

**21<sup>st</sup> September 2020****Agenda Item: 9****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, FINANCE, INFRASTRUCTURE &  
IMPROVEMENT****CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE CORE DATA SET - PERFORMANCE AND  
FINANCE FOR QUARTER 1****Purpose of the Report**

1. This report provides the Committee with a summary of the performance and finance of the Council's services for children and young people for quarter 1 of 2020/21 (1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020).

**Information**

2. The Council's Planning and Performance Framework establishes the approach that the Council takes to planning and managing its performance to deliver effective and responsive services.
3. The Council has agreed that the key measures of its performance will be defined through a number of core data sets which are detailed in its Council Plan and each of its Departmental Strategies.
4. Performance against these core data sets is reported to Committee every three months (quarterly) to support the performance management of the delivery of services.

**Performance Reporting for 2020/21**

5. This report provides a summary of the quarter 1 position for the Children's Social Care and Education Core Data Set performance measures that fall within the responsibility of the Children and Young People's Committee. The full Core Data Set is included in **Appendices 1 and 2**. **Appendix 1** shows those measures which have received updates since the previous quarter. **Appendix 2** shows those measures which have not changed.
6. For each measure, the following information is provided:
  - Current performance and whether a high or low value is regarded as 'good'.
  - The period this current value relates to.

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

## **Child and Family Assessments**

7. Performance in this area continues to be consistent and positive despite this quarter having been a challenging period for this and other service areas.

## **Child Protection**

8. The number of children on child protection plans in Nottinghamshire has slightly declined again this quarter, bringing the Council in line with statistical neighbours and the England figure, so meeting the target. Quality assurance data from the chairs of child protection conferences is that despite the restrictions due to Covid 19 on face to face working with children and families, child protection plans are nevertheless being progressed in the vast majority of cases. There has been a small decrease in the number of children becoming subject of CP plans in this quarter and this may well be due to the impact of Covid 19 in terms of reduced referrals into the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
9. The current figure, of 2.5% of child protection plans lasting 2 or more years, remains within target, and below both statistical neighbour and England figures.
10. The number of children becoming subject of a repeat plan in a two year period following the end of the previous plan has increased this quarter. According to the quality assurance data collected by conference chairs following the meetings of the six initial child protection conferences which took place, the children were placed on a child protection plan for the same reasons as the previous plan in four of the meetings. The reasons were neglect, domestic abuse, maternal mental health and risk of sexual abuse. This information has been shared with the children's service managers in order to inform continued oversight of this issue.
11. The percentage of Child Protection cases reviewed in timescale decreased slightly from Quarter 4, falling from 96.9% to 95.4% in Quarter 1. Despite the decrease, this remains above both statistical neighbour and England figures.

## **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Missing**

12. Data this quarter has been impacted by Covid 19 and the lockdown restrictions and a significant decrease in reports of CSE can be seen. The number of reports of CSE to the MASH has decreased from 70 in Quarter 4 2019/20 to 55 this quarter. This is thought to directly link with the general reduction of reports to the MASH seen during Quarter 1, however this cannot be equated with a reduction in CSE occurrences and reports are expected to increase as lockdown restrictions ease. The number of Looked After Children (LAC) considered at CSE Strategy meetings remains consistent with previous quarters. It

must be noted that the risk of CSE remains higher for LAC and this risk is routinely considered in LAC reviews. The number of non-LAC considered at CSE Strategy meetings has reduced significantly from 19 in Quarter 4 2019/20 to 3 this quarter. This can be attributed to the general reduction in CSE reports to the MASH in the first instance. As said, in overall terms these figures appear significantly affected by the impact of Covid 19. The situation will be kept under close review over the coming months.

13. Data this quarter has been impacted by Covid 19 and the lockdown restrictions and while children have not stopped going missing, a significant reduction has been seen. Total missing occurrences have dropped from 721 in Quarter 1 2019/20 to 447 this quarter; this translates into 374 individual children in Quarter 1 2019/20, 275 in Quarter 4 2019/20 to 213 this quarter. The percentage of children missing 5x has increased from 23% in Quarter 4 2019/20 to 28%. The percentage of children missing from home has dropped from 61% Quarter 4 2019/20 to 54% this quarter while the percentage of children missing from care has increased from 38% Quarter 4 2019/20 to 50% this quarter. The decrease in children missing from home could be linked to parents being at home and able to offer greater supervision and boundaries, however the increase in children missing from care could be due to these children responding less well to the restrictions imposed by Covid as a result of their vulnerability and experience of trauma (ACEs). Despite this increase, the missing from care rate remains below that of both the national and statistical neighbours. Return Interviews completion showed an increase on Quarter 4 and is currently 80%, up from 64%, and this could be due to Social Workers being able to undertake these interviews using methods additional to face to face meetings – it has been noted some children have responded more positively to this.

## **Looked After Children**

14. This measure considers children in care (CiC) who have had more than three placements during the previous 12 months as a proportion of all CiC. Following a prolonged period of improvement throughout the last year, and in particular the period for January to March 2020, the current data indicates that performance during the last quarter has fallen back towards the level achieved during the period April to December 2019. Whilst overall numbers of children in care remained relatively stable during the peak of the coronavirus pandemic, there was a marked impact on placement stability evidenced by a 50% increase in requests for new/ changes of placement during this period. The fact that the Council was able to respond swiftly and positively to this ensured that children in care stayed safe during the lockdown period. Please note that some level of caution should be exercised when benchmarking against national data because there is a difference between how the current Nottinghamshire figure is calculated and the way in which the national average data was computed in 2017/18. It effectively over-inflates the Nottinghamshire figure, hence the target of 12% has been derived to account for this.
15. The improvement in this indicator during the last quarter underlines the fact that the majority of children in care experience very stable placements over the longer term, and that, thankfully, the short-term impact of the coronavirus on placement stability has affected only a relatively small number of children in care. Moreover, the computation of this performance indicator belies the fact that planned placement moves are part of the normal care plan for older young people in care as they transition into semi-independent accommodation to equip them with independence skills as part of their wider transition into adulthood. Please note that the same issue around differences in data computation

described above regarding stability of placements applies equally to this indicator hence this target has likewise been modified to account for this.

## **Adoption**

16. The average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family has increased in Quarter 1. A number of placements have recently been made and relatively few children are awaiting matching currently.
17. The average time between the Local Authority receiving court authority to place a child and deciding on a match has also increased this quarter. Some sibling groups have taken longer to match.

## **Care leavers**

18. Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training (EET) have sustained a level of over 50% despite the impact of Covid 19. Much of this is due to the flexibility and adjustments that colleagues in education provision have done with the assistance and intervention of Personal Advisors and Achievement Advisers. The Service has worked with education providers around alternative provision and access to laptops prior to the government scheme and are continuing to do so now that the government laptops have arrived. The Council has been in weekly contact with care leavers aged 18 - 21 years and assisted with continuation of employment where possible, understanding of the furlough scheme and to explore alternatives for the young people in finishing their courses (including University provision). The Council will be launching the Employability Assessment Tool, which is a follow on to the new Personal Education Plan (PEP) / Employability Assessment – Personal Education Plan (EA-PEP) for 16/17 year olds to help encourage and focus young people on their EET pathway and to enter the world of work. Some of the Work Tasters events have been put on hold due to Covid 19, but the Council is in the process of developing the Achievement Adviser Service with the addition of 3 FTE Achievement Advisers and an Achievement Co-ordinator.
19. The Council always aim for young people to be living in suitable and secure accommodation. At times, this is not possible through the choices that the young people make about where they reside (friends/family). This figure also will include the 4 young people who are identified as being in Houses of Multiple Occupancy - but are there because they are house sharing as part of their university experience, which is in fact appropriate for them. The Council continues to develop relationships with the District Councils as part of the Local Offer and are exploring options around council tenancies for former Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) so that there is a move on from Supported Accommodation Provision (SAP) which will then increase SAP capacity, as there have been some issues with the levels of capacity within SAP and move on. There has also been an impact on moving young people into SAP accommodation during the first few weeks of the Covid 19 lockdown. The Council continues to have a Homelessness Prevention Personal Advisor through funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government (MHCLG) who has worked with 46 young people in Quarter 1 to help prevent street homelessness, inappropriate emergency accommodation and reduced the risk of homelessness for care leavers, which is also reflected in this percentage figure.

## **Outdoor Education Services**

20. Outdoor education residential centres are currently closed for overnight stays, and plans are being developed to reopen these services when possible and in line with government guidelines. During the interim period the service is supporting young people within Children's Social Care settings by offering young people adventurous activities and outdoor learning experiences. Through March to July the team provided Forest School activities to key worker children in schools to support teaching staff. In addition, during June and July the service offered Year 6 pupils WoW Days providing schools with onsite outdoor activities, which included the mobile climbing wall, archery, and mountain bike skills.
21. Schools will be able to go on day visits at the Council's Centres from September. The team has also developed a new on-site programme for schools in the autumn term based on the popular WoW Days. These activities include the WoW activities and also Viking, Robin Hood and Stone Age themed days. The autumn term will see the opening of the new climbing tower and high ropes elements at the Mill Adventure Base and an immersive Saxon and Viking Settlement at the Perlethorpe Centre.

## **Youth Services**

22. Currently, the Youth Service is supporting young people within Children's Social Care settings, including residential homes and in supporting placement stability. Youth work with the most vulnerable young people will be prioritised which aims to stabilise young people's living arrangements, raise their aspirations and introduce them to universal provision, so that they can continue to access support and engage in positive activities in the long term. The Youth Service has also continued to deliver Youth Work Intervention and Outreach sessions within the communities they would normally operate.
23. Plans are currently being developed to reopen universal provision in line with government guidelines. With this in mind, it is anticipated that during week commencing 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020 all Youth Service colleagues will: Review and refine local building reoccupation and youth work delivery plans to ensure the Service is Covid ready, and this will include completing the Covid check list, checking that building signage is in place, installing sanitiser stations, and having laser thermometers in place; Meet with their local Youth Work teams and Youth Support Worker colleagues to ensure appropriate support and inductions are in place, this includes completing individual risk assessments, where appropriate, and ensuring team members are clear about the new ways in which the Council will work, including social distancing, and PPE requirements; Continue to deliver Outreach and Youth Work Interventions sessions, which will provide an opportunity to promote the reopening of mainstream Youth Work sessions from week commencing 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020.

## **Educational standards**

### **Ofsted inspections**

24. Ofsted school inspections were halted on 17<sup>th</sup> March due to Covid 19. Ofsted has indicated that in the autumn term they are intending to carry out 'visits' to look at how schools are managing pupils' return to education after so long at home. They will use the visits to listen

to school leaders' experiences and plans and provide constructive challenge. There will be no formal judgement and visits will not be graded. Outcomes from discussions will be published in a brief letter with a more detailed report on the situation nationally. Formal inspections are planned to resume in January 2021, but this date will be kept under review. Ofsted's regulatory work in children's social care, nurseries and childminders has continued throughout lockdown.

### **School exclusions**

25. Latest data on permanent exclusions for the 2018/19 academic year from all schools (primary, secondary and special schools including academies) shows Nottinghamshire continues to remain below both national and statistical neighbour averages. 0.04% (44 pupils) of the overall Nottinghamshire school population were excluded in 2018/19, this rate remains unchanged from the previous academic year, however the number of pupils permanently excluded fell from 48 (in 2017/18) to 44 this period.
26. The national and statistical neighbour figure for the same period remains unchanged at 0.10% from the previous year. On this measure Nottinghamshire is placed 2<sup>nd</sup> (out of 11 LAs; no change in rank from last year) with Kent LA placed first (exclusion rate of 0.02%). Against all authorities nationally Nottinghamshire is placed 16<sup>th</sup> (out of 152; an improvement from 23<sup>rd</sup> the year before).
27. Permanent exclusions by district show Gedling schools are the highest at 0.09% of the school population (15 pupils) while Ashfield and Newark schools are joint lowest at 0.01% (2 and 1 pupil respectively).

### **Two-year-old take up**

28. Figures for 2 year old take up for the summer term are based on the number of children funded and expected to attend (as opposed to those who did attend) due to Covid 19. Local authorities were required to fund settings as normal during the summer term (including any closed settings).
29. 68.4% of eligible 2 year olds were funded for their free entitlement in the summer 2020 term which is a 5.9 percentage point decrease from the same period last year. Rushcliffe district continued to have the highest proportion of eligible 2 year olds funded whereas Bassetlaw district had the lowest at 55.6%. Comparisons with the same term last year show all districts reported a fall apart from Broxtowe (2.7 percentage point increase to 78.3%).
30. Much of the 2 year old take up usually occurs later in the term and this has not happened this year as most children did not actually attend any provision. Attendance in autumn is also not expected to reach previous levels, due to lack of parent confidence in returning their children to childcare settings.

### **Youth Offending & Early Help Support**

31. Nottinghamshire Youth Justice Service (YJS) has seen a reduction in the number of First Time Entrants (FTEs) by 32% in the past year from 251 in 2018/19 to 171 in 2019/20. This compares favourably to the national average of 276. Nottinghamshire's reoffending rate

remains low at 26.7%, with fewer than one offence committed per reoffender (national average is 40.9% and 1.6 offences per reoffender).

32. Multi-Agency Out of Court Disposal (O OCD) panels have proven successful in seeing a greater proportion of children and young people supported on a voluntary basis. Current processes aim to ensure that all young people being considered for a Youth Caution/Youth Conditional Caution are assessed by the YJS and reviewed as part of a multi-agency panel. This has meant that more children and young people have benefited from being diverted away from receiving a Youth Caution/Youth Conditional Caution whilst still receiving YJ intervention as part of a Community Resolution. In the past year, 231 children and young people received a Community Resolution; of these, 76% received intervention from the YJS.

## Summary Financial Position

33. The Children and Families Department Revenue Budget is forecast to overspend by £12.775m, including additional Covid 19 costs of £10.706m, and £2.069m (1.46%) excluding Covid 19 costs as summarised in the Table below.

**Table 1 – Summary Revenue Position**

Previous Variance Incl Covid Addn Costs	Previous Variance Excl Covid Addn Costs	Division	Annual Budget	Actual to Period 3	Year-End Forecast	Under(-) / Overspend Variance	Covid19 Additional Costs	Variance Excluding Additional Costs	Variance as % of Budget
£000	£000		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	%
		<b>Children &amp; Young People's Committee</b>							
1,505	181	Youth, Families & Social Work	60,091	12,293	61,884	1,793	1,511	282	0.47
619	418	Education Learning & Skills	6,455	649	7,133	678	354	324	5.02
10,665	1,594	Commissioning & Resources	61,220	9,578	71,525	10,304	8,841	1,463	2.39
0	0	Capital & Central Charges	13,940	35	13,940	0	0	0	0.00
<b>12,789</b>	<b>2,193</b>	<b>Net Committee Overspend</b>	<b>141,707</b>	<b>22,556</b>	<b>154,482</b>	<b>12,775</b>	<b>10,706</b>	<b>2,069</b>	<b>1.46</b>

34. The Youth, Families & Social Work Division is forecasting an overspend of £1.8m including Covid 19 additional costs of £1.5m. The major contributing factor is £1.3m overspend on social work staffing which has arisen due to a combination of additional capacity staff to respond to anticipated increased workloads, maintain manageable caseloads, new posts to be established and agency workers. It is estimated that the additional cost of social work staffing due to Covid 19 is £0.5m.
35. The forecast agency spend for the Hard to Retain teams is £4.6m (2019-20 £5.4m). There were 73.4 fte agency Team Managers and Social Workers at the end of June and it is estimated that there will be 67 fte agency workers by the end of March 2021. This equates to an average of 70 fte agency workers for the year. The forecast also includes 20.61 fte agency Social Work Assistants and a reduction to reflect the annual leave, sickness and bank holidays to be taken by agency workers. All agency posts continue to require the

explicit approval of the Service Director, Youth, Families and Social Work, and are subject to scrutiny by the quarterly Agency Challenge Panel.

36. There is also a £1.0m overspend due to Covid 19 in relation to Youth Workers temporarily working additional hours (£0.2m), lost income whilst schools were closed for the Outdoor Education traded service (£0.5m) and school penalty notices (£0.2m); and miscellaneous other costs (£0.1m).
37. The overspends were offset by a net underspend of £0.3m across all other budgets which includes vacancies and additional income from grants and Children with Disability homes. The Education, Learning & Skills Division is reporting a £0.7m overspend which is made up of a £0.9m overspend on the school improvement sold service offer offset by a £0.2m underspend on all other budgets. Due to Covid 19 all conferences and training courses for the rest of the financial year have either been cancelled or looking very unlikely to proceed and contribute an estimated £0.3m to the overspend. A review of the sold service offers for 2020/21 and beyond is underway.
38. The Commissioning & Resources division is reporting a £10.3m overspend including Covid 19 additional costs of £6.8m. The major contributing factor is an £8.0m overspend on external residential placements for Children Looked After of which £6.8m is an estimate of Covid 19 related costs (additional placements, specific additional/anticipated costs and temporary additional internal residential provision), leaving an underlying placement overspend of £1.2m. The underlying overspend is mainly due to general cost increases observed towards the end of 2019-20 and the cost of additional support for complex cases.
39. External placements increased by a net of 10 in June which was only 1 more than the 9 predicted for the month. Independent Fostering Agency placements reduced by 5, whereas residential and semi-independent placements each increased by 5, thus affecting the placement mix.
40. The assumptions within the forecast are:
  - actual number of children in placement at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020 is 470 (445 March 2020)
  - projected number of external placements at March 2021 is 505 (445 March 2020)
  - average number of external placements at March 2021 is 478 (425 March 2020).
41. There is a further £2.0m overspend relating to Covid 19 for Early Years payments to PVI providers (£0.2m), alternative education provision for vulnerable children and Post 16 young people for provision during school holidays (£1.8m).
42. The remaining £0.3m overspend is attributable to Short Breaks, ICDS Direct Provider Services attributable to commissioned Personal Care costs, implementation costs of bringing the Children's Centres back into the management of the County Council (contingency request pending) and various other budgets across the division.
43. Clayfields is currently forecasting a surplus against its income target of £0.169m. The impact of Covid 19 has not been as limiting to new admissions as initially expected although income totalling £0.273m (260 bed nights) has been forgone as a result of Covid 19. From June the centre was operating at 95% occupancy and this, along with the management of running costs, has contributed towards the surplus. Any surplus at the



end of the financial year will be added to the trading reserve the balance of which is £0.180m.

44. There are risks associated with the forecast in relation to external residential placements and social work staffing due to the volatile nature of the demand on these budgets. In view of the high cost of external residential placements the forecast is highly sensitive to changes in e.g. numbers, weekly costs and placement mix. There is a robust monthly monitoring process to track trend data, average costs and actual numbers of children in placement to highlight potential issues as soon as possible.

### **Other Options Considered**

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

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

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

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

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

### **Financial Implications**

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

### **Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk Implications**

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

## **RECOMMENDATION**

- 1) That Committee considers whether there are any actions it requires in relation to the performance information on the Council's services for children and young people for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

**Nigel Stevenson**  
**Service Director for Finance, Infrastructure & Improvement**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

Matthew Garrard  
Team Manager – Performance, Intelligence and Policy  
T: 0115 9772892  
E: [matthew.garrard@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.garrard@nottsc.gov.uk)

### **Constitutional Comments (KK 27/08/20)**

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

### **Financial Comments (SAS 27/08/20)**

51. 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.

[Performance reporting \(Quarter 2 2019/20\) – services for children and young people: report to Children and Young People's Committee on 16th December 2019.](#)

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

C1381