



Nottinghamshire County Council

Children and Young People's Committee

Date: Monday, 08 October 2012
Time: 10:30
Venue: County Hall
Address: County Hall, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7QP

AGENDA

- | | | |
|----------|--|----------------|
| 1 | <u>Apologies for Absence</u>
Details | 1-2 |
| 2 | <u>Declarations of Interests by Members and Officers:- (see note below)</u>
(a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests
(b) Private Interests (pecuniary and non-pecuniary) | 1-2 |
| 3 | <u>Minutes of the last meeting held on 10 September 2012</u>
Details | 3 - 6 |
| 4 | <u>Committee Work Programme</u>
Details | 7 - 12 |
| 5 | <u>Presentation on the Medium Term Financial Strategy</u>
(Oral Report) | 1-2 |
| 6 | <u>Update on the Establishment of a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub</u>
Details | 13 - 18 |
| 7 | <u>Progress in the Adoption Service</u>
Details | 19 - 24 |
| 8 | <u>Authority Governor Appointments and Reappointments to School Governing Bodies and the Appointment of</u>
Details | 25 - 30 |

No. NOTES:-

1-2

(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 08449 80 80 80

(3) Persons making a declaration of interest should have regard to the Code of Conduct and the Council's Procedure Rules.

(4) Members or Officers requiring clarification on whether to make a declaration of interest are invited to contact Sara Allmond (Tel. 0115 977 3794) or a colleague in the Democratic Services Team prior to the meeting.

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

minutes

Meeting CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE

Date 10 September 2012 (commencing at 10.30 am)

Membership

Persons absent are marked with `A`

COUNCILLORS

Philip Owen (Chairman)
Allen Clarke (Vice-Chairman)
Steve Carroll
A Bob Cross
A Sybil Fielding
Mike Quigley MBE
Mrs Sue Saddington
S Smedley MBE JP
Lynn Sykes
Brian Wombwell
Liz Yates

Ex-officio (non-voting)
A Mrs Kay Cutts

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)

A Ms G Neill
A Mr James Parry
Mr David Richards
A Mr John Rudd

OTHER COUNCILLORS IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Mel Shepherd

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Sara Allmond Policy, Planning and Corporate Services
Steve Edwards Service Director, Children's Social Care
Jon Hawketts Senior Executive Officer, Children, Families and Cultural Services
Jas Hundal Service Director, Transport, Property and Environment
Anthony May Corporate Director, Children, Families and Cultural Services
Philippa Milbourne Children, Families and Cultural Services
Neil Robinson Group Manager, CFC Investments & Treasury Management
John Slater Service Director, Education Standards & Inclusion
John True Service Director, Children, Families and Cultural Services

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sybil Fielding (illness) and Mr Rudd.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Steve Carroll declared a private interest in item 8 – Schools Capital Refurbishment Programme as he was a governor at Croft Primary and Leamington Primary and Nursery which were listed within the report.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 16 JULY 2012

RESOLVED: 2012/022

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 16 July 2012, having been circulated to all Members, were taken as read and were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

INTRODUCTION TO SERVICES: CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

Steve Edwards presented an overview of the key services within the remit of Children's Social Care. He responded to Members' questions and comments.

RESOLVED: 2012/023

That the presentation be noted.

ESTABLISHMENT OF POSTS IN CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE FRAMEWORK TEAM

RESOLVED: 2012/024

That the establishment of the following posts in the Children's Social Care Framework Team be approved:

- 1 full time equivalent (fte) technical specialist post
- 0.5 fte E-support worker post
- 0.5 fte administrative support post
- 1 fte business lead post

PERFORMANCE REPORTING (QUARTER 1 2012/13) – SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

RESOLVED: 2012/025

That the report be noted.

REVIEW OF THE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES PLAN

RESOLVED: 2012/026

That the revised and update version of the Children & Young People's Plan 2011-14, attached to the report, be approved.

SCHOOL CAPITAL REFURBISHMENT PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: 2012/027

That the report be noted

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BLOODHOUND PROJECT

RESOLVED: 2012/028

1. That the report be noted
2. That the use of additional funding from the Support to Schools Service budget, if required, to address supplementary costs associated with the launch, business breakfasts and evening community events, be approved.

The meeting closed at 11.26 am.

CHAIRMAN



8 October 2012

Agenda Item: 4

**REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR, POLICY, PLANNING AND
CORPORATE SERVICES**

WORK PROGRAMME

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider the Committee's work programme for 2012/13.

Information and Advice

1. 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.
2. The attached work programme has been drafted in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, and includes items which can be anticipated at the present time. Other items will be added to the programme as they are identified.
3. As part of the transparency introduced by the new committee arrangements, committees are expected to review day to day operational decisions made by officers using their delegated powers. It is anticipated that the committee will wish to commission periodic reports on such decisions. The committee is therefore requested to identify activities on which it would like to receive reports for inclusion in the work programme. It may be that the presentations about activities in the committee's remit will help to inform this.

Other Options Considered

4. None.

Reason for Recommendation

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

Statutory and Policy Implications

6. 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

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:

Sara Allmond
Democratic Services Officer
T: 0115 9772794

Constitutional Comments (HD)

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

Financial Comments (PS)

8. There are no direct financial implications arising from the contents of this report. Any future reports to Committee on operational activities and officer working groups, will contain relevant financial information and comments.

Background Papers

None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME

<u>Report Title</u>	<u>Brief summary of agenda item</u>	<u>Lead Officer</u>	<u>Report Author</u>
5 November 2012			
Performance reporting (Quarter 2 2012/13) – Services for Children and Young People	Quarterly performance report	Anthony May	Anthony May
Initial committee budget proposals 2013/14		Anthony May	Anthony May
Review of School Place Planning		John Slater	John Slater
Education Outcomes		John Slater	John Slater
Review of arrangements for children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties		John Slater	John Slater
Response to the Sexual Exploitation Action Plan		Steve Edwards	Steve Edwards
Post 16 reforms and LA guidance		John Slater	John Slater
2, 3 & 4 year olds Education Entitlement Funding	To discuss the 2 yr Entitlement Funding and links to 3 & 4 years Education Funding	John Slater	John Slater
Rota visits	Six-monthly report	Steve Edwards	Steve Edwards
Safeguarding Children Board annual report		Steve Edwards	Steve Edwards
Provision of funding for home extension to enable a child to remain with foster parents		Steve Edwards	Steve Edwards
Heymann Primary School, West Bridgford	Proposed expansion: outcome of a published Section 19 Notice	John Slater	John Slater
Brookside Primary School, East Leake	Proposed delivery of early years education places: outcome of a published Section 19 Notice	John Slater	John Slater
Child Poverty Strategy Co-ordination – establishment of post		Derek Higton	Derek Higton
3 December 2012			
Youth Employment, Education and Training Strategy		John Slater	John Slater
Schools Strategy		John Slater	John Slater
Review of Closing the Gap Strategy	6 monthly review	John Slater	John Slater
Review of Child Poverty Strategy	Annual update	Derek Higton	Derek Higton
Troubled Families Programme update		Steve Edwards	Steve Edwards

<u>Report Title</u>	<u>Brief summary of agenda item</u>	<u>Lead Officer</u>	<u>Report Author</u>
Officer groups report	Children's Trust Board (inc District Management Groups)	Anthony May	Anthony May
14 January 2013			
Work programme		Anthony May	Anthony May
Authority appointments & reappointments to school governing bodies	Quarterly report on appointments made	John Slater	John Slater
11 February 2013			
Performance reporting (Quarter 3 2012/13) – Services for Children and Young People	Quarterly performance report	Anthony May	Anthony May
Revised Residence Order Financial Support Scheme for regular payments	Annual determination	Steve Edwards	Steve Edwards
Revised Adoption Financial Support Scheme for regular payments	Annual determination	Steve Edwards	Steve Edwards
National Minimum Fostering Allowances	Annual determination	Steve Edwards	Steve Edwards
Sold Services offer to schools	Annual approval	Anthony May	Anthony May
Troubled Families Programme update		Steve Edwards	Steve Edwards
Committee budget 2013/14		Anthony May	Anthony May
11 March 2013			
School Admission Arrangements 2014/2015		John Slater	John Slater
Financial support for students in Post-16 Education	Annual determination	John Slater	John Slater
Locality Visits	Six monthly report	Steve Edwards	Steve Edwards
15 April 2013			
Work programme		Anthony May	Anthony May
Authority appointments & reappointments to school governing bodies	Quarterly report on appointments made	John Slater	John Slater
Outside bodies report	Futures; SACRE	Anthony May	Anthony May
May 2013 date tbc			
Performance reporting (Quarter 4 2012/13) – Services for Children and Young People	Quarterly performance report	Anthony May	Anthony May
Capital Refurbishment Programme for Schools	Six monthly performance report	Anthony May	Anthony May
Home to School/SEND Transport Policy	Annual determination	John Slater	John Slater
Post-16 Transport Policy 2013/2014 academic year	Annual determination	John Slater	John Slater

<u>Report Title</u>	<u>Brief summary of agenda item</u>	<u>Lead Officer</u>	<u>Report Author</u>
Exceptional payments for school clothing and footwear allowance	Annual determination	John Slater	John Slater
Troubled Families Programme update		Steve Edwards	Steve Edwards
Rota visits	Six-monthly report	Steve Edwards	Steve Edwards
Officer groups report	SEND High Level Needs Panel; NLC Management Committee; Education Trust Board; Safeguarding Children's Board	Anthony May	Anthony May
To be placed			
Budget monitoring	Quarterly reports	Anthony May	Anthony May
Locality visits	Six-monthly report (Sept & March)	Steve Edwards	Steve Edwards
Schools with an increase in school places of 25% or more – outcome of consultation		John Slater	John Slater
Scrutiny reviews	Child & adolescent mental health	Steve Edwards	Steve Edwards
Report back on scrutiny reviews	Appointment & retention of governors; Child Poverty in Education		
Officer groups report (June)	Schools Forum; School Admissions Forum; Children's Trust Board (inc District Management Groups)		

8 October 2012

Agenda Item: 6

**REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND
CULTURAL SERVICES AND THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR ADULT
SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND PUBLIC PROTECTION**

**UPDATE ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MULTI-AGENCY
SAFEGUARDING HUB (MASH)**

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on the establishment of a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in Nottinghamshire.

Information and Advice

2. On 11 January 2012, Cabinet endorsed the establishment of a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) as part of the new operating model for Children's Social Care. On 12 September 2012, Policy Committee approved the funding of the annual recurring costs for the MASH, established a number of posts and noted the final arrangements for the MASH.
3. The aim of the MASH is to significantly improve the sharing of information between agencies, improve decision-making by taking a more holistic view and therefore help to protect the most vulnerable children and adults from harm, neglect and abuse.

Overview of the MASH

4. Most MASHs nationally deal with safeguarding concerns about children but not adults. Research highlighted the clear advantages of taking a broader family approach and as a result, the Nottinghamshire MASH will deal with safeguarding concerns about both vulnerable children and adults, providing a faster, more co-ordinated and more consistent response from partner agencies and services to safeguarding concerns.
5. The MASH will act as the first point of contact for Children's Social Care and for safeguarding concerns about adults. It will involve representatives from Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, Police and Health working together, co-located in one place. Virtual links will exist to other services and agencies which are not located in the MASH, such as preventative services, the Probation Trust and District Councils.
6. The MASH will receive safeguarding concerns from professionals such as teachers and doctors as well as members of the public and family members. For those concerns that meet the threshold for Adult or Children's Social Care involvement, representatives from

the different agencies in the MASH will collate information from their respective sources to build up a holistic picture of the circumstances of the case and the associated risks to the child or adult. As a result, better decisions will be made about what action to take and support will be targeted on the most urgent cases. Better co-ordination between agencies will lead to an improved service for children, adults and families.

7. The MASH will also provide advice and guidance for professionals with safeguarding concerns about a child or adult. This will help to enforce the application of need thresholds, improve the quality of information provided and ensure that the appropriate level of support is offered. For those concerns that do not meet the threshold for Adult or Children's Social Care involvement, the MASH will ensure that cases are passed to early intervention or other services as and when this is appropriate.
8. The MASH will be based at the Customer Services Centre at Mercury House and will build on the model and success of the Dedicated Adult Access Team which is already located there. It is anticipated that a significant number of contacts will be addressed at an early stage by a new team of MASH Officers; this represents a considerable change to how safeguarding concerns are currently handled. Working under the close supervision of qualified Adult and Children's social work professionals, MASH Officers will swiftly advise and signpost referrers to the most appropriate service, thereby filtering contacts and reducing the number of contacts being escalated to social work professionals inappropriately. In Adult Social Care having a single point of contact for social care enquiries staffed by a mix of Customer Service Advisors, Social Work and Occupational Therapy staff has resulted in over 60% of contacts being resolved directly by the Customer Service team with an overall reduction of 30% in referrals to dedicated Adult Social Care teams.
9. Implementation of the MASH will bring the following benefits:
 - a reduction in the number of children and adults inappropriately receiving costly services from social care, health, the police and others
 - closer partnership working and clearer accountability, with agencies providing a faster, more co-ordinated and consistent response to safeguarding concerns, ensuring that vulnerable children and adults are kept safe
 - an improved 'journey' for the child, adult and family with more preventative support and better informed services provided at the right time
 - a reduction in the number of inappropriate referrals and re-referrals
 - a more straightforward and responsive process for the professional or citizen raising a safeguarding concern, with clear guidance and support.

MASHs in Other Areas

10. The MASH model originated in Devon and this project is drawing extensively on their experience. Several other local authorities have successfully established MASHs: Staffordshire, Stoke City, Haringey, Hackney, Harrow, Norfolk, Birmingham City, Hull and York. MASHs are also being set up in every London Borough, in Northamptonshire and in Nottingham City. The design of the MASH in Nottinghamshire is actively building upon best practice elsewhere in the country.

Progress to Date

11. A Strategic Steering Group for the project has been established since December 2011, with senior representatives from the Police, Health, Probation Trust, District Councils and Fire & Rescue Service, as well as NCC services. The Group is chaired by the Corporate Director for Children, Families and Cultural Services. Robust governance arrangements are in place, with progress reported to the Children's Social Care Transformation Programme Board and Adult Social Care Business Improvement Board and then via the Programme Director's Board to the Corporate Leadership Team. In addition, members of the Strategic Steering Group have been keeping relevant stakeholder boards updated e.g. Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board, Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Adults Board, Police Command, PCT Board etc.
12. An Operational Group has also been working to design and implement the MASH, jointly chaired by a Superintendent from Nottinghamshire Police and the Service Director for Children's Social Care. Five workstreams have been working since February 2012, each focusing on a different element of the MASH: Organisation Structure, Business Process, Technology, Information-Sharing Agreement and Volume & Performance Analysis. Each has a workstream lead and a multi-agency working group that has collectively designed and refined their element, ensuring that stakeholders have been fully engaged in developing the model in Nottinghamshire.
13. Progress to date has been good, thanks to the hard work of operational staff and senior representatives involved in the project. Partner agencies and NCC services have given and maintained a very strong commitment to the project, and this has been backed up by resources.
14. Significant elements of progress are noted below:
 - best practice research has been completed, highlighting lessons learnt, useful documents and contacts from existing and emerging MASHs across the country
 - a detailed volume analysis has estimated the likely demand upon the MASH, using this to inform the number of posts within the organisation structure and the design of the business process
 - the organisation structure for the MASH has been agreed by the Strategic Steering Group for final approval by Policy Committee. This incorporate roles, job descriptions and staff funding arrangements
 - business processes, describing how the MASH will operate in detail, have been agreed
 - an Information Sharing Agreement has been developed and is being widely consulted upon, in preparation for sign-off by the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board and Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Adults Board in the Autumn
 - technology requirements have been gathered from partner agencies and services, informing the design of technical solutions and associated cost estimates
 - the office layout for the MASH at Mercury House has been agreed, with minor building work due to start in early September
 - draft performance measures for the MASH have been developed

- existing posts have been filled through enabling and preference processes. New posts have been advertised, at the discretion of the relevant Corporate Director, to ensure that post holders are in place in time to undertake induction training prior to go-live at the end of November
- extensive communication activity has taken place since the start of the project, with presentations, face-to-face briefings, electronic bulletins and web pages all being used to engage stakeholders. An ongoing more detailed communication plan is being developed for the run-up to go live to ensure that key parties and the public are aware of the existence of the MASH, its function and how to access it.

Timescales

15. The MASH is on track to go live in the week commencing 26 November 2012, with strong commitment from the partner agencies and services to achieve this. Support for implementation is being provided by ICT, Property, Ways of Working, HR, Communications and the Improvement Programme.

Gateway Review

16. A Gateway Review, involving an independent external consultant, was conducted in May 2012, examining project progress through interviews with a range of stakeholders, assessing confidence in project delivery and project management. The review graded the project as 'Amber/Green' overall and made a number of recommendations, which have all been addressed. The Gateway Review report is available as a background paper. A second Gateway Review is scheduled for early October 2012.

Other Committees

17. An update report about the MASH was also received by the Adult Social Care and Health Committee on the 1 October and Policy Committee will receive a progress report on the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub six months after it opens.

Other Options Considered

18. As this is a report for noting, it is not necessary to consider other options.

Statutory and Policy Implications

19. 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.

Implications for Service Users

20. Service users will receive faster, more co-ordinated assistance from operational teams as a result of the swifter, better informed decisions being taken in the MASH. In addition, a

greater number of children and families will receive support from preventative services, dealing with problems before they escalate.

Financial Implications

21. Policy Committee approved on 12 September 2012 that recurring annual costs for the MASH of £552,000, including some staffing costs, are to be met from County Council contingencies.
22. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between partner agencies located at the MASH will include consideration of the ongoing funding arrangements.

Crime and Disorder Implications

23. Co-locating social care professionals with Police colleagues will improve the sharing of information and hence the handling of crimes related to safeguarding and domestic violence. As more data is gathered, analysis will help identify risk factors and enable better prediction of potential vulnerability, so that support can be targeted accordingly.

Safeguarding Implications

24. The MASH will significantly improve the safeguarding of children and adults, helping partner agencies to make faster, more informed decisions that mean children, adults and families receive appropriate, co-ordinated support more quickly.

Human Resources Implications

25. The relevant trade unions have been consulted on the establishment of the MASH through regular ongoing meetings with the Service Director, Childrens Social Care, as part of the wider transformation programme. A number of existing posts have been provisionally allocated to existing employees through the programme's enabling process. Approval to advertise new posts in advance of Policy Committee on 12 September 2012 was also obtained due to the need to recruit staff in advance of the implementation date for training and induction purposes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) That the update on the establishment of a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in Nottinghamshire be noted.

Anthony May
Corporate Director for Children, Families
and Cultural Services

David Pearson
Corporate Director for Adult Social Care,
Health and Public Protection

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Merlin Tinker
Project Manager, Improvement Programme
T: 07748 194 982
E: merlin.tinker@nottscc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments

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

Financial Comments (NDR xx/09/12)

27. The financial implications are set out in paragraphs 21 and 22 of the report.

Background Papers

MASH Gateway Review – May 2012

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.

C0069

8 October 2012

Agenda Item: 7

REPORT OF THE GROUP MANAGER, REGULATED AND CORPORATE PARENTING

PROGRESS IN THE ADOPTION SERVICE

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform Members about progress and developments in the adoption service and Nottinghamshire's response to the national agenda.

Information and Advice

Timescales in adoption

2. Nottinghamshire is currently measured in three areas of the adoption process:
 - a) N161, the time taken from adoption panel approving the child's plan to placement with adopters.

This is the figure which was released in league tables in October 2011, during National Adoption Week. At that time Nottinghamshire placed 54% of children within the 12 months target.

This measurement is taken for children adopted during the year, which inevitably means it relates to historic practice. The league table in October 2011 was based on children who became subject to an adoption order between April 2010 and March 2011, and were therefore placed, most likely in September 2009 to September 2010.

Based on the children adopted 2011-12, 62.8% were placed within 12 months. This year to date, 67% were placed within 12 months.

- b) The Adoption Scorecard for matching children with families which has a target of matching children with adopters within 7 months of obtaining Placement Order. This target will reduce to 4 months within the next 4 years.

When the scorecard was released in May this year, this showed Nottinghamshire's performance to be above average, at 163 days (national average 171 days), approximately 5-6 months. This is based on an average of the 3 years 2008-2011.

Of the children adopted 2011-12, 65% achieved this 7 month timescale, and 37% met the 4 month timescale. However, scorecard performance is recorded in days, not percentages, and it takes a 3 year average.

- c) The Adoption Scorecard for the length of time children spend being looked after prior to being placed for adoption. The target for this is 21 months.

Between 2008-11, 56% of our children were placed within 21 months; the national average was 58%. Of the children adopted 2011-12, 65% achieved this 21 month timescale.

3. Clearly, Nottinghamshire's performance is improving in our timeliness of placing children, however some children continue to experience delay.
4. We are beginning to experience a push from courts to complete care proceedings in a timely manner, and this is impacting positively on very young children, who are ready to place within months of birth.
5. In order to reduce delay within the adoption processes, we have a monthly home finding meeting to consider children and matches.
6. Supply of adopters does not keep pace with children needing families, and we do now discuss children with some families prior to their approval. In some cases we present approval and match to panel. This is a change in practice, as previously only foster carer matches were considered in this way.
7. However, it means there is no delay for children in waiting for adopters to be approved, and then returning to panel in subsequent weeks with a match. The risk is borne by adopters.
8. The Government Action Plan for Adoption, released earlier this year, makes it clear that the adoption assessment/approval process is viewed as bureaucratic and slow.
9. The action plan talks of approvals of adopters being achieved within 6 months – 2 months of pre-selection work, self-assessment, statutory checks, own reflection, followed by 4 months after an application is accepted of assessment, and matching. This is now detailed in consultation documents and it is clear that matching is expected to take place during approval processes, and increased involvement of adopters in matching is to be encouraged.
10. In the home finding meetings we discuss children as soon as the agency decision is made. We do not feature children without a Placement Order but we complete all tasks, so we are immediately ready.
11. Our commitment to placing children in a timely manner is not at the expense of careful consideration. All steps previously taken remain in place; what has been removed are various periods of 'waiting time' within our own systems. This also applies to adult assessments.

12. We will continue to seek to reduce delay for children, in all ways possible, and expect to look at other changes to practice in future, such as adopters being approved as foster carers for children to enable earlier placement.

Numbers in the adoption process

13. We have taken a very proactive approach to home finding, with great success. In recent months we have placed or matched 4 sibling groups of 3, which bucks the national trend.
14. We have placed/matched many sibling pairs; however the biggest challenge currently is to find adopters for single boys who are less than 5 years of age.
15. We have had an increase in relinquished babies this year and are ready to place them at 12 weeks of age; one was placed aged 105 days.
16. We have vastly improved our home finding activity, with excellent profiles of children and committed involvement to national events. As a result we expect to place around 70 children this year, up to 20 of whom may be placed with adopters who are approved by other agencies.
17. In addition, Nottinghamshire maintains its reputation with adopters, and we expect 48 approvals this year, up on last year's 31.
18. We expect to consider 120 plans this year, up by 50% on last year's figure of 81. The number of Looked After Children continues to grow and was 809 in June 2012, compared to 739 in July 2011.

Home finding for children

19. Nottinghamshire now participates in a range of home finding activities, some of which are entirely new. One of the new initiatives is the Adoption Activity Days which is an innovative approach to home finding in this country.
20. Adoption Activity Days are a new home finding initiative for harder to place children, being run as a pilot project for two years by the British Agency for Fostering and Adoption. It is based on principles of empowerment of children waiting for a new family and adopter-led linking. The project is based in the East Midlands Adoption Consortium, which embraces 9 local Authorities, although initially only 5 were willing to take part.
21. Nottinghamshire is one of the lead Authorities in the pilot project steering group, and has been well regarded both locally and nationally for the commitment to developing practice and placement of children in this area. Staff from the Authority have been involved in well-received radio and newspaper broadcasts as well as being a part of a video of the first event, which is used for national training purposes, and securing additional sponsorship for the project.
22. There have now been three Adoption Activity Days with two more planned for October 2012 and March 2013. As expertise has developed and children have been matched and placed, so Government interest and support for the days has grown. Martin Narey, adoption champion for the Government, is planning to attend the event in October 2012.

23. So far the Adoption Activity Days have offered 128 places to children, several of whom have attended twice. Between 23 and 27 adoptive families have attended each event. Each day has given the children a memorable day of activities. Each child has a trusted carer with them, as well as their social worker and activities are geared around age and interest. The event finishes with food and singing for the children, a buffet for all the adults, and the children all go home with a small bag of toys. The event has been held in different large venues with the capacity for about 180 people. General feedback from the children has been that they have had a great day out.
24. Specifically, Nottinghamshire had places for 23 (out of 39) children at the first day, 13 (out of 41) children at the second day, and 9 (out of 48) children at the third day. As more Authorities witnessed the success of the days, so more East Midlands Agencies signed up to take part, giving less child places per Authority.
25. Our children included a range of children with additional needs, some had profound disabilities, others were older, and some were brothers and sisters wanting to stay together. Many were boys. Although the children were predominantly white, a few Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) children also attended. We have also sent two sets of Nottinghamshire adopters to the events, as they had been waiting a long time to find the right child for them.
26. Feedback from all participants has been balanced, constructive and largely very positive. One of the positive spin offs has been children being pleased to see so many children waiting for families, like them, which makes it feel more normal.
27. However, this event has to deal with children who will not find an adoptive family at this kind of day, or at all. The work done by the steering group to provide detailed written guidance to social workers preparing the children, for their foster carers and for the prospective adopters is critical in this respect. All the prospective adopters are asked to write some positive comments on every child who attends before they leave the event which becomes part of the child's life story. Also a number of children do attract follow up interest which does not result in a match. Given the complex nature of the children's needs and histories, this is not surprising, as we are asking prospective adopters to make a lifelong commitment to our child which goes far beyond the initial attraction. However, all interest is logged for the child so that they take away some positives about themselves, their talents and personalities.
28. In terms of matching children, 22 children have found families from the three events. Specifically, Nottinghamshire will have matched 5 children, representing 23% of children placed so far in the pilot. Nottinghamshire children consisted of 2 sibling groups and a single child, 3 boys and 2 girls in the age range 3 to 6 years, and with a range of different additional needs.
29. Many of the 22 children matched had been waiting for over a year for an adoptive family, and one child in particular, who had been featured on GMTV last autumn as part of national adoption week and received not a single enquiry because of her learning and physical disabilities, has been successfully placed. Children matched also include 2 nine year olds, and 8 older sibling pairs.

30. Adoption Activity Days are one part of a wide range of home finding activities in Nottinghamshire as follows:

- we have a comprehensive child's profile, the information from which is used for the adoption register and referrals to the regional consortium
- the profile includes professional photographs which show our children in the best possible light
- we have a system to respond to register enquiries which is efficient and professional which means that we do not lose potential carers at the enquiry stage
- we hold local profile exchange events to share our children's profiles with locally approved adopters
- we have attended national register exchange days in London, Leeds and Cardiff
- we have close working relationships with the local Voluntary Adoption Agencies and expect to place several children with them throughout the year
- we have made a DVD of a range of children which we can show adopters
- we have had extensive media campaigns this year involving experienced adopters and maintaining our profile to potential adopters.

Other Options Considered

31. As this is a report for noting, it is not necessary to consider other options.

Statutory and Policy Implications

32. 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

That:

- 1) the developments and progress that Nottinghamshire is making in ensuring that children with a plan for adoption are placed in a timely and safe way be noted.
- 2) the development and progress that Nottinghamshire is making to attract potential adopters to Nottinghamshire be noted.

Rachel Coombs
Group Manager, Regulated and Corporate Parenting

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Shelagh Mitchell
Adoption Service Manager
T: 0115 9774169
E: shelagh.mitchell@nottscc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments

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

Financial Comments (NDR 25/09/12)

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

Background Papers

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

C0088

8 October 2012

Agenda Item: **8****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION STANDARDS
AND INCLUSION****AUTHORITY GOVERNOR APPOINTMENTS AND REAPPOINTMENTS TO
SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES AND THE APPOINTMENT OF PARENT,
COMMUNITY AND AUTHORITY GOVERNORS TO THE TEMPORARY
GOVERNING BODY OF THE NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL IN WORKSOP****Purpose of the Report**

1. To note new appointments to Authority governor vacancies and re-appointments of Authority governors who reach the end of their term of office during the period 1 August to 31 October 2012 and have indicated their willingness to serve a further four year term of office.
2. To note the appointment of parent, community and Authority governors to the temporary governing body of a new primary school in Worksop.

Information and Advice

3. The Corporate Director for Children, Families and Cultural Services has delegated authority to approve school governor appointments for which the Council has responsibility and is required to report the decisions quarterly to the Children and Young People's Committee.

Authority governor appointments and reappointments to school governing bodies

4. In line with the procedures set out in the Local Authority's governor recruitment strategy, officers sought new nominations to outstanding vacancies from political parties and from school governing bodies.
5. A number of Authority governors who were approaching the end of their term of office were identified and each governor was asked whether he or she would be willing to serve as an Authority governor for a further term of four years. Those governors re-appointed had indicated their willingness to be re-nominated.
6. The new appointments and re-appointments of Authority governors, which are made subject to the successful completion of appropriate checks, are as listed overleaf:

New appointments

Ashfield	
Forest Glade Primary	Mrs Julie Elizabeth Cotterill
Bassetlaw	
Hallcroft Infant and Nursery	Councillor Michelle Gregory
Prospect Hill Infant and Nursery	Mrs Vicky Wanless
Redlands Primary	Mrs Jean Mary Waller
Gedling	
Abbey Gates Primary	Mrs Wendy Anne Elizabeth Norman
Mansfield	
All Saints Catholic School, Mansfield	Mrs Jean Pamela Crane
Crescent Primary	Mr Roy Chapman
Eastlands Junior	Councillor Derek John Evans
Garibaldi Maths and Computing College	Mrs Diane Wardle Wright
Leas Park Junior	Mrs Wendy Dorothy Allen
St Edmund's CofE Primary	Councillor Philip Shields
St Edmund's CofE Primary	Councillor David Malcolm Smith
Newark	
Harby Queen Eleanor Primary	Mrs Kim Wainwright
The Muskham Primary	Mrs Brenda Dickinson
The Muskham Primary	Mr Martin Talbot

Reappointments

Ashfield	
Mapplewells Primary and Nursery	Mr John Anthony Heald
Selston Arts and Community College	Mrs Betty Dixon
Bassetlaw	
Normanton-on-Trent St Matthew's CofE (Cont) Primary	Mr Andrew Thomas Martin
Normanton-on-Trent St Matthew's CofE (Cont) Primary	Mrs Alison Hilda Purser
Broxtowe	
Toton Bispham Drive Junior	Councillor Marilyn Yvonne Hegyi
Mansfield	
Birklands Primary	Mrs June Margaret Ibbotson
Newark	
Lowe's Wong Infant	Mr Roger Merryweather
Rushcliffe	

East Bridgford St Peter's CofE (V/C) Primary	Mr Trevor Malcolm Large
Kinoulton Primary	Mrs Sheila Hill
Orston Primary	Mrs Susan Jane Martin

Appointment of parent, community and authority governors to the temporary governing body of a new primary school in Worksop

7. Nottinghamshire County Council has the statutory duty to establish a temporary governing body for all proposed new schools that are to be maintained by the Local Authority in accordance with the New Schools (General) (England) Regulations 2003.
8. The size of the temporary governing body ranges from a minimum of 9 to a maximum of 20. Within this range the County Council can adopt the temporary governing body model of their choice, provided it complies with the guiding principles for the particular category of the new school.
9. The temporary governing body of the new primary school in Worksop will have the following membership:

Parent	5
Staff (including the headteacher)	3
Authority	3
Community	3

10. The appointment of parent, community and Authority governors to the temporary governing body of the new primary school in Worksop, which are made subject to the successful completion of appropriate checks, are as listed below:

Parent x 5	Mr Albert James St John Deakin
	Mr Paul Collison
	Mrs Emma Claire Hagen
	Mrs Louise Shaw
	Vacancy
Community x 3	Mrs Una Daniel
	Mrs Heather Margaret Bryan
	Vacancy
Authority x 3	Councillor Glynn Gilfoyle
	Mrs Linda Jane Daulton
	Vacancy

Other Options Considered

11. There are no other options. The County Council has a statutory duty to ensure governor vacancies are filled without undue delay.
12. Nottinghamshire County Council's strategy for recruiting and retaining school governors includes the re-appointment of existing governors. The County Council sees many advantages in retaining experienced governors and actively seeks to encourage

governors approaching their end of term of office to stand again either in the same school or in a different one. The appointments made ensure the retention and supply of experienced governors.

Statutory and Policy Implications

13. 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.

Equalities Implications

14. New nominations have been encouraged and received from a broad range of sources. We welcome applications from all types of people, especially those from ethnic minority communities and under-represented groups such as disabled people.
15. All existing Authority governors approaching the end of their term of office have had the opportunity to put themselves forward for re-nomination.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That:

- 1) new appointments to Authority governor vacancies and re-appointments of Authority governors who reach the end of their term of office during the period 1 August to 31 October 2012, as listed in paragraph 6, are noted.
- 2) the appointment of parent, community and Authority governors to the temporary governing body of a new primary school in Worksop, as listed in paragraph 10, are noted.

John Slater
Service Director, Education Standards and Inclusion

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Leonie Meikle
Team Manager, Governor Services
T: 0115 854 6055
E: leonie.meikle@nottsc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments

16. As the report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (NDR 21/09/12)

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

Background Papers

Completed Authority governor nomination forms

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

Sutton in Ashfield Central	Coun Michelle Gent
Sutton in Ashfield West	Coun Fiona Asbury
Selston	Coun Gail Tuner
Retford West	Coun Mike Quigley
Worksop North East and Carlton	Coun Alan Rhodes
Worksop East	Coun Glynn Gilfoyle
Worksop West	Coun Kevin Greaves
Tuxford	Coun John Hemsall
Chilwell and Toton	Coun Richard Jackson and Coun Dr John Doddy
Newstead	Coun Christopher Barnfather
West Mansfield	Coun Victor Bobo and Coun June Stendall
East Mansfield	Coun Bob Cross and Coun Martin Wright
North Mansfield	Coun Parry Tsimbiridis and Coun Joyce Bosnjak
Warsop	Coun John Allin
Collingham	Coun Vincent Dobson
Farndon & Muskham	Coun Susan Saddington
Southwell & Caunton	Coun Bruce Laughton
Radcliffe-on-Trent	Coun Kay Cutts
Keyworth	Coun John Cottee
Bingham	Coun Martin Suthers

C0071

