steve Edwards	Rachel Coombs
Leaving Care Service update	Six monthly report	Steve Edwards	Michelle Lee
Advocacy Service for Looked After Children		Steve Edwards	Mary Jarrett
Work Programme		Steve Edwards	
8 June 2015			
Summer Term report for the Virtual School for Looked After Children		Steve Edwards	Linda Foster
End of year report for the Independent Reviewing Officer Service		Steve Edwards	Izzy Martin
Fostering Service annual report		Steve Edwards	Jayne Austin
County CAMHS Looked After and Adoption Team – service provision and developments 2014/15		Steve Edwards	Helen Daft
Improving health outcomes for children and young people in the care of the Local Authority		Steve Edwards	Sharon Thompson/ Rachel Coombs
Pupil premium – impact on LAC educational attainment		Steve Edwards	Linda Foster
Work Programme		Steve Edwards	
To be placed			