

Public Document Pack



Children Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board

Monday, 11 June 2018 at 6.30 p.m.
Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David W R'.

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Councillor Mark Dennett (Chair) | Labour |
| Councillor Geoffrey Logan (Vice-Chair) | Labour |
| Councillor Chris Carlin | Labour |
| Councillor Lauren Cassidy | Labour |
| Councillor Pauline Hignett | Labour |
| Councillor Margaret Horabin | Labour |
| Councillor Rosie Leck | Labour |
| Councillor Peter Lloyd Jones | Labour |
| Councillor Christopher Rowe | Liberal Democrat |
| Councillor John Stockton | Labour |
| Councillor Louise Whitley | Labour |

*Please contact Ann Jones on 0151 511 8276 or e-mail
ann.jones@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Board is on Monday, 10 September 2018*

**ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Part I

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| Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion or voting on the item. | |
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In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

**CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE
BOARD**

At a meeting of the Children Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 29 January 2018 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Dennett (Chair), Logan (Vice-Chair), Cassidy, P. Hignett, Horabin, P. Lloyd Jones and Rowe

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Edge, Parker and J. Stockton

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. McIntyre, A. Jones and T. Coffey

Also in attendance: None

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

Action

CYP27 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2017 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

CYP28 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.

CYP29 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The minutes relating to the Children, Young People and Families Portfolio that have been considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of this Board, were attached at Appendix 1 for information.

Clarity on the following was made:

EXB63 – the Schools Forum was the decision making body in respect of the transfer of 0.5% from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block.

EXB78 – Edinburgh Road Children's Home had been de-registered by Halton Borough Council, not Ofsted.

EXB 81 – a small number of schools would see a reduction in funding in 2018/19. Most of these reductions were due to falling pupil numbers. Other funding factors that have had an impact in school funding had been the increase in funding for low prior attainment and change to funding for deprivation.

RESOLVED: That the minutes are noted.

CYP30 SSP MINUTES

The minutes of the Halton Children's Trust meeting held on 23 November 2017 were submitted to the Board for information.

RESOLVED: That the minutes are noted.

Councillor Horabin declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item of business.

CYP31 CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE PERFORMANCE (PRESENTATION)

The Board received a presentation from the Operational Director for Children and Families which provided Members with an overview of the key service developments.

Information on the following was included:

- Caseload breakdown;
- I-CART activity;
- Contacts;
- North West Profile;
- Assessment Timescales;
- Children in Need;
- Children in Care;
- Placement Stability; and
- Current activity and developments within the service.

Following the presentation Members raised the following queries:

Why were children sometimes moved around?

This could be for a number of reasons but generally: the child goes missing; the foster carer gives notice; or it could be a social worker decision following a review.

Have there been any serious case reviews lately?

Not since the one two years ago following a teenager having an acute life-threatening event.

Would it be possible to have the child protection figures by Ward?

Yes this and other relative data would be arranged into Ward profiles and sent to Members.

How many children do foster carers usually have?

This depends on their accommodation i.e. number of bedrooms. It also depends on the carer themselves as to how many they wanted. Children over the age of 10 also have to have their own bedroom, so this was taken into consideration as well.

Members welcomed the information provided and agreed it was very helpful, to the extent that they would like even more detail in future.

RESOLVED: That the Board notes the contents of the report and presentation.

Director of
Children's Services

CYP32 NEGLECT STRATEGY

The Board was presented with Halton's Neglect Strategy 2017-18, a copy of which was appended to the report.

The Neglect Strategy (the Strategy) had been developed under Halton Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) and was a multi-agency document which outlined the definitions and responses to neglect and the background and prevalence to neglect in Halton. The Strategy was accompanied by a multi-agency action plan which detailed how agencies and partners should identify and respond to neglect and how HSCB would scrutinise and monitor the impact and effectiveness of the Strategy.

The six classifications of neglect that had been identified were discussed: medical neglect, nutritional neglect, emotional neglect, educational neglect, physical neglect and lack of supervision and guidance. It was highlighted that neglect affected children of all ages, not just small children and that there was usually a contributing factor to neglect, as discussed in the Strategy.

The following queries were made during consideration of the paper:

Was there a definition of 'good enough care' or an 'eccentric family'?

There is clear evidence about what constitutes good enough care; in assessing a family who may be 'eccentric' the issue was what the impact was on the child and if their basic needs were being met.

Taking cultural values into consideration could be difficult?

Yes, however social workers used tools to assist them when dealing with cultural differences, plus they received equality and diversity training. It was important though that a social worker was able to challenge a family with a different cultural background, if they felt a child's basic needs were not being met.

What was being done in schools to recognise neglect?

The HCSB ran courses for Governors of schools and i-cart offered support to them as well. Recently some funding was made available to recruit two experienced staff whose job it was to assist schools and offer support and guidance in cases of suspected neglect. A document had been produced around recognising neglect and this would be sent to Members.

RESOLVED: That the Board receives and endorses the Strategy.

Director of
Children's Services

CYP33 BUSINESS PLANNING 2018 -19

The Board received the proposed priorities for the Children, Young People and Families elements of the Council's Single Business Plan for approval.

It was reported that since 2015 a Single Business Plan had been developed for the Local Authority (LA) as a whole. This plan had focussed on the key medium term issues rather than providing extensive narrative of every area of work of the LA. To ensure that the LA was producing a Business Plan that enabled it to meet the priorities identified within the Corporate Plan, the information from each Directorate would be set out under the Council's priority headings:

- Children and Young People;

- Employment, Learning & Skills;
- Safer Halton;
- Healthy Halton;
- Environment and Regeneration; and
- Corporate Effectiveness and Efficiency.

It was noted that each directorate was compiling their contribution to the Council's Single Business Plan and would seek approval for their priorities from their respective PPBs. The information would then be compiled into a single Business Plan which would be presented to Executive Board in March 2018.

The Board were presented with the following six proposed priorities for the Children and Young People's element of the plan as follows:

1. Keeping children and young people safe by improving practice;
2. Improve outcomes for children and young people through effective multi-agency early intervention;
3. Improve progress and attainment across all key stages and diminish the difference between vulnerable groups and their peers;
4. Raise achievement in early years;
5. Improve the offer for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND); and
6. Improve participation and skills for young people to drive Halton's future.

Members discussed the priorities presented before them and it was noted that if agreed, more details of the priorities would emerge and more detail could be provided over time with careful monitoring. It was also agreed that all six were as important as each other and that to prioritise the priorities would not be appropriate.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) notes the contents of the report; and
- 2) approves the priorities for the Children, Young People and Families elements of the Council's Single Business Plan.

CYP34 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 2 OF 2017/18

The Board received the Performance Management reports for quarter 2 of 2017-18 (1 July to 30 September 2017) and were requested to consider and raise any questions or points of clarification in respect of these.

It was noted that the key priorities for development or improvement in 2016-17 were agreed by Members and included in the Local Authority's Business Plan, for the various functional areas reported to the Board as follows:

- Education, Inclusion and Provision Services; and
- Children and Families Services.

The reports detailed progress made against objectives and milestones and performance targets and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period.

The following were highlighted:

- A children and young people's speech and language therapy service had started on 1 September 2017, jointly commissioned between HBC and the CCG;
- The schools categorisation letters were sent to headteachers and chairs of governors in Halton in September 2017; the purpose of these was explained to Members;
- Halton had been awarded capital funding to invest in the provision for children and young people with SEND, an amount of £500,000 would be provided over 3 years;
- Consultation had begun on the relevant sections of the Children and Social Work Act 2017; and
- The number of permanent exclusions in Halton rose to 53 for 2016-17.

Members discussed the new protocol in place for schools when dealing with a pupil who had been identified as having challenging behaviour. Schools were expected to use the protocol which was aimed at helping them support pupils with challenging behaviour, encourage consistency across schools and avoid exclusion. There was a discussion about the more academic curriculum and greater emphasis on progress and the impact this may be having on pupil behaviour and increased exclusions.

RESOLVED: That the performance management reports for quarter 2 of 2017-18 be received.

Meeting ended at 8.45 p.m.

REPORT TO: Children, Young People and Families Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 11 June 2018

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Enterprise Community and Resources

SUBJECT: Public Question Time

WARD(s): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider any questions submitted by the Public in accordance with Standing Order 34(9).
- 1.2 Details of any questions received will be circulated at the meeting.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That any questions received be dealt with.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Standing Order 34(9) states that Public Questions shall be dealt with as follows:-
- (i) A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for dealing with questions from members of the public who are residents of the Borough, to ask questions at meetings of the Policy and Performance Boards.
 - (ii) Members of the public can ask questions on any matter relating to the agenda.
 - (iii) Members of the public can ask questions. Written notice of questions must be given by 4.00 pm on the working day prior to the date of the meeting to the Committee Services Manager. At any one meeting no person/organisation may submit more than one question.
 - (iv) One supplementary question (relating to the original question) may be asked by the questioner, which may or may not be answered at the meeting.
 - (v) The Chair or proper officer may reject a question if it:-
 - Is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the Borough;
 - Is defamatory, frivolous, offensive, abusive or racist;

- Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or
 - Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.
- (vi) In the interests of natural justice, public questions cannot relate to a planning or licensing application or to any matter which is not dealt with in the public part of a meeting.
- (vii) The Chairperson will ask for people to indicate that they wish to ask a question.
- (viii) **PLEASE NOTE** that the maximum amount of time each questioner will be allowed is 3 minutes.
- (ix) If you do not receive a response at the meeting, a Council Officer will ask for your name and address and make sure that you receive a written response.

Please bear in mind that public question time lasts for a maximum of 30 minutes. To help in making the most of this opportunity to speak:-

- Please keep your questions as concise as possible.
- Please do not repeat or make statements on earlier questions as this reduces the time available for other issues to be raised.
- Please note public question time is not intended for debate – issues raised will be responded to either at the meeting or in writing at a later date.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton** – none.

6.2 **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton** – none.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton** – none.

6.4 **A Safer Halton** – none.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal** – none.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

8.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO: Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 11 June 2018

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Executive Board Minutes

WARD(s): Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Minutes relating to the Children and Young People Portfolio which have been considered by the Executive Board are attached at Appendix 1 for information.
- 1.2 The Minutes are submitted to inform the Policy and Performance Board of decisions taken in their area.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Minutes be noted.

3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 None.

4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None

5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None

5.3 A Healthy Halton

None

5.4 A Safer Halton

None

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 None.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

8.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

Extract of Executive Board Minutes relevant to the Children, Young Peoples and Families Policy and Performance Board

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 18 JANUARY 2018

| | |
|--------------|--|
| EXB87 | CONTRACTED SERVICES FOR MISSING FROM HOME AND CARE CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION SERVICES ACROSS CHESHIRE |
|--------------|--|

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, which sought approval to commence a procurement process for the provision of Missing from Home, Care and Exploitation Services for young people across Cheshire.

The Board was advised that in 2012, the four Cheshire Local Authorities (Halton, Warrington, Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester) agreed to jointly commission a pan Cheshire Missing from Home Service. It had clear links with Cheshire Constabulary's missing from home co-ordinators to support young people notified as missing from home or care. It was reported that in April 2014, the Service was expanded to include the emerging links around Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

Members were advised that Halton would lead on the procurement process, in collaboration with the three Cheshire authorities, and seek delivery of a high quality service which was effective in improving outcomes delivered by skilled practitioners. It was expected that the Service would combine a balance of advice and guidance with direct, evidenced based interventions for those that required additional support.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves Halton Borough Council to lead a joint procurement exercise of Missing from Home and Care and Exploitation services for young people across Cheshire with Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington Councils.

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| EXB88 | SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2019 – KEY DECISION |
|--------------|--|

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, on the school admission arrangements for 2019.

The Board was advised that in October 2017, Halton Local Authority issued a statutorily required paper on the proposed admission arrangements and co-ordinated admission schemes for the September 2019 intake. It was noted that the consultation ran until 17 November 2017, with no changes proposed to the current oversubscription criteria for Local Authority schools. It was reported that no responses to the consultation had been received.

Reason(s) for Decision

The decision was statutorily required and any revision to the proposed arrangements may adversely affect school place planning, as detailed in the report.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Other options considered and rejected included the allocation of places through random allocation (lottery), and this method could be seen as arbitrary and random.

Implementation Date

The Policy will apply for the September 2019 academic intake.

RESOLVED: That the Board approves the School Admissions Policy, Admission Arrangements and Co-ordinated Schemes, attached to the report, for admission to primary and secondary schools for the 2019/20 academic year.

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| EXB89 | CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2018-19 – KEY DECISION |
|--------------|---|

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, which provided a summary of the Capital Programmes for 2018/19 for the People Directorate.

The Board was advised that in October 2017, the Department for Education (DfE) announced the schools capital allocations grant for 2018/19 and had confirmed that there would be no change in the methodology used in 2017/18. It was reported that Halton would also receive Healthy Pupils Capital Funding in 2018/19, for one financial year only, which was intended to improve access to facilities such as kitchens, dining facilities, playgrounds, changing rooms and sports facilities.

The DfE had announced Special Provision Capital Funding for local authorities to invest in provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, aged 0-25, with funding for a range of provision types where this would benefit children and young people with health and care (EHC) plans. The latter funding was due to commence in 2018/19, with Halton's allocation over a three year period being £500,000.

Reason(s) for Decision

To deliver and implement the Capital Programmes.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Implementation Date

Capital Programmes would be implemented from 1 April 2018.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Capital Funding available for 2018/19 be noted;

- 2) the proposals to be funded from School Condition Capital Allocation be approved: and
- 3) Council be recommended to approve the Capital Allocations for inclusion in the Budget report.

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| EXB90 | CONTRACT FOR PARENT TO PARENT VOLUNTEER SUPPORT: REQUEST TO WAIVE PROCUREMENT STANDING ORDERS |
|--------------|--|

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, on the contract for Parent to Parent Volunteer Support.

The Board was advised that the existing Parent-to-Parent Volunteer Support contract had been identified as being exceptionally well placed to deliver additional provision to work with families that met the Troubled Families criteria. The Volunteer Support service was staffed by individuals that were qualified, skilled and experienced in delivering inter-parental relationships provision and had been highly effective within the Borough in supporting the key aspect of early intervention. It was noted that funding for this support service had been allowed for within the existing Troubled Families budget.

RESOLVED: That the waiver of Procurement Standing Orders 1.14.3 and 1.14.4 to the value of £150,000 be approved, for the period 9 April 2018 to 8 April 2020, to facilitate the rapid implementation of inter-parental relationships provision as part of the existing parent to parent support contract delivered within the Troubled Families initiative.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 22 FEBRUARY 2018

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| EXB105 | INSPECTION FRAMEWORK (PRESENTATION) |
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The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, regarding the framework for the Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children Services (ILACS).

The Board was advised that the last Ofsted Inspection of Children Services in Halton took place in 2014, under the Single Inspection Framework (SIF). It was noted that the overall judgement was "Requires Improvement", as detailed in the report. Since that inspection, a plan had been developed to address the recommendations, with continual monitoring, review and evaluation of performance undertaken.

It was reported that the SIF cycle had ended, and local authorities would now be inspected under the ILACS framework, which was essentially built around answering three questions, as stated in the report. In addition, the presentation provided information on what the authority could expect in terms of inspection visits, although it was noted that the 'Annual Conversation' visit and shared self-evaluation took place on 26 January 2018.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 19 APRIL 2018

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| EXB138 | HIGH NEEDS UPDATE |
|---------------|--------------------------|

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, People, which provided an update on the High Needs budget for 2018/19.

The Board was advised that funding received by local authorities from Government for pupils with special educational needs had not kept pace with the increase in demand. It was reported that the needs of children and young people with additional support requirements had become more complex; in addition, the Government had extended cover for children and young people from 0 to 25 years of age.

Under new Government regulations, only 0.5% of funding could be moved between funding blocks, if approved by Schools Forum. In previous years, reserves had been used to fund the high needs overspend, but it was noted that the reserves had now been fully committed.

The report set out details of the indicative budget for High Needs for 2018/19. A range of budget reductions, discussed at the Schools Forum, were attached at Appendix A. It was noted that there was a shortfall of over £220,000. Following a review, a further report would be brought to the Board setting out future funding options.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) applications for Enhanced Provision continue to be considered for the Summer term 2018;
- 2) a review be undertaken with a report to the Board in June 2018; and
- 3) the Board approve the reductions in central spend included in Appendix A.

REPORT TO: Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 11 June 2018

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Special Strategic Partnership Board minutes

WARD(s): Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The minutes relating to the Children and Young People's Portfolio which have been considered by the Halton Children's Trust at their meeting on 24 May 2018, are attached at Appendix 1 for information.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Minutes be noted.

3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

3.1 None.

4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None.

5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None.

5.3 A Healthy Halton

None.

5.4 A Safer Halton

None.

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 None.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

8.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.



Halton Children's Trust: Minutes 22.02.18
Riverside College, Widnes

Present:

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Cllr Tom McInerney | Lead Member for Children's Services HBC (Chair) |
| Cllr Dave Cargill | Community Safety Police and Crime Panel |
| Ann McIntyre | Operational Director, Children's Organisation and Provision, HBC |
| Mil Vasic | Strategic Director People, HBC |
| Denise Roberts | NHS Halton CCG |
| Tracey Coffey | Operational Manager, Children & Families, HBC |
| Dorothy Roberts | Principal Policy Officer, People, HBC |
| Angela Woolfall | Foster Carer |
| Sharon Canavan-Daly | Foster Carer |
| Jane Tetlow | Cheshire Police |
| Anne Simmons | Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic College |
| Matthew Walker | Halton Youth Cabinet |
| Helen Young | Bridgewater Community HCT |
| Debbie Wright | Bridgewater Community HCT |
| Anne Doyle | Bridgewater Community HCT |
| Tisha Baynton | Health Improvement Team, HBC |
| Kelly Collier | Policy Officer, Children & Young People, HBC |

Apologies:

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Shélah Semoff | Partnership Officer, Policy, People, Performance & Efficiency, HBC |
| Tracy Ryan | Assistant Policy Officer, People, HBC (Minutes) |
| Alan Fairclough | Cheshire Police |
| Gareth Jones | Head of Service, Youth Justice Services |
| Mary Murphy | Principal, Riverside College |
| Eileen O'Meara | Director of Public Health for Halton |
| Libby Evans | Bridgewater Healthcare NHS Trust |
| Richard Strachan | Chair, Halton Safeguarding Children Board |
| Cleo Alonso | Vol Sector rep |
| Ewan Jago | UK Youth Parliament |
| Pat Hansen | Halton Housing Trust |
| Matthew Machell | Children in Care Council |
| Sarah Jones | Participation and Inclusion Officer, HBC |
| David Baugh | Head at Pewitt Hall Primary |
| Vicky Wrest | Cheshire Fire and Rescue |
| Susan Lythgoe | Job Centre Plus |

For Information:

| | |
|------------|---------------------|
| David Parr | Chief Executive HBC |
|------------|---------------------|

| Item | | Action | Deadline |
|------|--|--------|----------|
| 1.0 | <p>PART A - TOPIC ITEM</p> <p>E-Safety in Schools and Impact of Social Media on Young People Discussion</p> <p>Jane delivered the lively Topic Discussion session incorporating a quiz and video into the delivery. It was highlighted that in Halton:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology is prevalent. Nearly all school aged children have a phone or have access to a phone. • Small portion of Facebook is communication between friends. • Always use non-descriptive profile pictures so as information cannot be gathered and used inappropriately. • Beware of internet slang e.g. PIR – Parent in Room • Draw up a contract between parent and child. The do's and don'ts of social media. • Be aware that through mobile phones children/young people have access to inappropriate video games, gangs online (Combat 18). Make sure this is monitored. • Indecent images on phone, if Police investigate and therefore confiscate the phone the phone will not be returned. • Snap chat – ghost mode hides your location. • Apps – beware they ask for access to camera, location etc. <p>Questions considered by members during the discussion were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do we need to have a system in place to monitor the use of mobile phones in school time? If so how could we manage this? 2. Do we feel that youths in our area are negatively affected by social media? How can we safeguard against this? <p>This item drew lots of engagement in discussion, particularly around mobile phones in schools and children, young people and parents being educated appropriately via curriculum delivery, and the effect this has on mental health.</p> <p>Parents are often adding to the problems of mobile phone usage in schools. Parents ring their child in the middle of the school day instead of ringing the school office.</p> <p>The Grange has a blanket ban on mobile phones. All phones are handed in at the beginning of the school day and collected at the end of the school day. Other schools incorporate phone usage into the session e.g. for research purposes.</p> | | |

| | PART B - BUSINESS ITEMS | | |
|-----|---|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 2.0 | <p>Minutes/Actions 23.11.18</p> <p>Actions carried over:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mary Murphy noted that FE/Post-16 (Riverside College) do not have a Mental Health Link Worker which has been raised on several occasions with Halton CCG. Action: Sheila to follow up FE/Post-16 issue raised by Mary. Children's Trust Question time panels to be arranged so pupils can put questions to Trust members. Action: Ann, Phil and Policy Team to make arrangements for the Question Time Panels in 2018. <p>Minutes accepted as accurate.</p> | SMcH | ASAP |
| 2.2 | <p>You Said, We Did – Smoking and Vaping</p> <p>Tisha cascaded the completed you said, we did template to the Trust. The following update was provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A smoke free and vapour free policy for schools has been developed and will shortly be distributed. The Tobacco Alliance is to be reformed. There are currently mixed messages within the media around e-cigs/vapouring. Halton do not supply or promote vapouring. The long –term effects are still unknown. Nationally there has been a 11% drop in smoking. Vaping is not promoted in the workplace within Halton. Anyone wishing to vapour must go outside along with those who smoke. <p>It was raised that vaping does occur on a particular school bus and is seen by young people as a trendy accessory. However in a confined space this can cause health issues particular where the young person is asthmatic. The jury is still out as to whether vaping is a gateway to smoking.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tisha to send Kelly the completed You Said, We Did template for circulation. Cllr Tom McInerney to enquire as to whether there are no vaping signs on buses, similar to that of no smoking, | AMc/PMcC/ Policy Team | ASAP |
| 2.3 | <p>Pupil Premium Report and accompanying anonymised school website exemplification</p> <p>This report outlines the Pupil Premium provided to schools and the Local Authority and gives some examples of how the money can be used effectively to diminish the difference in</p> | TB TMcI | 2.03.18 24.05.18 |

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|-----|---|----------|----------------------|
| | <p>attainment and progress for disadvantaged young people.</p> <p>Mark pulled out the following key messages within the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil Premium is for children who are least resilient and lack in confidence not necessary low achievers. • Consistent excellent teaching is a must for all children but particularly for those children on Pupil Premium. • Schools should be checking interventions are working on a termly basis. <p>At a previous Children’s Trust meeting the question was asked whether the whole £900 should be spent solely on the individual. Mark informed the Board that a school may choose, for example, to spend a significant amount of money on employing a Teacher in a specific subject area. As long as progress is being made and there is evidence of impact for that child that is fine. However if the evidence suggests there is no direct impact then there is an issue.</p> | | |
| 2.4 | <p>CYPFP – Plan on a Page</p> <p>Kelly distributed the draft 2 page summary plan for comments. The Board where informed that information on the summary plan had been taken directly from the main plan.</p> <p>The Trust approved the summary plan.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelly to put the summary plan on the Children’s Trust Website. • Kelly to send out the summary plan on the next schools e-newsletter. | KC KC | 24.05.18 12.03.18 |
| 2.5 | <p>CYPFP Action Plan Snapshot Update</p> <p>The Trust agreed that each priority in turn will be updated and discussed at the meeting.</p> <p>At the next meeting the focus will be on Early Intervention.</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelly to ask for updates on the Early Intervention elements of the action plan. • Kelly to add the priorities onto the forward plan. | KC KC | 05.03.18 05.03.18 |
| | PART C - INFORMATION ITEMS | | |
| 3.0 | <p>Key Partner Updates</p> <p><u>Halton Children Safeguarding Board Arrangements</u> Tracey informed the Trust that following on from the Social</p> | | |

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| <p>3.1</p> | <p>Work Act there will be changes to all Children’s Safeguarding Board’s. In short the board will cease as it stands from April 2019 and new arrangements need to be put in place. Relationship between the new safeguarding arrangements and Children’s Trust need to be explored. The Trust will remain a key partner. Consultation will begin September 2018. We need to ensure Halton Children and young people are safe and all partners work together. It was proposed and confirmed that this will be agenda item for May’s meeting.</p> <p><u>Mental Health Campaign – Halton Youth Cabinet</u> Halton’s Youth Cabinet has secured funding from a national charity to train twelve mental health champions - two for each high school in Runcorn. The programme will start in March 2018 and will see the champions undertake accredited Mental Health First Aid training as well as getting the opportunity to meet and influence senior decision makers from mental health support organisations across the borough and beyond. It is hoped that the presence of a mental health champion will raise the profile of emotional health and wellbeing in schools as well as providing young people the opportunity for peer support and signposting to professional help and advice.</p> <p>AOB <u>Children/Young People Representation at Future Trust Meetings</u> Over the last couple of meetings it has been noted that there had been dwindling representation from children and young people. This is partly down to representatives moving on. It was agreed that we need to look into inviting new children and young people to the Trust. Anne Simmons mentioned the relaunch of the student council at Sts. Peter and Paul as a possible avenue. Jane Tetlow also mentioned student safety officers within schools might also be interested. It was agreed that a meeting would be arranged, in the first instance, between Ann McIntyre and the Policy Team to explore options.</p> <p><u>Fond Farewell to Matthew Walker</u> This was Matthews’s last Trust meeting as he leaves to pursue the next chapter in his life. He has been really committed and instrumental in progressing key agendas. Matthew has been a fantastic conduit between young people and HBC and will be sadly missed. Good luck Matthew!</p> <p>Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kelly to add Safeguarding Board Arrangements to the agenda for May’s meeting. • Cllr Tom McInerney and Mil Vasic to invite Matthew to Runcorn Town Hall. • A meeting to be arranged between Ann and the Policy Team to look at young people representation | <p>KC</p> <p>TMci/ MV</p> <p>AMC/ Policy</p> | <p>5.03.18</p> <p>ASAP</p> <p>5.03.18</p> |
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| | <p>on the Trust.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send information to Jane about the Trust that can be shared with student safety officers and equally to Anne to share with their student council. | <p>Team</p> <p>KC</p> | <p>2.05.18</p> |
| | <p>2018 Meeting Dates/Time Riverside College, Kingsway Campus, 4.30-6.30pm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thurs 24 May '18 – Classroom A8, Ground Floor • Thurs 13 September '18 • Thurs 22 November '18 | | |

REPORT: Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 11 June 2018

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Directors – Children and Families Services; and Education, Inclusion and Provision Services

SUBJECT: Annual Report 2017/18

PORTFOLIO: Children, Young People and Families

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE AND CONTENT OF REPORT

1.1 To receive the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Boards' Annual Report for 2017/18.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the 2017/18 Annual Report be received.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Article 6 of the Constitution requires each Policy and Performance Board to submit an Annual Report to Council outlining their work, making recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods as appropriate.

3.2 The Annual Report (see attached) has been submitted to the Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board for consideration.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton
None

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton
None

6.3 A Healthy Halton

None

6.4 A Safer Halton

None

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 None

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 None

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

9.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

**ANNUAL REPORT
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD
APRIL 2017 – MARCH 2018**



Cllr. Mark
Dennett
Chairman
Children &
Young People
PPB

“I normally look back over the previous year and then look forward to the forthcoming year. But, this year I would like to start by saying thank you to all of the people involved in providing Children’s Services whether in Education or Social Care. To continue to provide a good service while resources are continuously cut by the current government is a credit to the determination and professionalism of all involved.

It is not only Council, School, and Health resources that are being cut, so to cut to our residents’ benefits which are biting deep, this, in turn, is creating increased demand for our services. But, against this backdrop, our staff, social workers, teachers and health workers are continuing to provide good support — albeit in diminishing amounts — to the children of the Borough.

I also want to take this opportunity to congratulate our students, and also thank the parents, carers and teachers who supported them. National changes to the curriculum and assessments have made this challenge even harder. To see how our students have performed against this changing landscape is inspiring, and I know that it will only continue to get better.

You will see, I think, from the “Review of the Year”, that it has been a good and varied twelfth year for the Board and I would like to thank all of the Members of the Board, as well as all of the Officers involved for their continued support and contribution.

Going forward we will continue to monitor how the new curriculum and assessment criteria are being implemented, to ensure that Halton is providing the best level of education for all of our children.

We will also continue to scrutinise our social care and safeguarding services, ensuring that we do everything we can to support our most vulnerable children and young people.

Finally, I would like to conclude this report by thanking all of the Officers and Members (of all parties) involved in all of the ‘additional duties’ that take place to make sure that the children and young people receive that best care and support. Duties such as being a school governor with all of the responsibilities that that entails, statutory inspections of our care homes (Regulation 44) or of our social worker teams (Climbié visits), membership of the Local Safeguarding Board, the Adoptions Panel, the Children and Young People’s Trust, to name but a few of the ‘extra duties’ that both Members and Officers perform to support and improve the lives of the children and young people of our Borough.”

Councillor Mark Dennett

Chair, Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board

MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

During 2017/18 the Board comprised Eleven Councillors – Councillors M. Dennett (Chair) Cllr G. Logan (Vice Chair), L. Cassidy, S. Edge, C. Gerrard, P. Hignett, M. Horabin, P. Lloyd Jones, S. Parker, C. Rowe and J. Stockton.

The Board is responsible for scrutinising performance and formulating policy in relation to the work of the Council (and its partner agencies within Children’s Trust Arrangements) in seeking: to ensure that children and young people in Halton have the best possible start in life and opportunities to fulfil their potential and succeed; and to scrutinise progress against the Corporate Plan and the Children and Young People’s Plan.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

The full Board met four times during the period June 2017 to March 2018, and detailed below are some of the main initiatives that the Board has worked on during the year.

Children and Social Work Act 2017

The Board received a report on the changes to statutory duties for children and young people and the reform of social work outlined in the Children and Social Work Act 2017. Members were advised that the act would strengthen the duties to children in care and the corporate responsibilities of the local authority and its partners and extend the duties to care leavers until 25, as well as introducing a requirement for the publication of a care leaver offer. The Act introduced compulsory relationship education in primary schools and compulsory relationship and sex education in secondary schools. Local Safeguarding Children Boards would be abolished and replaced by a safeguarding performance framework agreed by the Local Authority, the Police and the Clinical Commissioning Group in consultation with the relevant partners. It was also reported that a new regulator for social work would be established, called Social Work England. The Board discussed the implications of the Act and expressed concern about the additional cost pressures for the LA and schools in implementing the changes.

Reducing Child Poverty and Improving Life Chances

A report providing an update on the work of Halton’s Child and Family Poverty Strategic Group and its links to the Liverpool City regions was considered by the Board. The report highlighted that the most disadvantaged children were less likely to achieve their academic potential, secure employment and gain a sense of future financial security. They could be also more likely to suffer from poor health, live in poor quality housing and unsafe environments.

Joint Local Area Inspection of Special Education Needs and Disability for Halton

The Board received a report summarising the outcome of the Joint Local Area Inspection of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) in Halton. It was

Members discussed the agreed priorities from the Strategic Group and the Action Plan.

Joint Local Area Inspection of Special Education Needs and Disability for Halton

The Board received a report summarising the outcome of the Joint Local Area Inspection of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) in Halton. It was reported that the inspection had been undertaken by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission between 27th and 31st March 2017. The aim of the inspection was to assess the effectiveness of the Local area in implementing the SEND reforms. The report outlined the key strengths identified in the inspection and the areas for development. To address any areas of development it was agreed that a Joint Action Plan would be developed. Members discussed the increase of pupils with social emotional and mental health, the rise in exclusions and the financial implications of the rise in demand.

Neglect Strategy

A report was received on the Halton's Neglect Strategy, developed under Halton Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB). This multi-agency document outlined the definitions and responses to neglect and the background and prevalence. The Action Plan linked to the Strategy detailed how agencies and partners should identify and respond to neglect and how the HSCB would scrutinise and monitor the impact and effectiveness of the Strategy. The Board discussed the six classifications of neglect and the fact that is affected children of all ages. Discussions were also held on training and awareness of schools in recognising neglect.

Early Years Strategy and Action Plan

The Board received a report on the Early Years Strategy and Action Plan. An overview was presented on the vision and priorities along with the details of the key actions proposed to improve outcomes. Members were also advised that a Guide to Parents had been produced to support parents to understand how to prepare their child for school. Discussion was held on identifying and sharing good practice and the opportunity for links to other authorities.

New Social Care Inspection Framework

A report was presented to inform the members of the requirement of the new inspection framework for children's social care services. Members that the inspections of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) is a 'system' of inspection that is proportionate, flexible, and bespoke to each and every local area inspected. Halton's current Ofsted grade, 'Requires Improvement' determines the kind of inspection we have next time, and the contact and support received in-between visits.

The framework would include an annual self evaluation of the social work practice by local authorities and an annual conversation between Ofsted and the local authority to review the self evaluation. Focused visits looking at a specific area of service or cohort of children. As Halton was previously judged as Requiring Improvement at its previous inspection there would be a two week standard

inspection every three years. A Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) could also take place which investigated the multi agency arrangements and response to a range of key priorities such as child abuse. Members discussed their role in the inspection process.

Scrutiny Topic

In 2017 The Board agreed a Scrutiny topic titled: Further developing links between Halton's Businesses and Schools. Councillor G. Logan was nominated as the Chair of the Scrutiny topic group and three lines of enquiry were agreed, those being:

- Employer engagement
- Careers education information
- Business Needs

Four meetings of the Scrutiny topic group took place between August 2017 and January 2018, each of the first three meetings reviewing a different line of enquiry from the above list and the final meeting reviewing the result of further actions/investigations agreed during the Scrutiny topic meetings.

Whilst the scrutiny topic work was being carried out the Government released its new Careers Strategy titled: Making the most of everyone's skills and talents. Following this strategy the statutory guidance for schools and for colleges about the requirements for delivering careers guidance and links to employers was also updated. These documents were reviewed by the Scrutiny topic group during their final meeting and influenced the final recommendations from the group.

Other Matters

The Board also considered a range of reports on; attainment outcomes for children and young people and their performance in comparison to national data and north west regional data; that annual Headteacher report on the educational outcomes of children in care; the process for determining school term and holiday dates; the National Funding formula and the revised approach to funding High Needs and the annual report on comments, complaints and compliments relation to children's social care services.

As part of its overview, the Policy and Performance Board also considers the Council's Executive Board minutes and Children's Trust minutes as well as the Quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports.

Members of the Public are welcome at the meetings of the Board. If you would like to know where and when meetings are to be held or if you would like any more information about the Board or its work, please contact Ann McIntyre on 0151 511 7332 ann.mcintyre@halton.gov.uk

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| REPORT TO: | Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board |
| DATE: | 11 June 2018 |
| REPORTING OFFICER: | Strategic Director, People |
| PORTFOLIO: | Children, Education and Social Care |
| SUBJECT: | Applying Corporate Parenting Principles for Children in Care and Care Leavers |
| WARDS: | Borough Wide |

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report is to inform members of the changes to statutory duties for children in care and care leavers and the introduction of seven corporate parenting principles under the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members note the seven principles and the revised expectations in acting as corporate parents, and requests that an evaluation of how effectively we are delivering against those principles be undertaken and reported to this board.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Children and Social Work Act 2017 introduces the following seven corporate parenting principles:

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

- 3.2 The principles should shape the mind-set and culture of every part of a local authority in how it carries out all of its functions in relation to looked-after

children and care leavers. The statutory guidance gives a number of examples and questions that members and officers should ask in evaluating how effectively we demonstrate we have high ambition and support for children and care leavers who are part of “our family” as corporate parenting.

- 3.3 The statutory duties only apply directly to local authorities but cannot be delivered in isolation from our agency partners who are a central part to play and already have given their commitment to working in partnership with us.
- 3.4 Halton has a good base to work from on how we support children in care and care leavers but we have already made a number of changes in response to the corporate parenting principles.
- 3.5 The Children in Care Partnership Board chaired by the Lead Member for children, young people and families has revised its terms of references to focus more strongly in continuing to deliver improved outcomes. A number of sub-groups have been established on education, employment, housing and support for care leavers, placements and health, chaired by various partners, who are responsible for a work plan and reporting evidence of progress to the board. The Children in Care Council will also report to the Board on issues and matters that are important to them.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL’S PRIORITIES

4.1 Children & Young People in Halton

As corporate parents, we have a duty to ensure children in our care are supported to achieve to their best of their ability with their education, physical and emotional health and succeed as adults. The Act strengthens those core principals.

4.2 Employment, Learning and Skills

As corporate parents, we have a duty to support and advocate for our children in care and care leavers to have access to and participate in a full range of education, training and employment opportunities. The Act increases the duty to ensure care leavers are in employment, education or training.

4.3 A Healthy Halton

Children in Care may have experienced a number of issues before care that may impact long-term on their emotional health and well-being which need appropriate support and services in response. If these issues are not addressed, they may act as a barrier to successful outcomes in education and employment and later adult life. The Act increases the duty to identify and respond to those needs including emotional health and well-being.

4.4 **A Safer Halton**

Stable placements and support reduce the risk of children in care becoming involved in anti-social behaviour and crime and also reduce their vulnerability to exploitation.

4.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified

5.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

5.1 The principles will be used by Ofsted to assess how effectively we are meeting the needs of children in care and care leavers.

6.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

6.1 Children in Care will have a range of issues because of their identity and their needs which require an appropriate response and access to a range of specific services as required.

7.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

| Document | Place of Inspection | Contact Officer |
|---|----------------------------|--|
| Applying Corporate Principles for Children in Care and Care Leavers www.gov.uk/government/publications/applying-corporate-parenting-principles-to-looked-after-children-and-care-leavers | | Tracey Coffey Operational Director (0151 611 8790) |



Department
for Education

Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers

Statutory guidance for local authorities

February 2018

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1. Summary

About this guidance

This guidance is about the role of local authorities and the application of corporate parenting principles as set out in section 1 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. Local authorities must have regard to the seven needs identified in the Children and Social Work Act when exercising their functions in relation to looked-after children and care leavers (relevant children and former relevant children). It should be read and applied alongside the [Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 2: care planning, placement and case review](#) and [The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 3: planning transition to adulthood for care leavers](#).

This guidance is designed to help local authorities consider the kinds of services that may be offered when having regard to the corporate parenting principles. It is not intended to be prescriptive about what must be offered. It is expected, however, that services respond to the individual needs of looked after children and care leavers when they exercise their functions in relation to these children and young people.

Expiry or review date

The guidance will be reviewed on an annual basis but will not be revised unless it is considered that it requires amendment.

What legislation does this guidance refer to?

This guidance refers to:

- Section 1 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Part 3 of the Children Act 1989 (the Act)
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 (the 2010 Regulations)
- The Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010 (the Care Leavers Regulations)

Who is this guidance for?

This guidance is for local authorities and their 'relevant partners' (as defined in section 10 of the Children Act 2004) and others who contribute to services provided to looked-after children and care leavers.

The principles are applicable to all local authorities in England whether they are or were the local authority looking after a particular child/young person. They apply to the whole local authority and not just to children's services functions. However, they apply only to local authority functions that are exercised in relation to looked after children and care leavers (see page 11).

For the purpose of this guidance, a local authority in England means:

- A county council in England
- A district council
- A London borough council
- The Common Council, of the City of London (in their capacity as a local authority)
- The Council of the Isles of Scilly; and
- A combined authority established under section 103 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009

Main points

- 1.1 The role that councils play in looking after children is one of the most important things they do. Local authorities have a unique responsibility to the children they look after and their care leavers (relevant and former relevant children). In this context local authorities are often referred to as being the ‘corporate parent’ of these children and young people, and the critical question that local authorities should ask in adopting such an approach is: ‘would this be good enough for my child?’.
- 1.2 A strong ethos of corporate parenting means that sense of vision and responsibility towards the children they look after and their care leavers is a priority for everyone. They recognise that looked-after children have the same needs – to be loved, cared for and feel safe - as other children. But also that there are unique challenges that looked-after children and care leavers face. 60% of children become looked-after due to abuse or neglect and they have poorer educational and health outcomes than their peers¹. Local authorities that have a strong corporate parenting ethos recognise that the care system is not just about keeping children safe, but also to promote recovery, resilience and well-being.
- 1.3 All children need love and stability in order to thrive. A strong corporate parenting ethos means that everyone from the Chief Executive down to front line staff, as well as elected council members, are concerned about those children and care leavers as if they were their own. This is evidenced by an embedded culture where council officers do all that is reasonably possible to ensure the council is the best ‘parent’ it can be to the child or young person . [Statutory guidance](#) on the role of the Director of Children’s Services and Lead Member for Children describes how those roles set the tone for the local authority to be an effective corporate parent.
- 1.4 The term ‘corporate parent’ is broadly understood by Directors of Children’s Services and Lead Members for Children, as well as those working directly in children’s services, in relation to how local authorities should approach their responsibilities for looked after children and care leavers. Corporate parenting is an important part of the Ofsted inspection framework and the corporate parenting Principles are referenced in Ofsted’s Inspecting Local Authority Children’s Services (ILACS) framework.² However, it is vital that all parts of a local authority beyond those directly responsible for care and pathway planning recognise they have a key role too.

¹ [Department for Education, Children looked after in England including adoption: 2015 to 2016](#)

² Framework for the Inspections of Local Authority Children’s Services (ILACS), <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inspecting-local-authority-childrens-services-from-2018>, p. 58.

- 1.5 The Children and Social Work Act 2017 therefore introduces corporate parenting principles, which comprise of seven needs that local authorities in England must have regard to whenever they exercise a function in relation to looked-after children or care leavers (collectively referred to as *looked-after children and young people*).
- 1.6 The corporate parenting principles are intended to secure a better approach to fulfilling existing functions in relation to looked after children and care leavers and for the local authority to facilitate as far as possible secure, nurturing, and positive experiences for looked after children and young people and enable positive outcomes for them.
- 1.7 It will be important for all who exercise functions in relation to looked-after children and care leavers – from elected councillors and the teams dealing with placements and care leaver services to those responsible for special educational needs, housing and council tax – to work together to ensure they have a more joined up approach.
- 1.8 The corporate parenting principles are not new requirements, but provide a framework to help local authorities understand and fully comply with existing duties across the whole of their services as they discharge those duties to looked-after children and care leavers.
- 1.9 The corporate parenting principles apply only to local authorities. Directors of Children’s Services and Lead Members for Children should nevertheless ensure that relevant partners understand how they can assist local authorities apply the principles in relation to the services those partners may provide. ‘Relevant partners’ include local policing bodies and Chief Officers of Police, local probation boards and probation services, youth offending teams, clinical commissioning groups, NHS England, schools and educational institutions.
- 1.10 The corporate parenting principles are about embedding a positive culture in the local authority towards looked-after children and care leavers and their success will depend on the extent to which directors, councillors, heads of service and front line managers champion and promote understanding of them.
- 1.11 The experiences of looked-after children and care leavers, particularly in regards to whether they feel cared for and listened to, will therefore be an important measure of how successfully local authorities embed the principles.
- 1.12 The corporate parenting principles should be integral to the way in which local authorities approach the development and review of their local offer to care leavers. They will also provide an important framework in promoting the mind-set and culture that will underpin the non-statutory care leaver covenant (see paragraph 3.12).

2. What are the corporate parenting principles?

The principles

- 2.1 In order to thrive, children and young people have certain key needs that good parents generally meet. The corporate parenting principles set out seven principles that local authorities must have regard to when exercising their functions in relation to looked after children and young people, as follows:
- to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people
 - to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings
 - to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people
 - to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners
 - to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people
 - for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work; and
 - to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.
- 2.2 The corporate parenting principles do not exist in a vacuum. They should shape the mind-set and culture of every part of a local authority in how it carries out all of its functions in relation to looked-after children and care leavers. The full range of duties placed on local authorities in respect of the children they look after and their care leavers is set out at Annexes 1 and 2.
- 2.3 The corporate parenting principles are not about applying a formulaic approach to how services are delivered in relation to looked-after children and care leavers. Rather they describe the behaviours and attitudes expected of councils when they are acting as any good parent would do by supporting, encouraging and guiding their children to lead healthy, rounded and fulfilled lives. The principles intend to ensure that all councils have high ambitions for the children in their care. In doing so, the application of the principles must respond to the individual needs, vulnerabilities or disadvantages of looked after children and care leavers. This will assist in securing that such children and young people are

not placed at significant disadvantage when compared with the support a non-looked after child or young person may receive from their family.

How the principles work

- 2.4 The detail of what local authorities must do to effectively care for looked-after children and care leavers is addressed through existing legislation, regulations and accompanying statutory guidance. The corporate parenting principles are intended to inform how a local authority carries out those existing responsibilities, whether that is about assessing a looked after child's needs or listening to and taking account of the wishes and feelings of care leavers. The principles are intended to encourage local authorities to be ambitious and aspirational for their looked-after children and care leavers.
- 2.5 The corporate parenting principles do not replace or change existing legal duties, for example in relation to the provision of accommodation for care leavers aged 18 and above.
- 2.6 Local authorities will need to consider the extent to which the corporate parenting principles are relevant to a particular service area or exercise of a particular function. This should be a reasonable and proportionate evaluation based on the extent to which the service/function is being carried out in relation to looked-after children and/or care leavers. This should include arrangements for ensuring that in two tier authorities that district and county councils work closely together. For example, although county councils exercise social services functions to this group of young people, district councils (which do not have social service functions) should consider how the principles apply when they are exercising their functions in relation to looked-after children and care leavers.

3. Applying the principles to local authority functions

Leadership

- 3.1 Strong corporate parenting means strong leadership, challenge and accountability at every level. The quality of support can be measured in how the child or young person experiences the support they receive and the extent to which they feel listened to and taken seriously. To that end, many top tier local authorities have established Corporate Parenting Boards or Panels to look strategically at the way in which their looked-after children and care leavers experience services. Feedback from looked-after children and care leavers is an important way in which local authorities can consider how effectively the corporate parenting principles are being applied when exercising functions in relation to these young people.
- 3.2 For care leavers, one of the main ways in which local authorities will bring the corporate parenting principles to life will be through their local offer to this group of young people. Through provisions in the Children and Social Work Act 2017, local authorities will also be required to publish information about the services that they offer that may assist care leavers in making a successful transition to independence. Where it considers it appropriate, a local authority should publish information about services for care leavers it has the power to provide but which are offered by others. The local offer should be developed in close partnership and dialogue between senior leaders and young people who are looked-after and care leavers.

Examples of how senior leaders and councillors may champion corporate parenting

- Lead members and senior officers promote the idea that looked-after children and care leavers are part of the local authority 'family'.
- Members of Children in Care Councils (CiCCs) have regular and positive contact with senior managers and the Lead Member for Children, who know them well. CiCC members are part of the selection process for senior staff in the local authority and in the design of an annual questionnaire about services for looked after-children and care leavers.
- Senior officers and councillors demonstrate that they care about what happens to their looked-after children and care leavers by taking their corporate parenting role seriously. For example, by visiting their looked-after children and care leavers who are placed outside or are living outside of the local authority.
- Services and practice change as a result of the views of care leavers. One local authority acted on their views by making changes to the job descriptions of personal advisers (PA) to emphasise their role in encouraging aspirations and getting to know each care leaver well. PA support is now available during weekday evenings.
- A number of local authorities have a yearly takeover day or week for looked-after children who make presentations to the senior management team and social workers on their experiences of being in care and what they would do if they took over.
- One local authority has appointed a Young Director, an apprenticeship for a care leaver, who mirrors the work of the Director of Children's Services. The Young Director engages with staff at all levels to ensure the views of looked after children and young people are at the heart of the work the local authority does. The local authority has a programme of participation activities in place that ensures young people feel like they are driving the quality of the service they receive.

Deciding relevant functions to which the principles apply

- 3.3 Local authorities provide around 700 services to their local communities. For some of these services (e.g. refuse collection, building control, trading standards and environmental protection), it may not be appropriate or necessary to provide a differentiated service to looked-after children or care leavers. Other services (e.g. fostering, education provision, the administration of housing benefit, the

administration of council tax and access to leisure activities) will be more relevant and in these instances, Directors of Children's Services and Lead Members for Children will want to ensure the needs identified as corporate parenting principles are taken into account.

- 3.4 The services that local authorities deliver can be broadly categorised into 14 different types of service. The service areas where consideration of the corporate parenting principles are of most relevance are: education, social care, housing, libraries, leisure and recreation, strategic policies (such as health and well-being plans) and local tax collection.
- 3.5 The seven other types of service provided by local authorities include highways, transport planning, passenger transport, environmental health, waste collection, waste disposal and town and county planning. Looked-after children and care leavers access these services as residents of the local authority area, regardless of their legal status. These services are less likely to require differentiated service for looked-after children or care leavers and therefore the need to have regard to the corporate parenting principles will either not apply or apply only in a limited way. This is because it may not be possible to do anything towards meeting one or more of the identified needs or, although it may be possible, it is not appropriate to do so.
- 3.6 The way in which a local authority operates its corporate services is important to consider in relation to the principles. For example, the way a local authority acts as an employer can have an impact, such as by ring-fencing apprenticeships for care leavers. These opportunities can be provided in any department of the council regardless of the function it performs. For example, there is no reason why a care leaver could not take up an apprenticeship opportunity in the highways department. All services can have a role in providing these opportunities for looked-after children and care leavers. This is different from providing a differentiated service, for instance, a differentiated service for looked-after children or care leavers in relation to a particular function such as waste collection.

The duty to co-operate

- 3.7 While the duty to have regard to the principles applies only to local authorities, other agencies play an important role in supporting them to carry out their responsibilities to be a good corporate parent.

- 3.8 Local authorities are under a duty (section 10 of the Children Act 2004) to make arrangements to promote co-operation between ‘relevant partners’³ with a view to improving the well-being of children in their area. This should include arrangements in relation to looked-after children and care leavers. Local authorities will therefore need to consider the implications of how they take account of the corporate parenting principles – especially the need to help them access services - when they make arrangements under section 10 of the 2004 Act.
- 3.9 Section 10(5) of the 2004 Act places a duty on relevant partners to co-operate with the local authority in the making of these arrangements, therefore promoting and ensuring a joined up approach.

Some examples of key organisations/services local authorities need to think about engaging with

- Early years settings, schools, further and higher education, employers
- Health services, including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Adult Mental Health Services (AMHS)
- Housing services
- The immigration service
- The police and criminal justice agencies

3.10 In making arrangements to co-operate, Chief Executives and Directors of Children’s Services should ensure that:

- there is a shared understanding across the local authority, relevant partners and the agencies with which it works about the needs of looked-after children and care leavers; and that
- their arrangements and strategies for multi-agency working take account of the needs of looked-after children and care leavers.

³ Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 defines relevant partners as including: the district council; the local policing body and the chief officer of police; probation board; any provider of probation services; youth offending team; the Secretary of State in relation to functions under sections 2 and 3 of the Offender Management Act 2007; NHS England; Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs); the governing body of a maintained school; an academy or City Technology College or City Technology College of the Arts; the governing body of an institution within the further education sector; the Secretary of State in relation to functions under section 2 of the Employment and Training Act 1973.

3.11 County councils should ensure they work with their district councils, which also need to have regard to the need to act in accordance with the corporate parenting principles.

The care leaver covenant

3.12 There is wide recognition that care leavers have faced many challenges in their lives and are likely to need much more support than other young people in making the transition to adulthood. We do not expect local authorities to do it all on their own. We therefore want government departments and their agencies, relevant partners, charities and private sector organisations to play their part as part of a wider corporate parenting family. The Department for Education is therefore introducing a 'care leaver covenant' that will enable organisations to make commitments to care leavers within the spirit of the corporate parenting principles in a way that is most appropriate to them.

4. Implementing the principles

Examples of questions for local authorities

- What more could we do to ensure looked-after children and care leavers feel listened to and their suggestions acted on?
- To what extent are the needs and priorities of looked-after children and care leavers reflected in local strategic needs assessments, local service provision, and development plans?
- How can we collectively deliver services to looked-after children and care leavers in a way that is joined-up and which supports young people to make a successful transition to adulthood?
- Are the children and young people in our care enjoying happy, fulfilled childhoods and looking forward to their adult lives, with positive foundations and stable relationships? If not, why not and what can we do to address this?
- How do we know what children and young people's wishes and feelings are and how do we capture their views?
- How can we deliver services to looked-after children and care leavers in a way that mirrors as far as possible the way a good parent would support their child?
- How can we deliver services in a way that recognises the unique circumstances of looked-after children and care leavers?

4.1 There are many good examples of how local authorities are acting as a good corporate parent. Many of these will reflect the spirit of the corporate parenting principles. Authorities with the strongest corporate parenting ethos consider how services can be delivered differently in order to meet the needs of the care population as effectively as possible.

4.2 Although there are seven needs identified, they should not be seen in isolation from each other because they are not mutually exclusive.

4.3 This section focuses on each need and sets out the range of approaches that a local authority might take in having regard to that need at both a strategic level and in relation to individuals. It is not intended to be comprehensive: local

authorities will be expected to apply the corporate parenting principles in their local context, based on the needs, wishes and feelings of the children in their care and their care leavers.

Acting in the best interests and promoting physical and mental health and well-being

- 4.4 All good parents take account of their children's best interests and health and well-being. This is integral to a culture and attitude where investing in the quality of relationships with looked-after children and care leavers is recognised as of crucial importance. Young people will feel listened to, understood and supported to reach their full potential.
- 4.5 There are many different ways in which local authorities can have regard to the need to act in the best interests of and promote health and well-being for looked-after children and care leavers. It may involve understanding the reasons behind challenging behaviour and, for example, encouraging carers and professionals to adopt a restorative approach to problem solving where appropriate. Health and well-being should encompass emotional, mental and physical health and well-being.

Promoting good mental health and well-being

- One local authority has worked with local mental health services in order to respond to the mental health needs of looked-after children and care leavers as they make the transition from care by extending the service to care leavers up to the age of 25. Care leavers can self-refer or ask their personal adviser to refer them where there is a significant emotional health issue that is affecting their life.
- In another authority, care leavers who feel lonely and isolated can self-refer or be referred to volunteer mentors from their local community who have been recruited and trained by the local authority. Care leavers benefit from weekly meetings with their mentor and have the chance to build a personal relationship that is independent of the 'formal care system'. A number of local authorities carry out regular surveys of their looked-after children and care leavers' wellbeing and experience of care and use the surveys' results to drive improvements to care planning.
- Ten local authorities and four police services in the south-west have developed a protocol that recognises the potential of restorative justice approaches where there is an expectation that local authorities, staff and carers will strive to manage challenging behaviour without the involvement of the police wherever possible.
- Many local authorities provide family support workers or contact centres to support contact with looked-after children's birth families.

4.6 Local authorities should consider and be able to demonstrate how they have regard to this need when discharging their functions, for example:

- local authorities and their health partners may consider how physical, emotional and mental health needs are taken into account in developing their local Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs) and their Joint Health and Well-being Strategies (JHWS).
- How local authorities, Clinical Commissioning Groups, NHS England and Public Health England consider the needs of looked after children, and by extension care leavers, when they co-operate to commission services for all children in their area.
- The arrangements in place to ensure that looked after children are not refused a mental health or other health service on the grounds of their placement being short term or unplanned.

- 4.7 In accordance with care planning requirements as set out in Volumes 2 and 3 of The Children Act 1989 guidance and the 2010 Regulations local authorities may also wish to consider how to help children and young people develop their sense of identity in order for them to make sense of their early life experiences, reasons for entering care and family relationships. This might include focussing on the quality of life story work carried out with the children they support.
- 4.8 More broadly, local authorities may wish to consider how to enable looked-after children and care leavers to access services (e.g. sports and leisure services and cultural activities) that promote a young person's well-being as well as access to the outdoors (e.g. parks, beaches and woodlands). Local authorities that have a strong corporate parenting ethos will stress the importance of every child's interests, talents and aptitudes being noticed and nurtured.

Supporting access to leisure and cultural services

Local authorities may want to work with schools and local partnership organisations to help ensure looked after children are able to access local leisure and cultural services. To help achieve this, authorities may wish to work with their local Music Education Hub, bridge organisation and County Sports Partnership.

Music Hubs are groups of organisations working together to create joined up music education provision. Local bridge organisations work with local arts organisations, museums, libraries, music education hubs, further and higher education institutions and other partners, so children and young people can have access to great arts and cultural opportunities.

[Music Education Hub details](#)

[Bridge organisation details](#)

County Sports partnerships work to develop strong local sports offers and can provide details of local sports opportunities and clubs.

[County Sports Partnership details](#)

Encouraging and taking into account the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people

- 4.9 The second and third principles (having regard to the need to encourage views, wishes and feelings of looked-after children and care leavers; and having regard to the need to take account of them) is fundamental to being a good corporate

parent. These principles include and apply to every looked after child, regardless of their age, circumstances or needs. This includes children with disabilities, education needs (for example speech, language and communication difficulties) or other complex needs. It is also important to encourage and promote the views of those with other barriers to participation, such as young children, young people with cultural or language barriers and those young people who are currently disengaged. Both principles underpin how local authorities can deliver high quality care and pathway planning for looked-after children and care leavers.

- 4.10 The way in which local authorities involve care leavers in the design and development of their local offer to care leavers is a specific example of how local authorities will demonstrate they have regard to the needs identified in the second and third principles. Another tangible way of responding to the need to encourage and take account of the views, wishes and feelings of looked-after children and care leavers, is through the establishment of a Children in Care Council or Care Leaver Forum. Some local authorities use technology. For example, the use of online surveys may allow local authorities to capture the views of a wide section of their looked-after children and care leavers, including those placed out-of-authority.
- 4.11 In some instances, a looked-after child or care leaver may express wishes that are not always in their best interests or which may conflict with other considerations. In such circumstances, local authorities will have to balance the wishes and feelings of the children and young people with what is in their best interests – and like any good parent – have to take into account what is reasonably practicable and achievable. The child’s best interests and their right to be heard are not mutually exclusive. Due consideration must be given to the child’s wishes and feelings, and in circumstances where decisions are made contrary to this, it is equally as important to explain to children and young people why these decisions were made.

Improving participation and acting on what young people say: examples of local authority practice

- Council members and officers are proactive in seeking ways to improve the participation of looked-after children, including those placed out-of-authority, through, for example, the effective use of technology.
- Some local authorities have designed their websites for looked-after children and care leavers by collaborating with children and young people to ensure that it is young people friendly and contains important information about how young people can make their voice heard.
- Other local authorities have developed videos with their Children in Care Councils which communicate what looked-after children want and need from their social workers as well as how they feel about their experiences.
- A number of local authorities make use of apps which allow looked-after children to regularly communicate how they are feeling with their social workers and other professionals, such as advocates.
- The corporate parenting board priorities in one authority are derived from its Children in Care Council review of the authority's pledge for looked after children.
- One local authority changed the times at which Personal Advisers were available to support care leavers as a direct response to feedback from its care leaver forum.
- One local authority is launching a youth-led inspection programme of its children services to ensure their practice reflects their commitment to children and young people.

Helping looked-after children and care leavers gain access and make best use of services

4.12 As corporate parents, local authorities should have regard to the need to help the children they look after and care leavers to secure the services they need. At its most basic level, this principle is about giving some consideration to how looked-after children and care leavers might benefit from and access a particular service based on an understanding of the needs of these children and young

persons. This might be a factor that is considered when either designing or implementing services.

4.13 Another way in which local authorities may take account of this principle would be, for example, in their school choice for looked-after children. The school admission code requires schools to give priority to looked-after children and previously looked-after children in their admission criteria. Local authorities will need to consider how to most effectively use these arrangements. We would expect a local authority to match the best school to the child's needs, which includes where practicable, choosing good or outstanding schools.

4.14 To help children to access and use services will often require persistence. Local authorities should ensure social workers, children's carers and personal advisers have the skills and training they need to help looked-after children and care leavers access the appropriate services.

Examples of local authorities helping looked-after children and care leavers access services and advocating for them in accessing what they need

- Embedding a culture where the local authority builds positive relationships and routinely works with a wide range of agencies to ensure that, for example:
 - specialist health teams secure speedy access for looked-after children to specialist provision such as speech and language therapy.
 - children placed out-of-authority receive the support that they need in a timely way.
- Supporting a vulnerable care leaver through pregnancy and her foster carer to the point where she was ready to return to education and training, helping her find the right course and then to apply successfully for an apprenticeship in the local authority.
- Ensuring that transitions into adult health services are clear and efficient and ensuring that health needs are considered consistently in reviews and assessment meetings so that care leavers are aware of and able to access medical clinics, drug and alcohol services and family planning clinics when necessary.
- Designing an effective local offer for care leavers, in collaboration with care leavers, that sets out the range of available services and how to access them.
- Ensuring there are formalised transition arrangements for care leavers into adult services. For example, young people who will need ongoing support have their needs assessed jointly with adult services soon after their 16th birthday, so that there are no interruptions or delays in receiving help and the support services they need.
- Providing support and training to foster carers to engage with school staff and 'be there' when children need help with school work.
- Equipping carers and others to support children to make the right post-16 choices to access education, employment and training.

Promoting high aspirations and securing best outcomes

4.15 It is important that we set high ambitions and aspirations for looked-after children and care leavers. The fifth principle is intended to promote the cultural mind-set

that looked-after children and care leavers should be treated as individuals for whom, like any good parent, local authorities want the best outcomes possible. This might mean, for example, spotting potential and nurturing it by making it easy for a looked-after child or care leaver to pursue a particular activity they enjoy and are good at, encouraging them to set their sights on a good university if they have the potential to succeed there and exploring all avenues to help them access the support they need to do well.

- 4.16 Local authorities with social service functions are required to have an officer (called a Virtual School Head) whose role is to make sure the authority promotes the educational achievement of the children it looks after. The Virtual School Head has a vital role in ensuring the local authority embeds promoting high aspirations and best outcomes as part of the corporate parenting culture.

Encouraging, aspiring and responding to interests and needs like all parents

- For example, local authorities can help children to access easily a range of extra-curricular and recreational activities. These could include confidence building, cultural and/or sporting activities.
- Corporate parenting boards can routinely promote participation in programmes such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and the National Citizenship Service.
- Through the work of personal advisers, changes can be made in the approach to reviewing pathway plans to ensure that those transitioning from care have a positive mind-set about their futures.
- A number of local authorities are offering apprenticeship/traineeships within their local authority to care leavers.
- One local authority has developed a dedicated Employment and Housing Coach who is jointly managed by the council's employment team and leaving care service to increase cross-departmental support for care leavers.
- In one local authority the elected members fund a Trust Fund to promote the aspirations, life experiences and opportunities. Looked-after children and care leavers can apply for up to £400 per annum. Young people can use the money for things like laptops to support educational attainment, the purchase of an outfit for a young person going for a job interview, educational trips abroad or additional social activities.

4.17 At an individual level it will be crucial to build children's confidence and aspiration so they have high expectations of themselves. It will also be important to work together with carers to ensure children can access opportunities such as membership of sports clubs, visits to museums or theatre performances that relate to their interests. Local authorities may also wish to consider ways to help inspire young people to aim high and achieve. That might involve providing early "work tasters" in areas or establishing a mentoring/role models scheme that match young people with successful care leavers.

4.18 At a strategic level, local authorities may consider working with the regional network for collaborative outreach. These networks were designed to encourage more young people into higher education and bring together higher and further education institutions to coordinate their outreach activity. The access

agreements of 80% of higher education specifically include care leavers. Working with the regional network provides a way for authorities to use this and help ensure that outreach activities include looked-after children and care leavers.

Details of these regional networks can be found at:

<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/sas/ncco/find/>.

Universities working collaboratively with local authorities

There are already a number of universities working collaboratively with local authorities to help looked-after children and care leavers think about higher education and to access it successfully.

York St John University works with the professional support workers, foster carers and other influencers of looked-after children in two Virtual Schools in York and North Yorkshire.

Lincoln University and Bishop Grossetest University run the Joint Universities Mentoring Project (JUMP), which operates in collaboration with local authority, community and university partners to provide care leavers with a mentoring scheme. ⁴

One local authority worked with care leavers and local universities to develop informative video guides for looked-after children and care leavers thinking of going to university.

Being safe and having stability

4.19 In order to thrive, looked-after children and care leavers need to feel and be safe, to have stability in their lives including in their education and work and to build resilience by forging strong and trusted relationships.

4.20 For looked-after children this will mean having regard to the need to maintain, as far as possible, consistency in the home environment, relationships with carers and professionals and school placement. For some care leavers, it may involve supporting a Staying Put arrangement where care leavers and their former foster carers wish to remain living together after the young person reaches the age of 18. It may also mean wider support to help care leavers navigate the inevitable

⁴ <https://www.offa.org.uk/universities-and-colleges/guidance/topic-briefings/topic-briefing-care-leavers/>

challenges of moving to independence through early preparation, good planning, securing a range of housing options and maintaining relationships with those whose continued support they might want or need during their transition to adulthood.

4.21 The examples of support in North Somerset (page 29) illustrates how it demonstrates its commitment to meeting the needs of its care leavers. An important way of responding to these needs is the approach local authorities take to housing and homelessness or rent and council tax arrears. For example, in some local authorities, the leaving care team will have a protocol in place with the housing services, which means that the care leaving team is notified as soon as a care leaver has arrears over a certain amount. This means that problems can be identified early rather than escalating to the point where the care leaver loses their tenancy. Many councils have also taken steps to exempt care leavers from council tax altogether.

Promoting safety and stability

Local authorities are proactive in ensuring that looked-after children have advocates to talk to about any concerns and are supported in articulating and taking action on any concerns. Local authorities support carers to provide stability for children, for example, authorities may provide foster carers with additional training to effectively respond to looked-after children's needs.

In one local authority, an individual housing protocol – integral to their pathway plan – was introduced for each care leaver from the age of 16 together with a wide range of accommodation options to match the young person's needs. Alongside this, a non-eviction/placement stability policy is being developed together with consideration of how to address issues of loneliness and isolation experienced by young people moving into independent living.

Another local authority has introduced a 'housing taper' to enable care leavers to pay a reduced rent for longer once they have started earning in recognition of the need for on-going support and to reduce unplanned moves at this key point in a young person's life.

Preparing for adulthood and independent living

Effective planning for managing day-to-day life

Some local authorities are using 'training flats' to help looked-after children and care leavers develop the skills they need to live independently and are putting this in place at an earlier stage. Foster carers and residential care workers are integral to this by encouraging looked-after children to help with cooking and household chores as part of normal family life rather than seeing those activities as tasks to be 'taught' a few weeks before a young person leaves care.

- 4.22 Similar to other young people, looked-after children in their transition to adulthood and care leavers need support to live independent lives. Many care leavers, however, feel under-prepared for living independently. Alongside having to manage practical matters such as paying bills, they often struggle with loneliness and isolation. It is particularly important that local authorities consider the need to help prepare looked-after children and care leavers for making the transition to adulthood and independence. This includes the building up of support networks prior to leaving care, in addition to focussing on practical support and skills, such as managing money. It will be particularly important for local authorities to work with young people in developing their local offer so that it sets out what support care leavers can expect as well as where and how they can access it.
- 4.23 Good preparation, a gradual transition and flexible ongoing support are key to helping young people achieve a successful move to independent living. The most effective local authorities establish joint working arrangements between children's services, housing and other specialist services to help young people prepare for the realities of living independently, involve them in planning and decisions about their housing options, ensure suitable housing and support is in place and are ready to respond with contingency arrangements if things do go wrong.
- 4.24 St Basils and Barnardo's have produced a Care Leavers' Accommodation and Support Framework and toolkit, which can be downloaded [here](#). The framework,

which comprises of five steps, draws together expertise from local authorities as well as leaving care and housing charities.⁵

Local Authority (LA) Case Study

The Government puts £200 into Junior Individual Savings Account (Junior ISAs) for looked-after children. These are long-term tax-advantaged savings accounts, and the young person can then access the funds when they turn eighteen and leave care. Anyone can pay money into these accounts, and some LAs make additional contributions into the Junior ISAs, in the same way that other parents save for their children's long-term futures. This means these young people have a larger nest egg when they leave care. In one LA, £5 a week is added to each child's Junior ISA. The LA also encourages children and young people to save money from their personal allowances, which helps them to develop financial capability skills that will benefit them when they face the challenges of living independently.

4.25 The illustrative local offer, which is published alongside this guidance, exemplifies the kinds of support that local authorities may include in their offer to care leavers. Annex 1 of this guidance sets out the statutory entitlements that a local authority must provide, whilst the local offer provides additional examples of support that a local authority may choose to provide to its care leavers in fulfilling its duties as a corporate parent.

⁵ The five steps to the framework are: training young people on tenancies and the housing market; involving young people in planning their accommodation; reducing housing crisis by having emergency options; commissioning a wide range of housing types; and developing skills and confidence ahead of a move to independent living.

Examples of support for care leavers in North Somerset

North Somerset provides practical and financial help that supports care leavers to achieve key adulthood milestones, such as opening a bank account, and to deal with the emergencies where others would turn to their families for help. This includes:

Financial Help

Offer financial and practical support to help pay Council Tax.

Cover Council Tax if a care leaver takes up an apprenticeship position.

Provide a Leaving Care Grant of £2,000 to each care leaver to buy essential items for their home such as a TV and TV Licence.

Pay for five hours of driving lessons and the cost of driving theory test if in education, employment or training.

Pay 50% of the cost towards broadband internet if living on their own.

Practical help

Visit when care leavers move in to their new housing to ensure they have settled and have everything they need.

Help to open a bank account.

Give health passport to everyone who leaves care at 18, including details of your health history

Provide an exceptional clothing payment of up to £100 if in need of extra money for a winter coat, shoes, warm clothing and maternity clothing.

Offer food parcels, emergency payments, and vouchers or a top up for gas and/or electric if care leavers are in crisis and have no money for food or electricity).

Help to access education and work

Meet public transport costs up to age 21 for those travelling to training, education and apprenticeships and travel costs when travelling to attend an interview.

Provide up to £100 a year towards books, equipment and essential clothing for those in education and up to £100 a year for essential work clothes such as work boots.

Annex 1

Under the Children Act 1989 a 'child' is defined (subject to a couple of exceptions not relevant to this issue) as "a person under the age of 18".

- 1 If a child meets the test in section 20(1) of the Act the Local Authority (LA) is under a statutory obligation to provide accommodation for them.
- 2 Section 22 of the Act (general duty of local authority in relation to children looked after by them) defines what is meant by a "looked-after child" (LAC). A child provided with accommodation by the LA under section 20 of the 1989 Act for a continuous period of 24 hours or more, becomes a looked after child.
- 3 Section 22(3) and (3A) set out a general duty that an LA has in relation to any LAC:

(3) It shall be the duty of a local authority looking after any child—

(a) to safeguard and promote his welfare; and

(b) to make such use of services available for children cared for by their own parents as appears to the authority reasonable in his case.

(3A) The duty of a local authority under subsection (3)(a) to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child looked after by them includes in particular a duty to promote the child's educational achievement.

So a local authority owes this duty to any child that they are looking after.

- 4 Where a child is looked-after, section 22C sets out the framework for accommodating those children. Section 22C essentially sets out a hierarchy of placement types that the LA must look to accommodate the child in. Their first duty is to try and rehabilitate the child home to their parents or someone with parental responsibility. If that is not practicable then the LA are under a duty to place the child "in the most appropriate placement available". "Placement" in this context is defined in section 22C(6) as:

(6) In subsection (5) "placement" means—

(a) placement with an individual who is a relative, friend or other person connected with C [the child] and who is also a local authority foster parent;

(b) placement with a local authority foster parent who does not fall within paragraph (a);

- (c) placement in a children's home in respect of which a person is registered under Part 2 of the Care Standards Act 2000; or
- (d) subject to section 22D, placement in accordance with other arrangements which comply with any regulations made for the purposes of this section.

There is a duty on the LA to give priority to kinship care placements (that is a placement with a relative, friend or other person connected with the child who is also a local authority foster parent) which although won't be relevant in the majority of cases could be relevant in relation to unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) if they have connections with this country and there is someone that could be assessed as a foster carer for them.

5 So the LA must be placing the child in "the most appropriate placement available". Section 22C(7) – (9) provides that:

(7) In determining the most appropriate placement for C, the local authority must, subject to [subsection (9B) and] the other provisions of this Part (in particular, to their duties under section 22)—

- (a) give preference to a placement falling within paragraph (a) of subsection (6) over placements falling within the other paragraphs of that subsection;
- (b) comply, so far as is reasonably practicable in all the circumstances of C's case, with the requirements of subsection (8); and
- (c) comply with subsection (9) unless that is not reasonably practicable.

(8) The local authority must ensure that the placement is such that—

- (a) it allows C to live near C's home;
- (b) it does not disrupt C's education or training;
- (c) if C has a sibling for whom the local authority are also providing accommodation, it enables C and the sibling to live together;
- (d) if C is disabled, the accommodation provided is suitable to C's particular needs.

(9) The placement must be such that C is provided with accommodation within the local authority's area.

- 6 Although section 22C(9) provides that the LA is to ensure that the accommodation is within the LA's area, section 22(7) does provide that they only need to comply with ss(9) if it is reasonably practical to do so.
- 7 Placements in a section 22C(6)(d) placement (i.e. a placement in "other arrangements") are unregulated in the sense that they aren't registered and regulated by Ofsted in the same way that a registered children's home would be so the requirements on such settings is lighter touch. However section 22D of the Act applies to such settings and there are specific provisions in the 2010 Regulations which also apply.
- 8 Under section 25A of the Act an LA must appoint an independent reviewing officer (IRO) for any child they are looking after and this appointment should be made before the child's case is first reviewed.

Care planning obligations

- 9 When a child is a looked-after child the 2010 Regulations apply to that child's case.
- 10 Briefly the 2010 Regulations provide that the LA must:
- prepare a care plan for that child before that child (C) is placed by the LA or, if it is not reasonably practical to do so, within 10 days of the child being placed. Regulation 4(5) provides that where the child is aged 16 or over and agrees to be accommodated under section 20 of the Act, the care plan should also be agreed with the child.
 - Regulation 5 sets out what the care plan must include and includes things like the long term plan for the child's upbringing, the arrangements made by the LA to meet the child's needs in relation to health, education and training etc. and must also include the name of the child's IRO. Since August 2014 the care plan must include:
 - (1)(f) where C is—
 - (i) a victim, or there is reason to believe C may be a victim, of trafficking in human beings within the meaning of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings,
 - (ii) an unaccompanied asylum seeking child within the meaning of the Immigration Rules and has applied, or has indicated to the responsible authority an intention to apply, for asylum and has not been granted indefinite leave to remain, that fact.

- The care plan must be kept under review (regulation 6).
- Regulation 7 provides that before a child is first placed, or if that is not reasonably practicable, before the first review of the child's case, the LA must make arrangements for a medical practitioner to examine the child in order to assess the child and provide a written report. The LA must then take all reasonable steps to ensure that the child is provided with the appropriate health care services in accordance with the plan.
- Under regulation 9, before making arrangements to place the child under section 22C, the LA must prepare a placement plan setting out the matters listed in regulation 9 and in Schedule 2. If it is not reasonably practicable to prepare the placement plan before the child is placed it must be prepared within 5 working days of the start of the placement. There are specific requirements in regulation 27 of and Schedule 6 to the 2010 Regulations where a child is being placed in "other arrangements" under s22C(6)(d) of the Act (see below).
- Under regulation 11, where an LA decide to place a child out of area, where the placement is not with a connected person who is an approved foster carer or another LA approved foster carer, the placement must not be put into effect until it has been approved by a nominated officer and where the placement is "at a distance" (not within the area of an adjoining LA) it must be approved by a Director of Children's Services (DCS). Regulation 11 also sets out what the nominated officer or DCS must be satisfied about before they approve the placement.
- Regulation 14 provides that if the LA want to terminate the placement they must comply with the provisions of regulation 14.
- Part 4 of the 2010 Regulations set out the requirements applicable to different types of placement. Regulation 27 provides:

27 General duties of the responsible authority when placing a child in other arrangements

Before placing C [the child] in accommodation in an unregulated setting under section 22C(6)(d), the responsible authority must—

- (a) be satisfied that the accommodation is suitable for C, having regard to the matters set out in Schedule 6,
- (b) unless it is not reasonably practicable, arrange for C to visit the accommodation, and
- (c) inform the IRO.

Schedule 6 to the 2010 Regulations provides:

Matters to be Considered Before Placing C in Accommodation in an Unregulated Setting Under Section 22C(6)(d)

1 In respect of the accommodation, the—

- (a) facilities and services provided,
- (b) state of repair,
- (c) safety,
- (d) location,
- (e) support,
- (f) tenancy status, and
- (g) the financial commitments involved for C and their affordability.

2 In respect of C, C's—

- (a) views about the accommodation,
- (b) understanding of their rights and responsibilities in relation to the accommodation, and
- (c) understanding of funding arrangements.

- Part 5 of the 2010 Regulations deals with visits to LACs. LAs must visit the child in accordance with regulation 28.
- Part 6 of the 2010 Regulations deals with reviews of the child's case and the LA must review the case in accordance with that Part. Regulation 33 sets out the timings of such reviews (first within 20 days of when the child first became looked after, the 2nd not more than 3 months after the first and subsequent reviews at intervals of not more than 6 months).
- Regulation 36 sets out the role that the IRO has in relation to the LAC.
- Part 7 of the 2010 Regulations contains the LA's duties if they are considering ceasing to look after the child.

Annex 2

Categories of Care Leavers

1. A LA has the duties set out in section 23B in relation to a “relevant child”. A “**relevant child**” is defined in section 23A(2) of the Act as one who:
 - (a) is not being looked after by any local authority;
 - (b) was, before last ceasing to be looked after, an eligible child for the purposes of paragraph 19B of Schedule 2; and
 - (c) is aged sixteen or seventeen.

The Care Leavers Regulations provide for an additional category of relevant children in regulation 3; if a child falls within the following criteria:

- (a) is aged sixteen or seventeen,
- (b) is not subject to a care order, and
- (c) on attaining the age of 16 the child was detained, or in hospital, and immediately before being detained or admitted to hospital had been looked after by a local authority for a period or periods amounting in total to at least 13 weeks, which began after the child attained the age of 14.

“**Eligible child**” is defined as a child that is:

- (a) aged sixteen or seventeen; and
 - (b) has been looked after by a local authority for a prescribed period, or periods amounting in all to a prescribed period, which began after he reached a prescribed age and ended after he reached the age of sixteen.
- 2 The relevant prescribed period is set out in the 2010 Regulations as 13 weeks and the prescribed age is 14 years. An eligible child is one who has been looked after for a period of 13 weeks, or periods amounting to 13 weeks, which began after he reached the age of 14 and ended after he reached the age of 16.
 - 3 **The period of time for which the child should have been looked after to be an eligible child must amount to at least 13 weeks and be between the child’s 14th Birthday and at least one day after their 16th Birthday.** So if a child becomes an LAC at any time after they turn 14 and ceases to be looked after at any time after they turn 16 then they will be an “eligible child”.

- 4 Local authorities also have statutory obligations to **“former relevant children”** who are defined in section 23C(1) of the Act as a young person who is:
- (a) aged 18 or above, and either
 - (b) has been a relevant child and would be one if he were under 18, or
 - (c) immediately before he ceased to be looked after at age 18, was an eligible child.
- 5 LA’s also have some statutory obligations to former relevant children who are **pursuing further education or training** who are defined in section 23CA(1) as a former relevant child who is:
- (a) aged under 25,
 - (b) a former relevant child in relation to whom the duties in section 23C(2),(3) & (4) no longer apply, and
 - (c) he has informed the local authority that he wants to pursue or is pursuing a programme of education or training.
- 6 A final category of **“persons qualifying for advice and assistance”** to whom the LA will owe certain duties (see section 24A and 24B) are defined in section 24 of the Act as a person who is:
- (a) aged at least 16 but is under 21 with respect to whom a special guardianship order is in force (or was in force when they reached 18) and was looked after immediately before the making of that order, or
 - (b) under 21 and at any time after reaching the age of 16 but while he was still a child was, but is no longer, looked after, accommodated or fostered.

What provision is the care leaver entitled to?

This depends on what type of care leaver the young person is.

Eligible Children

- 7 The local authority has the same statutory obligations in relation to eligible children as they do towards other children looked after by them, including a duty to maintain their care plan, carry out regular reviews of their case and appoint an independent reviewing officer (IRO) for the child. In addition they must:

- prepare an assessment of the eligible child's needs with a view to determining what advice, assistance and support it would be appropriate for them to provide him (both while he is still looked after and after he stops being looked after) (paragraph 19B(4) of Schedule 2 to the Act; the requirements for carrying out the assessment are set out in regulation 42 of the 2010 Regulations).
- As soon as possible after the assessment of needs is completed, prepare a pathway plan (which includes the child's care plan) (paragraph 19B(4) of Schedule 2 to the Act; the requirements for preparing the pathway plan are set out in regulation 43 of and Schedule 8 to the 2010 Regulations).
- keep the pathway plan under regular review (paragraph 19B(5) of Schedule 2 to the Act).
- appoint a personal adviser for the child (paragraph 19C of Schedule 2 to the Act; the functions of the personal adviser are set out in regulation 44 of the 2010 Regulations).

Relevant Children

8 The local authority that last looked after the relevant child must:

- take reasonable steps to keep in touch with the relevant child even if the child is not in the LA area (section 23B(1) of the Act).
- Prepare an assessment of the relevant child's needs with a view to determining what advice assistance and support it would be appropriate for them to provide him (unless they already did so when he was an eligible child) (section 23B(3)(a) of the Act; the requirements for carrying out the assessment are set out in regulations 4 and 5 of the Care Leavers Regulations).
- As soon as possible after any assessment of needs is completed, prepare a pathway plan (section 23B(3)(b) of the Act; the requirements for preparing the pathway plan are set out in regulation 6 of and schedule 1 to the Care Leavers Regulations).
- Keep the pathway plan under regular review (section 23E(1D) of the Act; the requirements for carrying out reviews are set out in regulation 7 of the Care Leavers Regulations).
- Appoint a personal adviser for the child (unless they already did so when he was an eligible child) (section 23B(2) of the Act; the functions of the personal adviser are set out in regulation 8 of the Care Leavers Regulations).

- Safeguard and promote the relevant child’s welfare by maintaining him, providing him with or maintaining him in suitable accommodation and providing assistance in order to meet his needs in relation to education, training or employment as provided for in his pathway plan (section 23B(8) of the Act and regulation 9 of the Care Leavers Regulations; regulation 9 and schedule 2 to the Care Leavers Regulations also make provision about the meaning of “suitable accommodation”).

Former Relevant Children

9 The local authority that last looked after the former relevant child must:

- take reasonable steps to keep in touch with the former relevant child even if the child is not in the LA area, and if they lose touch with him, to re-establish contact (section 23C(2) of the Act) continue to keep the pathway plan under regular review (section 23C(3)(b) of the Act; the requirements for carrying out reviews are set out in regulation 7 of the Care Leavers Regulations).
- Continue the appointment of the personal adviser for the child (section 23C(3)(a) of the Act; the functions of the personal adviser are set out in regulation 8 of the Care Leavers Regulations).
- If his welfare requires it, provide financial assistance by contributing to the former relevant child’s expenses in living near the place where he is, or will be, employed or seeking employment (sections 23C(4)(a) and 24B(1) of the Act) if his welfare and educational and training needs require it, provide financial assistance to enable him to pursue education or training (sections 23C(4)(b) and 24B(2) of the Act).
- If the former relevant child pursues higher education in accordance with his pathway plan, pay him the higher education bursary (section 23C(5A) of the Act and the Children Act 1989 (Higher Education Bursary) (England) Regulations 2009).

To the extent that his welfare requires it, provide “other assistance” which may be in kind and in exceptional circumstances, cash (section 23C(4)(c) and 23C(5)). The case of *R (on the application of) S.O. v London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (2010)*⁶ considered whether section 23C(4)(c) of the Act provides a

⁶ R (on the application of O) v London Borough of Barking and Dagenham [2010] EWCA Civ 1101.

power for the LA to accommodate a former relevant child and held that the sub-section does afford an LA with a power to accommodate.¹⁰ The duties in section 23C(2), (3) and (4) of the Act continue until the former relevant child reaches 21 or, where the child's pathway plan sets out a programme of education or training which extends beyond his 21st birthday, they continue for so long as the child pursues that programme and the other duties in section 23C(2), (3) and (4)(b) of the Act also continue for the same period.

- 11 Although local authorities can provide support to any care leavers who want to remain with their former foster carers, a specific duty was placed on local authorities in section 23CZA of the Children Act 1989. This duty places a legal requirement on local authorities to advise, assist and support (which must include financial support) both the young person and their former foster carers when they wish to stay living together after the former relevant child reaches their 18th birthday.

Former relevant children pursuing further education or training

- 12 The local authority which owed duties to a former relevant child under section 23C and 23CA of the Act must:
- appoint a personal adviser for that person (section 23CA(2) of the Act).
 - Carry out an assessment of the needs of that person with a view to determining what assistance (if any) it would be appropriate for them to provide him (section 23CA(3)(a) of the Act; the requirements for carrying out the assessment are set out in regulations 4 and 5 of the Care Leavers Regulations).
 - Prepare a pathway plan for that person (section 23CA(3)(b) of the Act; the requirements for preparing the pathway plan are set out in regulation 6 of and schedule 1 to the Care Leavers Regulations).
 - To the extent the person's educational or training needs require it, provide financial assistance (section 23CA(4) and (5) of the Act).

Persons qualifying for advice or assistance

- 13 The relevant local authority (as defined in section 24(5) of the Act) must consider whether the person needs help of a kind the local authority can give:
- Under section 24A - to advise and befriend and give assistance.

- Under section 24B - to give financial assistance to a person over 16 years old but under 21 who was either made subject to a special guardianship order immediately after being looked-after by a local authority or who was looked-after but is no longer looked-after in relation to expenses incurred in living near the place where the person is, will be, or is seeking work or where the person is or will be receiving education or training ; or where the person is in full time further or higher education, is under the age of 25 and qualifies for advice and assistance, or would have done if he was under 21, assistance in relation to securing vacation accommodation (sections 24A(2) and (3), and 24B of the Act).

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) and victims of trafficking

- 14 Under the Care Leavers Regulations a care leaver's needs in relation to their status as a victim of trafficking or an unaccompanied asylum seeking child must be considered when the local authority is preparing an assessment of needs and to require that, where a child is a victim of trafficking or an unaccompanied asylum seeking child the local authority must consider whether their related needs are being met when reviewing the child's pathway plan.

Annex 3

Table A: functions where consideration of corporate parenting principles should generally apply

| | Shire areas | | | Metropolitan areas | London | |
|---------------------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-----|
| | Unitaries | County councils | District councils | Metropolitan districts | London boroughs | GLA |
| Education | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Social care | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Housing | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Libraries | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Leisure and recreation | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Local taxation collection | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |

Table B: functions where corporate parenting principles are less likely to apply

| | Shire areas | | | Metropolitan areas | London | |
|----------------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-----|
| | Unitaries | County councils | District councils | Metropolitan districts | London boroughs | GLA |
| Highways | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Transport planning | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Passenger transport | ✓ | ✓ | | | | ✓ |
| Environmental health | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Waste collection | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Waste disposal | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Planning application | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |

Further information

Relevant departmental advice and statutory guidance

- Care planning, placement and case review guidance:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-act-1989-care-planning-placement-and-case-review>
- Planning transition to adulthood for care leavers:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-act-1989-transition-to-adulthood-for-care-leavers>
- Roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/directors-of-childrens-services-roles-and-responsibilities>
- Promoting the health and well-being of looked-after children:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-health-and-wellbeing-of-looked-after-children--2>
- Promoting the education of looked-after children:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children>
- Care Leaver Strategy: a cross departmental strategy for young people leaving care: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keep-on-caring-supporting-young-people-from-care-to-independence>
- Working together to safeguard children:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>



Department
for Education

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|---------------------------|--|
| REPORT TO: | Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board |
| DATE: | 11 June 2018 |
| REPORTING OFFICER: | Strategic Director, People |
| PORTFOLIO: | Children, Education and Social Care |
| SUBJECT: | Children In Care - Placements |
| WARDS: | Borough Wide |

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report is share with members the Children in Care Scorecard for the end of year on 31 March 2018 with a particular focus on children's placements

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members note the report.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The categories for Children's placements are set by the Department for Education.
- 3.2 The majority of children in care are in foster placements. These are a mix of in-house foster placements (54% of the foster care population) and external independent foster placements (IFAs). We have 76 fostering households with Halton and currently we have 19 households at various stages of the assessment process. We have recently launched a collaboration with Warrington, Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester to improve the marketing, recruitment and assessment of foster carers via a co-ordinated recruitment and marketing hub. This launched in April 18 and we have already seen an increase in enquiries to Halton to be assessed as foster carers.
- 3.3 We have been revising our training and support to foster carers to develop their skills and abilities to care for children with more complex and challenging behaviour as a result of attachment difficulties and trauma by implementing SafeBase and attachment training and also revising the support and supervision framework for supervising social workers so foster carers receive increased support.
- 3.4 This is important as by ensuring we have sufficient foster carers in Halton it means children can be placed in borough and we can better match children to foster carers. In particular, we need foster carers who can care for larger sibling groups, teenagers and children with disabilities as these are the

groups of children who we either have to commission an IFA placement or a residential placement.

- 3.4 We have 41 children in a residential placement. The majority are placed within 20 miles of Halton, and are teenagers. We do have 7 children under 13 placed in residential; these are children who struggled with foster placements and experienced a number of placement breakdowns and have needed a period of stable residential care to work with them on the impact of the harm they have experienced.
- 3.5 We had 2 young people in welfare secure. These are young people who were exposed to a high level of risk to themselves or others and were formally detained following an application to court. One of these young people has now moved on to an intensive therapeutic residential setting.
- 3.6 We had 6 children placed with their adopters before an adoption order is made, and we currently have 25 with a placement order with a plan for adoption for whom we are still seeking families. We are reviewing a number of these currently as we have not been able to find adopters for them, and their plan is likely to change to long-term foster care.
- 3.7 32 children are placed with parents under a care order. This is for various reasons, where parents have made progress in meeting the needs of the their child but this progress is very recent, or there are significant risk factors which means that the local authority needs to share parental responsibility as there is a high likelihood that the children may be at risk of removal in the 12 months post the care order being made. A number of these parents however have been able to sustain and embed the necessary changes with support and there are plans to discharge 12 of these orders currently. We have also brought back 4 of these children into foster care.
- 3.8 24 children are placed with family and friends as foster carers. This means that the family member (or connected person) has put themselves forward to care for a member of their family and we have assessed and approved them as foster carers. The child's legal status is they have a care order; we do support and encourage family and friends carers to consider becoming special guardians but initially they may need support with managing contact arrangements with birth parents and also accessing speciality support for the child and training for themselves to be able to meet their needs.
- 3.9 Placement stability is a key measure for seeing how effectively we are meeting children's needs in their placement. This shows that we have reduced the number of children who move 3 or more times in 12 months since entering care and placement stability (remaining in the same placement for 2.5 years or longer) is at the England and NW average at 66% but not at the same higher level it was on the previous years.
- 3.10 We have refreshed our sufficiency strategy for placements and identified a number of actions as the capacity in fostering and residential services, both in-house and via agencies has been reducing. We will shortly be establishing

a placement team with dedicated roles to manage the identification and sourcing of independent fostering and residential placements, to build better relationships with the independent sector so they can match their recruitment activity to the needs identified for more complex children and young people and also to manage the contract process more robustly to ensure the identified outcomes for children, in particular for those children who are in residential for a specified period with a plan to step down into foster care.

- 3.11 We have been piloting the above approach for 3 months and so far out of 11 requests for residential care, we have diverted 7 of them either into our own in-house fostering or Independent Fostering Agency placements.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

4.1 Children & Young People in Halton

As corporate parents, we have a duty to ensure children in our care are supported to achieve to their best of their ability with their education, physical and emotional health and succeed as adults. Having access to a range of placements means that we can match children to a placement that meets their needs, reducing the risk of placement breakdown.

4.2 Employment, Learning and Skills

As corporate parents, we have a duty to support and advocate for our children in care and care leavers to have access to and participate in a full range of education, training and employment opportunities.

4.3 A Healthy Halton

Children in Care may have experienced a number of issues before care that may impact long-term on their emotional health and well-being which need appropriate support and services in response. If these issues are not addressed, they may act as a barrier to successful outcomes in education and employment and later adult life.

4.4 A Safer Halton

Stable placements and support reduce the risk of children in care becoming involved in anti-social behaviour and crime and also reduce their vulnerability to exploitation.

4.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 5.1 Having fewer in house foster placements means that there is increased costs in the use of the independent fostering sector or residential placements. The

approaches outlined above are designed to improve our capacity and also manage the independent sector more robustly in terms of their ability to meet the needs of Halton children but in in their outcomes and costs.

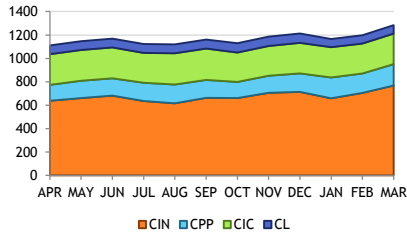
6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

6.1 Children in Care will have a range of issues because of their identity and their needs which require an appropriate response and access to a range of specific services as required.

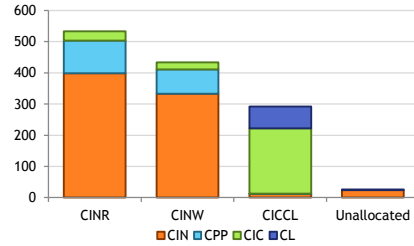
7.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None.

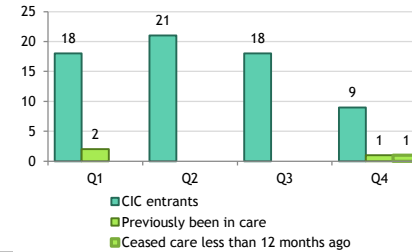
Open cases to Children's Social Care



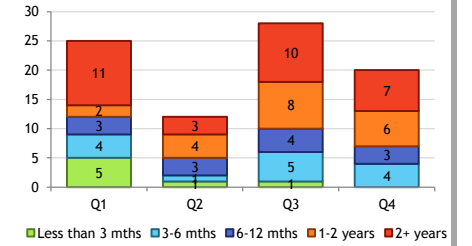
Breakdown of cases by team



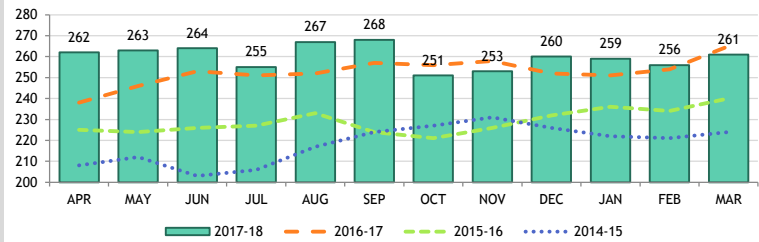
Children starting care by quarter



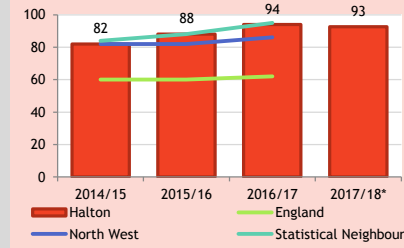
Children ceasing care by quarter



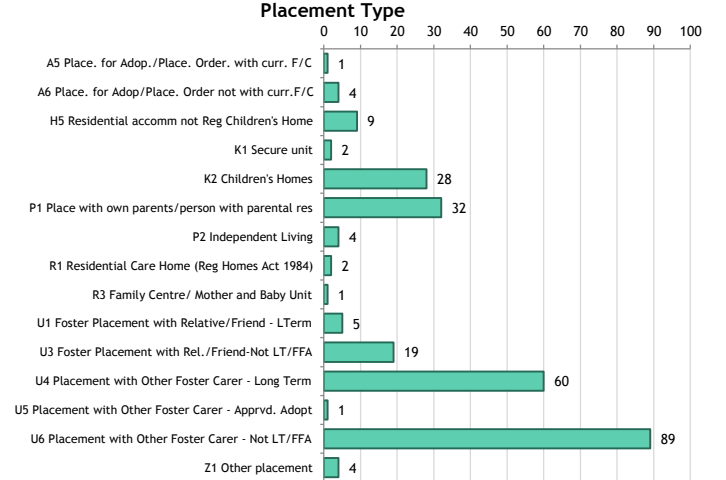
Children in Care Population at end of month



Children in Care rate per 10000



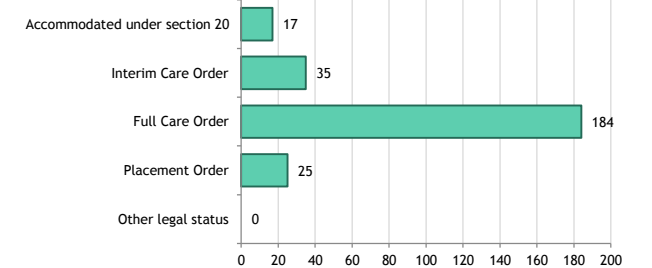
Breakdown of Children in Care at the end of quarter



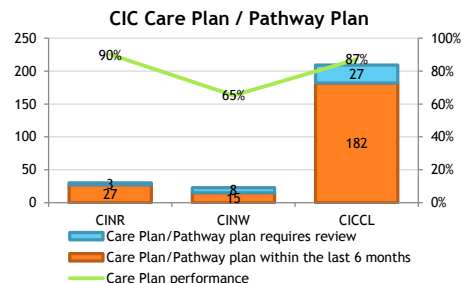
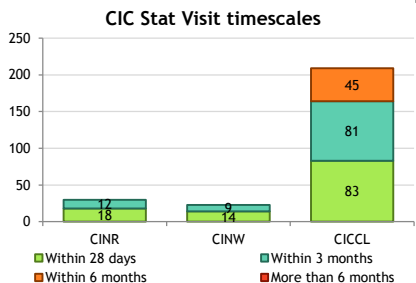
| Age Groups | | Gender | | Ethnicity | |
|-----------------|-----|-------------------------|-----|---------------------|-----|
| 0-4 years old | 55 | Male | 138 | White | 253 |
| 5-10 years old | 89 | Female | 123 | Black/Black British | 0 |
| 11-15 years old | 74 | Not recorded | 0 | Asian/Asian British | 1 |
| 16+ years old | 43 | | 261 | Mixed | 2 |
| Not recorded | 0 | | | Other | 5 |
| | 261 | | | Not recorded | 0 |
| | | | | | 261 |
| Disability | | Placement location | | | |
| Yes | 29 | Inside local authority | 177 | | |
| No | 232 | Outside local authority | 84 | | |
| Not recorded | 0 | | 261 | | |
| | 261 | | | | |
| SEND Status | | | | | |
| EHCP | 35 | | | | |
| SEN Support | 90 | | | | |
| | 125 | | | | |

Please note that a child may have more than one disability and be included in more than one count.

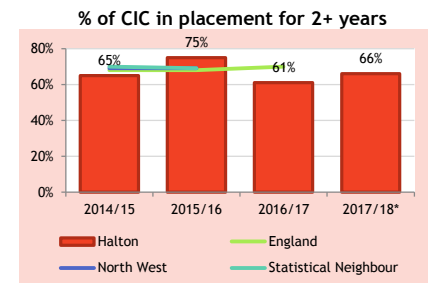
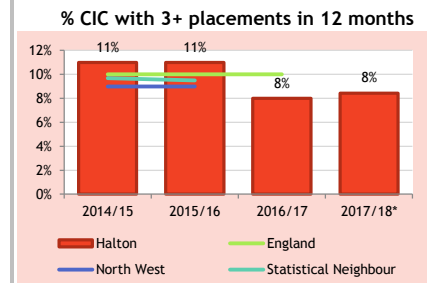
Legal Status



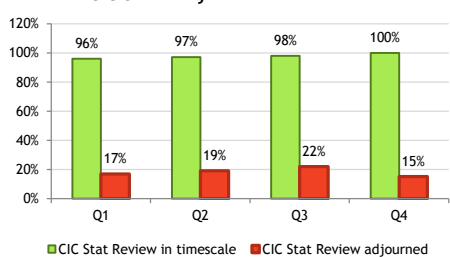
Compliance information



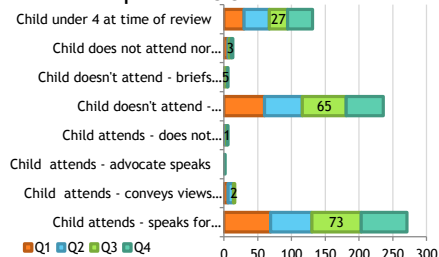
Placement stability information



CIC Statutory Review timescales



Participation of CIC in their Reviews



Health Information

% CIC with health assessment in the last 12 months
 % CIC with dental check in the last 12 months

Position at end of quarter

91%
 86%

Convictions Information

% of CIC aged 10+ who have been convicted/reprimand etc.

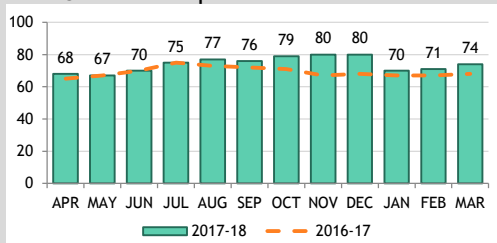
tbc

PEP's completed

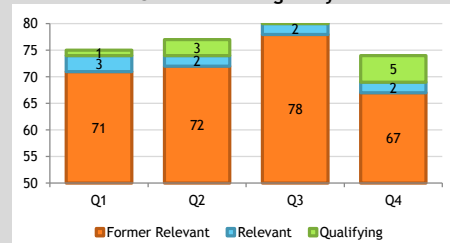
% of CIC with a PEP completed in the last 6 months

85%

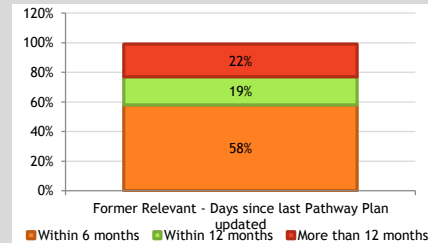
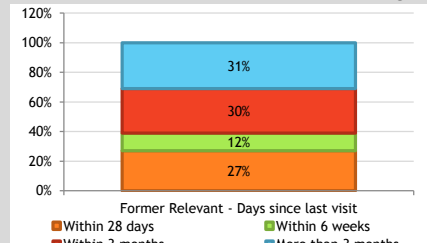
Care Leaver Population at the end of the month



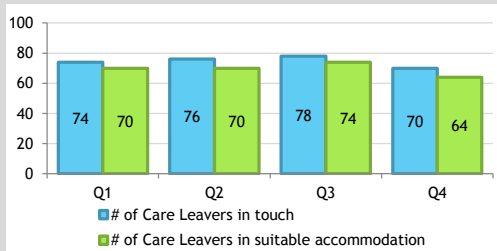
Care Leaver Eligibility



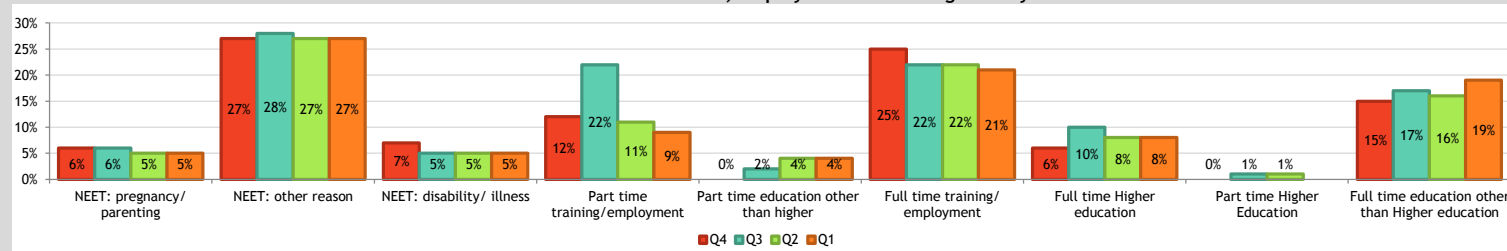
Compliance information



Care Leaver Accommodation information



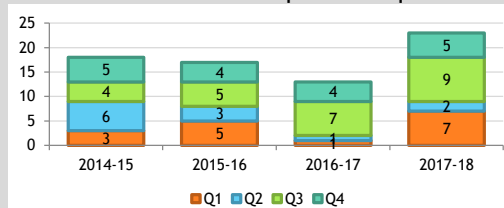
Care Leavers Education, Employment or Training Activity



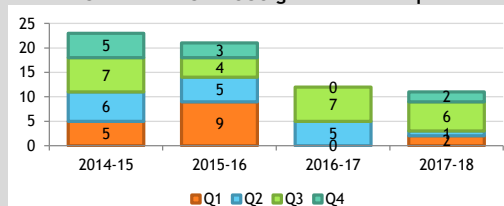
Children ceasing care in the quarter

| | |
|--|---|
| Adopted | 5 |
| Transfer to another LA | 0 |
| Return to parents - part of care planning | 1 |
| Return to parents - not part of care planning | 1 |
| Residence Order granted/ Child Arrangement Order | 4 |
| Special Guardianship Order granted | 2 |
| Moved to supported independent living | 1 |
| Moved to unsupported independent living | 0 |
| Ceased for any other reason | 3 |
| Transition to Adult care services | 2 |
| Age assessment determined over 18 | 1 |

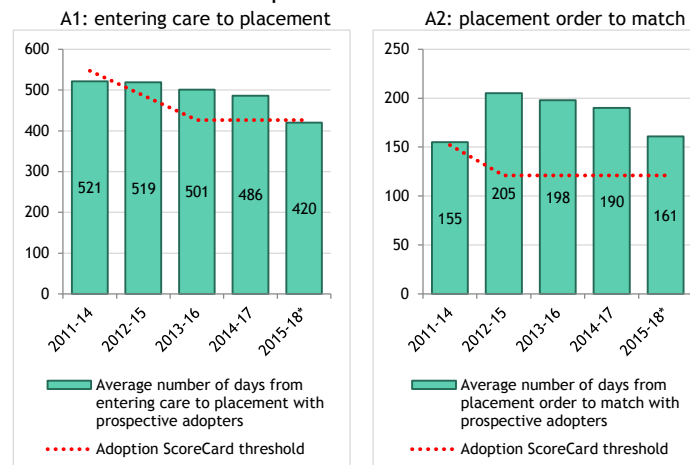
Children in Care Adopted in the quarter



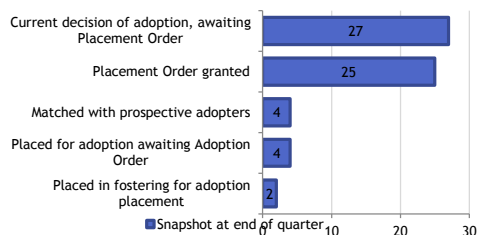
Children in Care SGO granted in the quarter



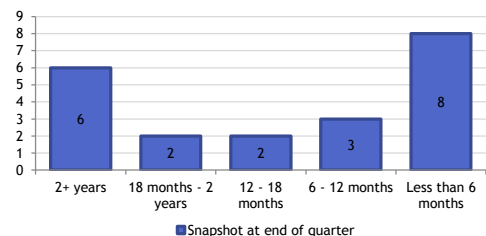
Adoption Scorecard thresholds



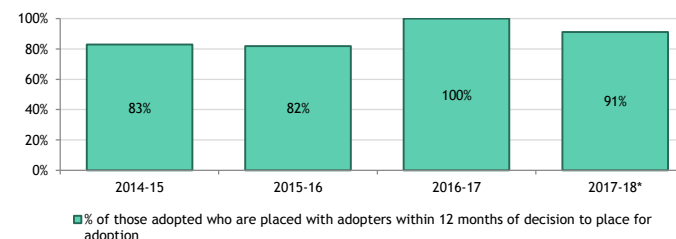
Children in Care with SHOBPA decision



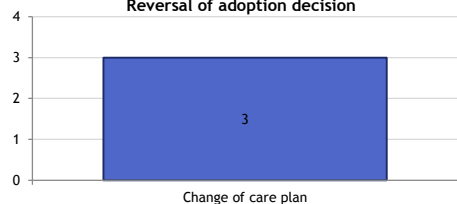
Children with Placement Order, awaiting match



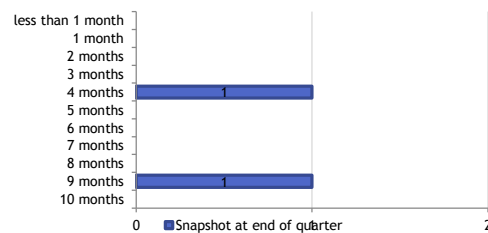
SHOBPA to Placement within 12 months



Reversal of adoption decision



Children with SHOBPA awaiting Placement Order



| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| REPORT TO: | Children, Young People & Families Policy and Performance Board |
| DATE: | 11 th June 2018 |
| REPORTING OFFICER: | Strategic Director, People |
| PORTFOLIO: | Children, Education and Social Care Health & Wellbeing |
| SUBJECT: | Everyone Early Help Strategy 2018-2021 |
| WARD(S) | Borough-wide |

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To present the new Everyone Early Help Strategy that combines children, adults and public health.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That**

- i) The content of the strategy is discussed and comments invited.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Services to support children, families and vulnerable adults are facing unprecedented challenges. It is obvious that Early Help and Prevention services should make up the cornerstone of any delivery model. If low-level needs can be prevented (or delayed) from developing into more serious or acute needs then this is win-win. Effective, early help and prevention can not only increase independence, improve outcomes and the quality of life for individuals, but also provide a financial return to the Local Authority in the form of cost avoidance and a reduction in the use of more expensive, acute resources.

- 3.2 This transformation in thinking is about undertaking a whole system review of the approach to Early Help and Prevention, with a focus on increasing the resilience of communities and their potential to help themselves, supported by a planned prioritisation of resources, integration, collaboration, and understanding the benefits that Early Help can have on a wide range of longer term outcomes for everyone involved.

Halton's Approach

- 3.3 There is a long standing and strong commitment to early help and prevention across all agencies and strategic partners in Halton.

Within Halton during 2016/2017 the council restructured to combine the adult and children directorate to create a People's directorate. Both of the existing directorates had in place a prevention/ early intervention strategies but it was agreed to the creation of a new joint Early Help strategy that would sit across the new People Directorate.

3.4 In response to the range of national and local policy developments, this new strategy for Early Help represents a refresh of our approach and reflects our desire for an integrated approach to Early Help across children,' adults and older people's services and public health as part of a whole Council approach.

3.5 Halton's definition of "early help and prevention" across children's and adults' services and public health can be described as:

"Supporting communities to prevent and reduce need at the earliest stage whilst taking targeted action as soon as possible to tackle emerging situations, where there is a risk of a person developing problems. Early intervention may occur at any point in a person's life".

3.6 Within the strategy there are five key aims

- 1) More children and young people will lead healthy, safe lives and will be given the opportunity to access education and develop the skills, confidence and opportunities they need to achieve their full potential;
- 2) More adults will have the support they need to live their lives as healthily, successfully, independently and safely as possible, with good timely access to health, mental health and social care services;
- 3) Everyone will be given the opportunity to voice their opinions and experiences to ensure that services meet their individual needs;
- 4) The best possible services will be provided within the resources we have, giving excellent value for the public.
- 5) Our workforce will continue to thrive and work effectively to support each other and the community they serve, ensuring that we have a confident, competent, happy workforce.

3.7 Contained within the strategy there are 3 priorities that we are wanting all agencies to work towards to help further embedded early help principles.

- 1) The right early help, in the right place at the right time.
- 2) Ensuring a whole system approach to early help with strong partnership working
- 3) Empowering local people and communities to build capacity and resilience, to enable people and communities to do more for themselves.

- 3.8 This strategy is ensuring that we are all responsible for Early Help. The idea is to build upon people's strengths at an early stage, so they are enabled with the support of family and friends to recognise when help is required. By tackling the root causes of a problem as early as possible, people are able to maintain their independence and general wellbeing longer and where necessary can self-refer to an appropriate person or service.
- 3.9 We will expect to see that more individuals and families are empowered and enabled to take control of their lives, and they are supported in their local communities avoiding the need for services intervention. When there is service intervention we will expect to see the positive impact in a timely way with families reporting sustained improvement in their circumstances.
- 3.10 Going forward we will focus on some key elements to assist with our early help offer these will be around improving information management and use of information technology, enhancing co-ordination and timing of service delivery, enhancing approaches to whole household and/or family support and building resilience and community capacity.
- 3.11 The development of a robust early help offer for children, young people, adults and families in Halton will prevent problems escalating and becoming entrenched and more complex. It will also lead to a reduction in the need for more costly, specialist and statutory services while preventing unnecessary trauma and emotional upheaval for families.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no policy implications identified.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None identified.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

Early help strategy directly relates to improving the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. The document also supports key elements within Halton's Safeguarding and Children and Young People's Plans.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

There are no implications for Employment, Learning & Skills arising from this Report.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

Early Help Strategy supports the Council's strategic priority of Improving Health.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

There are no implications for Safer Halton arising from this Report.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

There are no implications for Urban Renewal arising from this Report.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 None identified

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 None identified

9.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

9.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

Strengthening our Communities

Everyone Early Help Strategy 2018 - 2021

Early Help For Everyone In Halton – Children, Young People, Adults, Families

| Version Number | Date | Author | Review Date |
|----------------|----------|------------|----------------|
| V9 | May 2018 | Clare Hunt | September 2019 |

Foreword

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Purpose and Aims of the Strategy**
- 3. Legislative Framework**
- 4. What do we mean by Early Help?**
- 5. Early Help in Halton**
 - 5.1 Priorities**
 - 5.2 Principles**
 - 5.3 Early Help Stories**
- 6. Working Together**
- 7. Case for Change**
- 8. Halton's approach**
- 9. How will we measure success in Halton?**
- 10. Conclusion**

FOREWORD



**Councillor Tom McInerney
Lead Member Children, Young People
and Families Chair, Halton Children's
Trust Board**

I am pleased to introduce Halton's Early Help Strategy. Effective Early Help is essential to improve the life chances of Halton's children, young people and their families. Although Halton, along with many other Local Authorities and our partner agencies, faces unprecedented financial pressures, we believe that a focus on support, prevention and early intervention will not only mean that we can overcome the current and future financial challenges but also, and more importantly, give people of all ages, the opportunity to take full advantage of everything that Halton and life has to offer. Our vision is to empower our children, young people, adults and families to become more resilient and less reliant to cope with the demands of life in the 21st century. Early Help is fundamental to achieving this vision.



**Milorad Vasic
Strategic Director
People, Halton
Borough Council**

This Early Help Strategy is an enabling approach for all ages in Halton and it stresses the importance of different areas of social care, health and mental health working together with other agencies to improve the wellbeing of every individual. The Care Act (2014) highlighting the individual's right to choice and independence combined with The Children & Family Act 2014 which has a focus on greater integration across health, social care and education underpin much of what we do already and is articulated in this Strategy through examples, of how individuals, families and communities can benefit from different teams pooling their ideas and resources to develop local priorities and deliver early help that can make a significant difference in people's lives. Our approach will provide children, young people, families and older people with a straightforward route to the services they need from their first contact with us and strike the right balance between specialist support, targeted work to prevent issues getting worse and access to universal services that are open to all in our communities.

This balance of provision is becoming ever more difficult to maintain as the challenging financial position of the public and voluntary sector continues. This strategy is, therefore, an important document that will shape and guide the development of services by both the Council and its partners over the coming years and how we will work with you, as we all seek to ensure that Halton's families are supported in providing their children with the best start in life and maximise the chances for their children to achieve in their schools and into adulthood and for older people to live independently

1. INTRODUCTION

There is a long standing and strong commitment to early help and prevention across all agencies and strategic partners in Halton. The majority of people, irrespective of their individual circumstances want to live a fulfilling and where possible active life. They also want to stay healthy for as long as possible while remaining a valued part of the community and able to play a part. Halton fully supports this view. It recognises that by addressing needs and the root causes of a problem at an early stage, individuals and families can be supported to cope better and achieve their own future potential.

In response to a range of national and local policy developments, this new strategy for **Early Help** represents a refresh of our approach and reflects our desire for an integrated approach to Early Help across children, adults and older people's services and public health as part of a whole Council approach.

This strategy aims to build upon the good practice and existing strategies from early help and prevention which already exists in Halton. We will use these foundations to establish a new **'Everyone' Early Help Strategy** that is firmly embedded within the main relevant legislative acts for children and adults. Throughout this document the term 'Adult' is defined within the meaning of the Care Act (a person aged 18 or over and which also includes 'older people' - aged 55+).

Whilst the Early Help services in the People's Directorate of the Council has a key role in the provision of early help services by taking a lead in the delivery and commissioning of services; it also has a role as a partner working collaboratively and co-operatively within a system of services from the statutory, voluntary and community sector. In addition, as a facilitator it helps to build capacity and confidence among young people, adults and families within Halton as well as the wider partnership.

The main benefits of early help approaches include identifying and promoting protective factors at an early stage and as a result prevent negative outcomes developing. The overall aim is to support people to maximise their potential, and as a consequence, enjoy a better quality of life. Early help approaches are often 'enabling': equipping individuals and communities with the tools to succeed, rather than interventions being imposed upon them. Asset based approaches, being introduced in communities in Halton will foster self-reliance and resilience rather than dependency.

2. PURPOSE AND AIMS OF STRATEGY

In Halton we see a focus on early help as fundamental in tackling the root causes of problems as soon as they arise; this is critical to improving people's quality of life throughout each life stage. We want to break down intergenerational cycles of deprivation and poor outcomes, prevent problems from escalating and reduce the need for the involvement of statutory services. Early Help is an overarching philosophy that should influence all strategies in Halton. The aim of the strategy is to achieve much better outcomes for local people of all ages and their families.

In doing so, we will be promoting better outcomes for the people of Halton and the communities which are an integral part of their identity. We want to help to ensure that we reduce avoidable spending on acute services where early help would have prevented, decreased or delayed the need for them, and hence provide better value for public money.

The strategy outlines our intentions and approach to ensure early help is understood, accessible and firmly embedded within the working practices of all agencies, promoting lifetime and whole-family planning to deliver effective early help in Halton.

We want to empower our children, young people, adults and families to become more resilient and less reliant.

2.1 Aims

These aims set out our aspirations in broad terms. Further detail will be in the action plans that are currently being developed. By 2021 in Halton:

1. More children and young people will lead healthy, safe lives and will be given the opportunity to access education and develop the skills, confidence and opportunities they need to achieve their full potential;
2. More adults will have the support they need to live their lives as healthily, successfully, independently and safely as possible, with good timely access to health, mental health and social care services;
3. Everyone will be given the opportunity to voice their opinions and experiences to ensure that services meet their individual needs;
4. The best possible services will be provided within the resources we have, giving excellent value for the public.
5. Our workforce will continue to thrive and work effectively to support each other and the community they serve, ensuring that we have a confident, competent, happy workforce.

3. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The recent changes in legislation have reinforced the need to consider the needs of all individuals regardless of age and their families.

The Children & Family Act 2014 sets out a range of new responsibilities including the promotion of greater integration across education, health and social care. This focus on joint approaches to deliver integrated and personalised care provides a fresh impetus on achieving together the outcomes that matter to children, young people and their families. The act requires particular attention to be given to:

- Prevention
- Early identification
- Access
- Transition across life stages, and
- Preparation for adult life.

Also important to Early Intervention and Prevention work for children are the Children Act 1989 and 2004; the Ofsted single inspection framework; the thematic Ofsted framework; the Ofsted Children's Centre inspection framework; and the new Ofsted SEND inspection framework.

The Care Act 2014 highlights the requirement of effective person-centred planning to help intervene at the earliest possible stage. It states "*It is critical to the ethos of the Care Act that the care and support system works to actively promote wellbeing and independence, and does not just wait to respond when people reach a crisis point.*" To meet the challenges of the future, it will be vital that the care and support system intervenes early to support individuals, helps people retain or regain their skills and confidence, prevents need or delays and deterioration wherever possible".

According to the Care Act 2014 the most important part of adult care and support is to help people achieve those outcomes that are important and matter most to them in their life. This means that Halton, when carrying out its care and support functions for any person, must always promote that person's wellbeing. This idea of wellbeing covers many areas but can be summarised as follows:

- remain mentally and physically healthy
- maintain dignity stay safe and be in control
- enjoy, achieve and remain socially connected
- have a suitable home
- avoid financial and domestic troubles

4. WHAT DO WE MEAN BY EARLY HELP?

Early help aims to give people who are experiencing difficulty at any point in their lives the help they need as early as possible. It also supports individuals, families and communities to do more for themselves. People are no-longer considered passive recipients of care. Instead, they are actively involved and encouraged to adopt a 'can do' approach in tackling many of their own problems. This reduces dependency, but stresses independence and self-referral as means of accessing early support when needed.

In Halton, all agencies working with children or adults recognise that **prevention and earlier intervention** are more successful and cost effective than later or more formal interventions. We are all engaged to a greater or lesser extent in work that seeks to prevent the escalation of difficulties or the deterioration of circumstances which could adversely affect people at any age.

Halton's definition of "early help and prevention" across children's and adults' services and public health can be described as:

"Supporting communities to prevent and reduce need at the earliest stage whilst taking targeted action as soon as possible to tackle emerging situations, where there is a risk of a person developing problems. Early intervention may occur at any point in a person's life".

By **early help** we mean **the targeted action** that we take to prevent the development or escalation of problems. This definition importantly includes both help provided **early in life** (with young children, including pre-birth interventions) as well as the help delivered **early in the development of a problem** (with any person, regardless of age).

Who is responsible?

Everyone is responsible. The idea is to build upon people's strengths at an early stage, so they are enabled with the support of family and friends to recognise when help is required. By tackling the root causes of a problem as early as possible, people are able to maintain their independence and general wellbeing longer and where necessary can self-refer to an appropriate person or service.

For this to work effectively, a number of different groups involving public, private, voluntary and community have to work together to ensure the appropriate support is made available at the right time and in the right place.

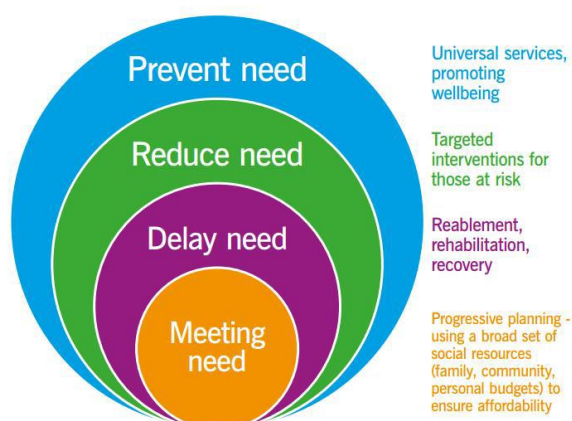
Specifically in relation to children's services, Munro (2011) outlines three levels of prevention: primary, secondary and tertiary. Focussed more on adults, the Care Act 2014 provides a similar categorisation using the language of prevent, reduce and delay.

This definition highlights the importance of early intervention in improving outcomes for people. The dual aspects of better life chances and improved value for money are

fundamental. In addition to this overarching definition, the Partnership recognises a continuum of prevention, ranging from:

- ‘primary’ or ‘upstream’ approaches (including whole population approaches and/or services and interventions for people with lower level needs)
- through ‘secondary’ approaches – typically those directed at people with emerging needs, in an attempt to stop these getting worse; and finally
- ‘tertiary’ or ‘downstream’ approaches to prevention, usually targeted at people with a range of complex needs and/or more pronounced ill-health, focused on maintaining stability and preventing deterioration for as long as possible.

The diagram shows how both the principles of “Prevent, Reduce, Delay” interrelates with Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Prevention, so that whether we are talking of children’s or adults’ services, we have a clear framework to describe early help in Halton.



The table below summarises the different levels of prevention to help agencies to describe their contribution across three levels.

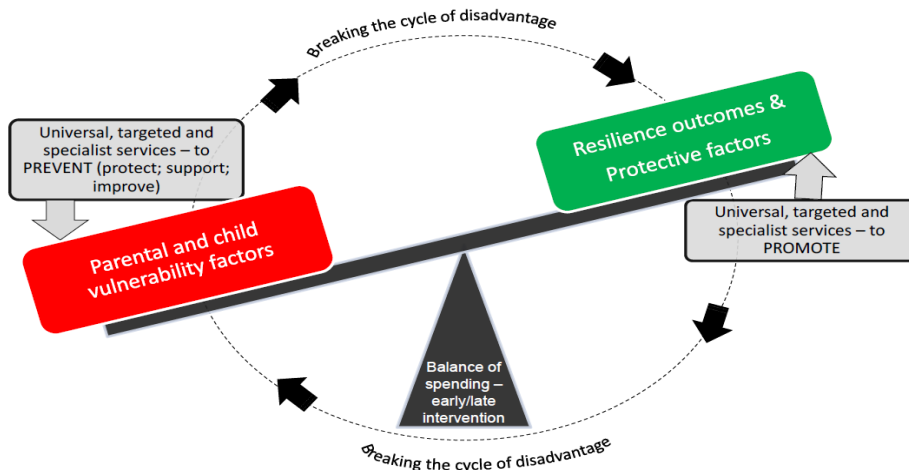
| Primary Prevention: Prevent | Secondary Prevention: Reduce | Tertiary Prevention: Delay |
|--|---|---|
| Preventing the occurrence of problems | Preventing problem escalation | Reducing the severity of problems |
| Early Help is taken at the level of the whole population in order to prevent the development of risk factors. At this universal level agencies build resilience across the population. Informal and formal education, awareness raising, helps to strengthen the support communities provide for local people. | At this level agencies will intervene early with individuals who have existing risk factors, vulnerabilities or acknowledged additional needs to ensure that problems are halted and do not become either more significant or entrenched. | At this level agencies work with individuals to tackle more complex problems to reduce the severity of those problems that have already emerged and reduce or delay the need for the involvement of more specialist services. This includes individuals, children, young people and families in crisis and on the edge of family breakdown. |

HALTON'S LEVELS OF NEED FOR CHILDREN

It is important that there is a clear understanding of where early help fits into the 'threshold of need' for children and that it is used appropriately by all partners. The diagram below illustrates this relationship it provides a continuum of needs of all children and their families in Halton.



What we do with children and young people now will have an impact and future savings for the adult population and the community. For example, social and emotional foundations in the early years, capable and confident parenting amongst vulnerable families, healthy lifestyles and good education experiences set during the primary and secondary school years can determine positive outcomes throughout the life course. It can also tackle the costly consequences of issues such as school exclusions and unemployment in later years.



EARLY HELP IN HALTON

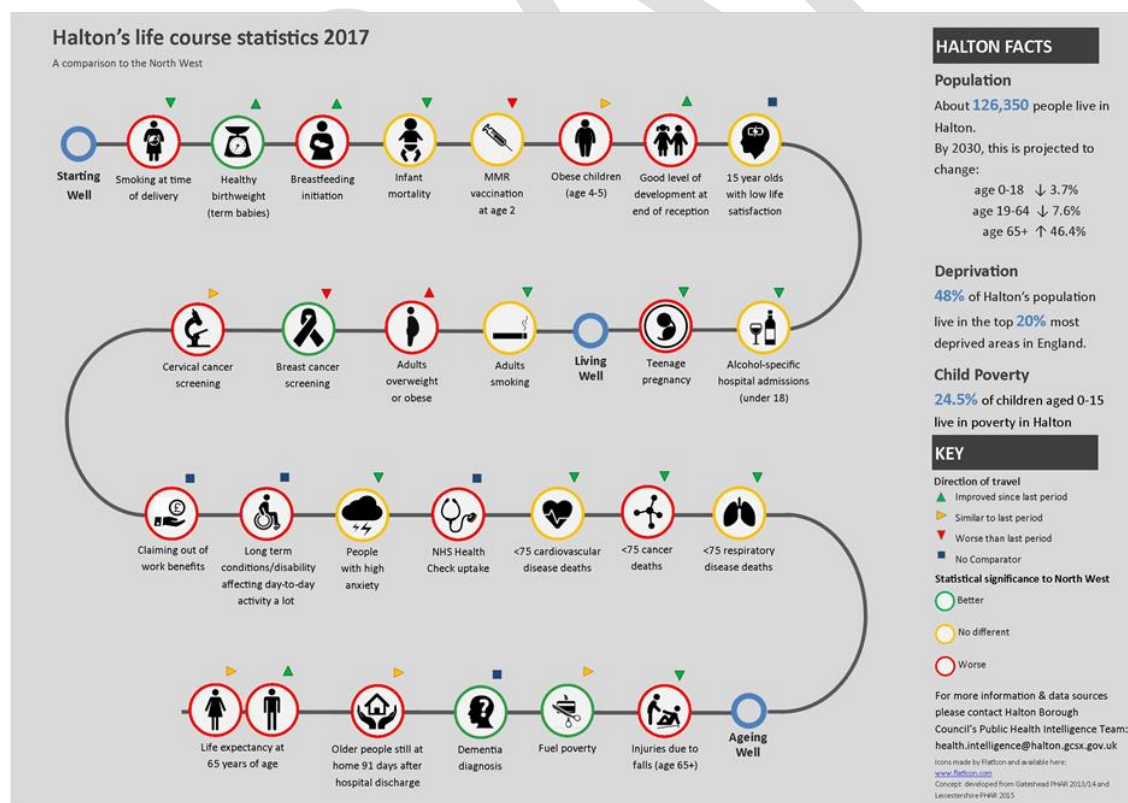
Halton's strategy is made up of three elements:

- a set of **shared early help priorities** to support the shift to early help,
- a set of **early help principles** to inform the borough partners' work on early help
- a selection of **early help 'stories'**, that help to illustrate some of the real benefits of effective early help to individuals, families and communities.

5.1 SETTING OUR PRIORITIES FOR 2018–2021

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment uses all available data and information to assess the current and future health and wellbeing needs of our local residents and communities. Such information is used to inform how resources are allocated across the borough in accordance with identified needs, ensuring the best possible health and wellbeing outcomes are achieved whilst also reducing health inequalities.

The following diagram provides an overview of the key findings from the most recent Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and other intelligence sources. The diagram reflects some common risk factors associated with the need for early help.



Priority 1

The right early help, in the right place at the right time.

Outcome

Individual's families and communities are self-aware, able to identify when they need support, and engage appropriate services to maintain their independence and overall wellbeing.

We will:

- Ensure whole system early help pathways are developed which are clearly understood and embedded in practice.
- Work with all agencies to put in place a workforce development plan to provide a whole system workforce response to our early help offer.
- Embed an outcome-focussed approach, ensuring that we can demonstrate the impact and difference made to, and in partnership with, our communities through the delivery of a whole system early help offer.

What difference will it make?

- People in Halton will know what advice and support is available to them and their families. This will help them respond to problems or needs arising due to changing circumstances.
- They will know where and who to go to for support, and what to expect.
- People will be able to deal with issues or problems before they become more severe or complicated. They will be independent and resilient enough to support themselves in the longer term, appropriate to their particular needs.

Priority 2

Ensuring a whole system approach to early help with strong partnership working

Outcome

Mature and adaptive partnerships which have shared ownership and accountability for the delivery of an effective early help offer.

We will:

- Embed a shared understanding and commitment of the 'everyone early help' offer.
- Ensure that all learning across the early help spectrum is shared to celebrate successes, but also learn from areas of improvement.
- Ensure that Early Help is not seen as something at the periphery of service design and delivery, but is embedded as mainstream.

What difference will it make?

- Service Providers will work together to minimise duplication, share knowledge about services available, and ensure that vulnerable people don't fall through gaps in processes.

Priority 3

Empowering local people and communities to build capacity and resilience, to enable people and communities to do more for themselves.

Outcome

Strong, connected communities supporting themselves and each other to lead happy and fulfilling lives, thereby reducing the demand on statutory services.

We will:

- Ensure that the premise of early help is underpinned by an asset-based approach to community development and resilience.
- Enable individuals, families and communities to self-help, and access services independently through maximising the use of technology, ensuring everyone is well informed about the service and support available.
- Promote independence by encouraging and enabling individuals to maintain a good quality of life accessing provision in their communities (helping them to help themselves).
- Recognise the need for strong connectivity with universal services to ensure people who need help are identified early, and effective step-up and step-down practices are in place.
- Ensure that the voice of the individual is at the centre of the early help offer, and individuals, families and communities are empowered to take control of their lives.

What difference will it make?

- People will have the knowledge and confidence to get involved or take a lead on community-based activities and projects, tailored to the skills and needs of their local areas.
- People will feel enabled to be independent, but aware of how to seek support services when needed.

Early Help Enablers

To assist with the 3 highlighted priorities we recognise that we need to more in the following areas:

- Improve **Information Management and Use of Information Technology**
- Enhance **Co-ordination and Timing of Service Delivery**
- Enhance approaches to **Whole Household and/or Family Support**
- **Building Resilience and Community Capacity**

We want to support individuals to make choices in their lives that enable them to achieve their full potential. Recognising that carers, staff and volunteers are an important part of delivering our vision, and must be valued and supported.

Our purpose is to improve the health and wellbeing of the population of Halton by empowering and supporting local people from the start to the end of their lives by preventing ill-health, promoting self-care and independence, arranging local, community-based support whenever possible and ensuring high-quality hospital services for those who need them.

We will work with local people and with partner organisations including healthcare providers and the voluntary sector. This will ensure that the people of Halton experience smooth, co-ordinated, integrated and high-quality services to improve their health and wellbeing.

The Council is working hard to maintain services with fewer resources and with further cuts expected, this will continue over the coming years. Our focus will be on prevention and independence and through making the most of universal and community based services to help young people, families and adults build, retain and recover skills.

5.2 Early Help Principles

Our vision is underpinned by a number of early help principles;

- Adopting strength based approaches using the strengths of individuals, families and communities;
- Supporting independence at all stages, with different levels of intervention offered;
- Working together as a strong partnership to deliver an effective local offer of support;
- Early help will be addressed across the life course, from developmental support in early years, to maximising wellbeing in later years.
- Ensuring we have an engaged, knowledgeable and committed workforce, that fully understand the importance of their role in early help;
- Identifying the children, young people, adults and families who need extra help and support at the earliest opportunity.
- Commitment to a 'Think Child', 'Think Parent', 'Think Family' and 'Think Community' approach to the assessment of needs which will have a positive impact upon all individuals within the whole family.
- Listening to children, young people, adults and families, and ensuring that the voice of children, young people, adults and families is evident throughout our involvement.
- Make every contact count – through effective assessment processes and by empowering professionals to address recognised needs of children, young people, adults and their families at the first opportunity.
- Share information – in a timely way, avoiding the need for continuous or repetitive assessment and 'starting again' syndrome. Understanding the whole family's needs, regardless of which individual service or setting they come to.
- Continuously improve – learning as we go along by monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the way that we work, gaining a better understanding of what helps families most, eliminating wasteful systems and bureaucracy and focusing our resources on making a positive difference.



By 2021 we will have:

Introduced targeted prevention, so that more people can live independently for longer in their communities, needing less; preventing and delaying the need for traditional public health or social care services.

Implemented and embedded requirements of the new Care Act.

Become more efficient in the way we work, making more use of digital technology to produce better results for people.

Supported new and existing providers of public health and social care to increase the range and quality of services.

Developed a confident, skilled and knowledgeable workforce that works flexibly with a range of partners to provide services.

5.3 Early Help Stories

The early help stories help to illustrate some of the real benefits of effective early help to individuals, families and communities.

David developed skills and confidence to live more independently



David has a diagnosis of Autism. He moved out of his family home to live in supported accommodation. His informal family carers were getting older and keen to see him settled in his own home.

At an early stage David was supported by his social worker and learning disability nurses to ensure all of his health needs were being met. Halton Housing was able to find suitable supported housing accommodation that David felt comfortable with. With assistance from his support agency he has been able to increase his independence gradually and improve his daily living skills such as maintaining his personal care and completing domestic tasks.

David now feels comfortable and safe in his new environment. Halton's Community Bridge Builders have enabled him to locate a local range of meaningful activities to take part in. These include volunteering with the local museum at Norton Priory to taking part in wider community activities such as walking groups. David and his family agree that the move has overall been a great success. He will be reviewed regularly by the social work team to ensure there is a continual emphasis on outcomes that match what David wants now and in the future.

Halton offers support to people at all levels of need and at every level will actively explore how people can be safeguarded and protected from harm. We offer timely intervention from our 'Home Support,' 'Rapid Access' and 'Reablement' teams. All of our actions are targeted to promote independence like David's story above.

Doris was reassured and felt enabled to access support**Doris's Story:**

I felt horribly alone when my partner died 4 years ago, especially as my remaining family live in London. Apart from shopping once a week I don't go out due to diabetes affecting my feet. I used to enjoy playing whist, but lack of transport made the journey impossible. When I had trouble with my answerphone and Lifeline I realised something had to be done.

I was referred to the Volunteer Service who arranged a whole raft of other services for me. These included door-to-door transport, enabling me to play whist again. My answerphone and Lifeline problems were quickly solved and I had my feet checked at the Podiatry Clinic.



Social isolation and the twin problems of loneliness and depression are common among people who are over 55 and living alone. The Volunteer Service that Doris found so helpful is part of Halton's SureStart to Later Life information service. This offers information about a range of activities available in the local community (benefits and pensions, transport, education, social activities, health and fitness and much more). The idea is to enable older people to counter loneliness and take an active part in their community.

Betty was supported to develop the right skills helping her to move forward to independence

Betty's Story:



Betty has Down syndrome and a diagnosis of Autism. She recently moved from her family home to live in her own flat in Runcorn. She receives some support each day to help her to maintain her tenancy, cook her meals and maintain her personal care. Before moving, she worked with her social worker and the Community Bridge Building team to set up social, education and work-based activities in her week. Structure and routine are very important for her and plans were put in place before she moved to avoid unnecessary disruption to her.

Betty is now attending college each week thank to the intervention of Halton's Bridge Building team and her social worker. She does voluntary work at a cafe and a salon both of which are run by Halton Day Services. She has a much more active social life and attends events in her local area with her friends. For big decisions that she may have to take about her life, she has help from advocacy services and also support from the Bridges Health Team to put plans in place and increase her independence. Currently, she is working with her social worker in order to gradually reduce the support that she needs from staff.

Community Connectors is a recent example of a local project that will provide practical person centred assistance to anyone in specific localities in the borough. The service is about empowering people to have the skill set to solve their own problems before they reach the crisis stage.

Individuals will be enabled to clarify their own goals, strengths and needs and develop a plan to pursue their aspirations, build resilience and improve their possibilities for a more fulfilled life.

Robinson Family were fully supported, reassured and motivated to regaining the confidence to move forward with family life

The Robinson family, are two parents under 25 years of age with a 2 year old and new born baby. A Health visitor referred the family for early help with a number of support needs including parenting, budgeting and mums isolation and low mood.

The family worked with a Family Support Worker for four months to holistically address their individual needs as adults, developing the families parenting skills as well as ensuring that the individual needs of the children were met.

The Family Support Worker supported the family through a range of suitable approaches to meet their needs; expanding their skills in areas such as child development, money management and parenting, as well as supporting Mum to access mental health support.

As a result of this early help, the family developed the necessary skills to grow their confidence to move forward with their lives independently. They have built strong connections in their community, helping to reduce social isolation, maintain their independence and improve their quality of life.

Halton offers a variety of support to parents and families. This family found support through their health visitor interactions, support via the G.P and with their local children's centre. These interactions got mum to talk about their mental health issues and get support, it identified a 2 year funded place, plus access to local groups to widen their support networks and improving their parenting confidence.

6 WORKING TOGETHER

6.1 The vital role of partnerships

We need to build on the work of the partnership to date to ensure we draw on the full range of resources, expertise and insight of all partners so we can better understand the needs of our children, young people, adults and families. We need to better identify and engage with those families who will benefit most from services, and provide co-ordinated services that effectively address needs early, to ensure the very best outcomes for our children, young people, adults and families.

The strategy is set in the context of a very challenging economic climate which has seen unprecedented levels of central government cuts to local authority funding. Central Government funding for Halton Borough Council has already fallen by £45m. The next four-year period looks equally challenging. One example is within the North West. Alder Advice were commissioned to report on the future of Adult Social Care

in the region. Their report indicated a number of key risks and challenges some of which involved moving from expensive residential care to community provision and greater use of digital technology to lower the cost of long-term care. This highlighted major financial challenges for Halton. By 2022 a further £4.8m will be needed to fund services. If demographic changes are included this figure increases to £12.8m. Halton's challenge working with others, is to deliver on our agreed priorities while maintaining front-line services within limited resources and at a difficult time for the national economy. To achieve this, particularly with vulnerable adults, Halton has introduced a new model of care. This emphasises the need to work with adults as early as possible. It aims to make the most of the person's own strengths and skills, enabling them to live independently as long as possible. The focus of assessment is for the individual leading a life (as fulfilling as possible) rather than having a service.

Partnerships are the key to being able to maintain effective services and continue to improve outcomes for everyone in Halton. There are key partnerships between the council and health services in supporting early help. The partnership between the third sector, the council and other partners is also crucial to achieving better outcomes for children, young people, adults and families. Third sector partners, including community groups and volunteers, perform an important role in reaching local communities and supporting individuals and families and it is important there is further collaboration across the partnership which maximises the third sector's contribution, and its ability to lever in additional resource.

Partnerships need to build on our achievements to date and encourage both the alignment of resources and more formal joint commissioning arrangements. Grants for 11 voluntary sector organisations, totalling £214,000 have been recommended for the current financial year (2018-19). These will contribute to the council's priorities involving: Children and young people; employment learning and skills; healthy Halton and Safer Halton. These grants will have a significant impact on volunteering, training and development opportunities as a means of reducing reliance on statutory services.

6.1 Commissioning

Bringing agencies to work together to meet the needs of children, adults and families is at the heart of early help. This requires whole system change, driven by energetic and visionary leadership which is already in place across the Council. Integrated commissioning is the key. It will support the delivery of the whole system change that is needed. It will also provide a robust, credible and objective way of making decisions about sparse resources, so that they have maximum positive impact on the lives of children, adults and families.

Key commissioning principles

We will:

- adopt an outcomes based approach to commissioning;
- understand the needs and priorities of our community, now and in the future and clearly specify our requirements;
- ensure that value for money and achieving sustainable efficiencies are the foundation of our commissioning solutions;
- undertake co-production and involve customers and service users in the planning, design, monitoring and evaluation of services;
- ensure commissioning takes place at the most appropriate level (services will be personalised wherever possible);
- be honest about the financial and legislative frameworks in which services are to be provided;
- support market developments to ensure there is a mixed economy of commissioned services enabling partners and individuals to deliver services where they can enhance outcomes and efficiency;
- build the capacity of our local third sector and small businesses to ensure they have equal opportunity to participate in commissioning;
- promote investment in the local community through all stages of the commissioning process; and
- work jointly with other relevant local and regional commissioners to best secure positive outcomes and value for money for our residents.

Halton will use commissioning and co-production approaches to develop and imbed a different widespread culture and practice. This will support and allow innovation and collaboration, as well as greater capacity and relevant freedom at local level to develop and implement new approaches.

An example of our joint commissioning is around Mental Health Services. Following a redesign of the services provided by the council for people with mental health needs, the Mental Health Outreach Team is now working collaboratively with NHS Halton Clinical Commissioning Group to provide targeted and time-limited support for people with the full range of mental health conditions in Halton, including people with

complex needs supported by the North West Boroughs NHS Trust and those people with more common, but often equally difficult to manage, mental health conditions who are supported only by primary care services.

When people are referred to the outreach team, they are interviewed about what changes in their lives they want to make, in order to have a better quality of life and to be able to participate in their own communities. An individual plan is then developed with them, targeted at their wishes and needs, and a member of the team supports them over an agreed time period to achieve these aims. This approach is having a considerable level of success and is reducing the need for people to be referred for more complex and expensive levels of support.

In addition, the mental health social work service has redesigned and is able to focus more fully on people whose needs are only being managed through primary care services. Both approaches are achieving positive outcomes for local residents with mental health problems.

6.2 Community Capacity Building – Working Towards a Community Asset Based Approach

Halton Borough Council has always helped communities to “help themselves”, including helping people to understand their needs and develop their own solutions to these needs. There are three key areas that we can continue with to develop this further:

1. Unlock the capacity of communities to support themselves and vulnerable individuals and families – reducing the demand on public service.
2. Support communities to work in partnership with the Council to design and deliver services, including those currently delivered by the Council
3. Develop voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations in Halton as effective providers in a diverse market which supports delivery of the Council’s priorities.

By 2021 we will have:

Strengthened arrangements for existing public health services so that more people get the right support to manage lifestyle issues such as substance misuse, smoking or being overweight.

Put in place actions to support communities and individuals to reduce loneliness and social isolation.

Improved preventative services for children and young people through the Healthy Child Programme.

Invested in local community projects within Halton that support people to live longer, healthier and more independent lives.

7 THE CASE FOR CHANGE - NATIONAL RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE

Nationally there are varying degrees of commitment to early help. Many services across health and social care are responding to escalating levels of demand through increased crisis management. However there is a growing body of evidence to support early help, which has been highlighted in key national documents and research.

Many local authorities are operating within a climate of unprecedented challenge for the public and voluntary sector, as demand for specialist services rapidly increases against a backdrop of dramatically reducing resources. For some families (estimated at 30 per cent of the population), difficulties arise which, if addressed early enough, can be prevented from escalating into costly statutory service intervention.

The Marmot Review into health inequalities in England published in February 2010 acted as a timely reminder of the continuing social and economic cost of health inequalities and provided further pointers towards early intervention help and support. In doing so, it presents a robust and well-evidenced business case for national and local action to address health inequalities through concerted action.

Work undertaken by the Early Intervention Foundation, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy, the Dartington Social Research Unit, MP Frank Field's review on the Foundation Years, MP Graham Allen's review of Early Intervention, and the work of the WAVE Trust among many others provide enough evidence that Early Help can reduce demand on more reactive and expensive services.

They all independently reached the same conclusion that it is important to provide help early in order to improve outcomes. Nationally, interest is growing in an evidence base for early help and in particular a need to demonstrate effectiveness to produce cost savings in more specialist and acute services. It is important to recognise that early help is not a one-off fix, but a highly targeted process and approach – a way of working with specific outcomes.

The emphasis on the economic value of early help has been developed further by the Social Research Unit at Darlington University. The American 'Blueprint' model is being translated into a UK context for a number of evidence-based interventions. The work currently in progress is specifically on child protection, however work on Early Years and Young Offending has already been published.

It is estimated nationally that if the number of offences by children and young people were reduced by 1%, it would generate £45 million in savings to households and individuals per year. The cost of educational underachievement has been projected at £18 billion per year by the London School of Economics for the Prince's Trust. Statistics highlight intergenerational cycles; daughters of teenage parents are three times more likely to become teenage mothers, and 65% of sons with a convicted father go on to offend themselves, with significant costs to society. Inequality also

impacts; a child living in poverty is more likely to have poorer health, lower attainment and less earning potential.

As people age they become more likely to have reduced contacts with family and friends. They are also more likely to be less mobile and have reduced income. These factors and others such as increased likelihood of hearing and sight deterioration can cause older people to be vulnerable to loneliness. Loneliness and isolation pose severe risks to health and can lead to early death. The effect of loneliness on life expectancy exceeds the impact of factors such as physical inactivity and obesity, and has a similar effect to that of cigarette smoking and alcohol consumption. Older people who are lonely have a greatly increased risk of developing Alzheimer's disease and have an increased use of health and social care services.

Well targeted loneliness interventions can substantially decrease spending on health and social care services. SCIE give case studies of befriending schemes saving £300 per person per year and Community Bridge Builder / Sure Start to Later Life type services saved even more. Research highlights that for every £1 spent on preventing loneliness there is a potential to save £3.

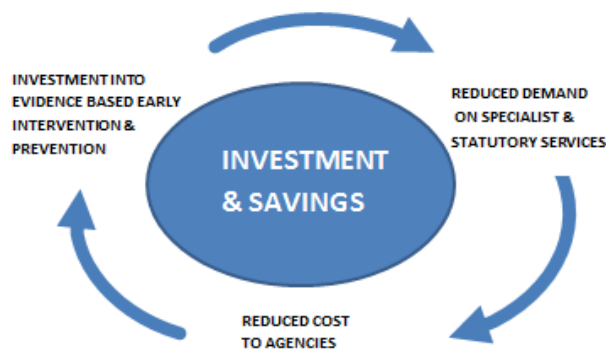
8 HALTON'S APPROACH

A key priority of this strategy is to develop a more cost effective, integrated and sustainable service model for people's services which identifies emerging problems as early as possible and prevents them from escalating.

In achieving this, a new financial model needs to be developed, which will include a focus on:

- Protecting the existing early help spend, focusing this on evidence-based interventions;
- Acknowledging that there is no new money to invest in interventions, exploring opportunities for attracting investment to pump prime early help initiatives;
- As early help is systematically rolled out and evidence of changes of demand becomes apparent, a commitment to re-prioritise some high cost expenditure on acute and crisis management services into cost effective early help provision.

This approach aims to create a cycle where a proportion of savings from reduced demand are reinvested into early help and prevention activity which in turn leads to a further reduction in demand on specialist and statutory services. This feedback approach is outlined in the diagram below:



By 2021 we will have:

Designed, developed and delivered services with people who use them, in ways that make good use of volunteers' time and are an efficient use of public money.

Routinely asked people who are experts by experience and where relevant Carers, to help us assess the quality of care and health providers.

Improved the ways in which we show that people and staff's involvement makes a difference – so that they can see and understand that we listen to what they tell us and that it influences what we do.

Kept more vulnerable people safe. We will do so by raising awareness and understanding in the social care workforce and the public about what to do if they are worried about someone who is vulnerable.

9 HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS

We will constantly review how we work to make sure that we are delivering better care and results for people. We know it is important to listen to people, if we have a good understanding of what people think, want or need, we are more likely to deliver the right result for them. We will not know if we are successful in making a difference to people's lives unless we can measure the results, and we will measure how well we are doing in a number of ways:

[The Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework](#) - tells us how well care services are meeting people's needs, as we would expect for ourselves, our friends and relatives. This includes whether people feel they are treated with dignity and respect, feel safe

and are independent, for example, being still able to live at home after a stay in hospital.

Public Health Outcomes Framework - tells us how well public health services in Halton are working, for example not only how long people live, but how healthy they are. Other indicators of success include reducing the number of people who have falls, or who feel they are lonely.

NHS Outcomes Framework - as we work more closely with partners, sometimes our performance will be jointly measured. For example, with our NHS colleagues how successful are we at reducing avoidable emergency admissions to hospital.

9.1 How will we know if Early Help in Halton is working?

We will expect to see that more individuals and families are empowered and enabled to take control of their lives, and they are supported in their local communities avoiding the need for services intervention. When there is service intervention we will expect to see the positive impact in a timely way with families reporting sustained improvement in their circumstances.

The success of the strategy will be reported through agreed key performance indicators. The indicators we are developing will provide a benchmark of whether early help for children, young people, adults and families in Halton is making a difference to our community. All our partnership activity – whether strategic or operational – over the next three years will be expected to make a contribution to these outcomes.

This strategy follows an outcome-based accountability model. The indicators below tell us whether early help is working locally. Outcome measures are used at service level to tell us whether early help is working for individuals and families. It follows that if early help services are delivering positive outcomes to individuals and families, then we should see that reflected at community level.

9.2 Governance

The Early Help Strategy covers the period 2018–2021 and will be reviewed annually to ensure the plan remains agile and focused on the emerging needs of local people and communities. The reviews will also enable an assessment to be made on progress to the previous year and provide means to harness commitment to deliver the future year's aspirations.

Responsibility for the monitoring of the implementation of the Strategy lies with the Children's Trust and Health and Well Being Board.

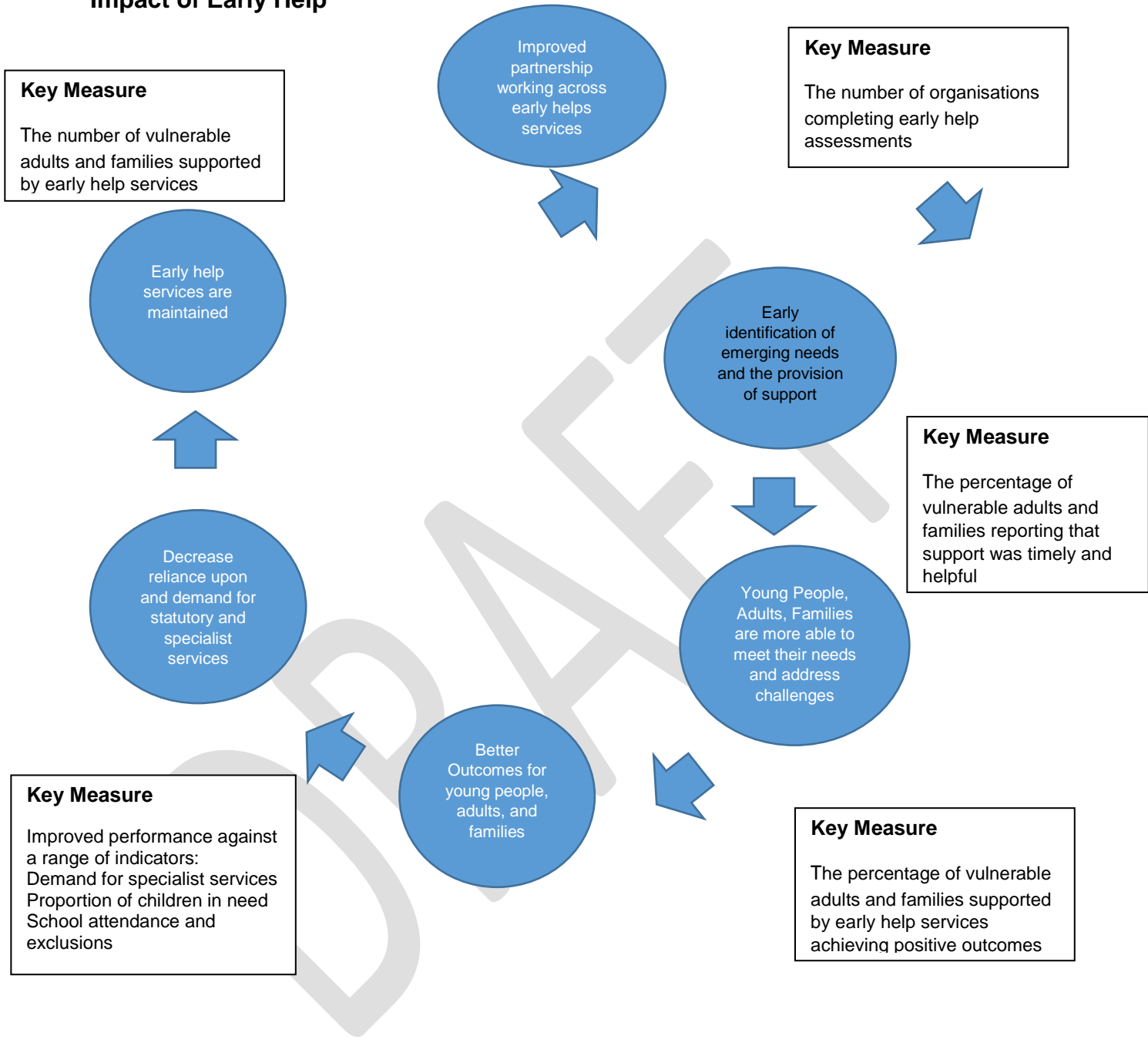
The Early Help Strategy is fully joined up with existing plans and priorities relating to:

- One Halton Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2022
- Sustainable Community Strategy 2016- 2026
- Children and Young People's Plan 2018 – 2021
- Adult Social Care Business Plan 2017 – 2020
- The Care Act 2014

A governance structure and early help priority groups will oversee the development and delivery of these priorities. Each group will use a life course approach and ensure each action plan includes action to maximise prevention and early help.

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Impact of Early Help



10 CONCLUSION

The success of our approach to Early Help is dependent upon collaborative and integrated working and will only be achieved by making Early Help an integral 'golden thread', which is woven into all our borough's strategic plans and comes with a clear commitment across the partnership.

The development of a robust early help offer for children, young people, adults and families in Halton will prevent problems escalating and becoming entrenched and more complex. It will also lead to a reduction in the need for more costly, specialist and statutory services while preventing unnecessary trauma and emotional upheaval for families.

Halton has the opportunity to provide an early help offer which is more coordinated, one which avoids duplication and makes the most of the resources available in an efficient and effective way. To deliver the early help offer requires a significant transformation of some current models of service delivery. This practice and culture change can take time and requires commitment into the medium and longer term future.

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Appendix 1 - Cost Benefit Analysis

There is a growing body of evidence which indicates that early intervention is cost effective when delivered in a targeted and timely fashion. It can create savings across a number of public sector services further down the line by taking demand out the system.

Since social and economic policy decisions are made under resource constraints, the value of public investment must be judged, at least in part, through economic efficiency, in terms of value for money. In deciding how funds should be allocated, public agencies need to know not only what is effective, but also which choice brings the greatest benefits for a given set of resources.

In the case of early year's interventions, the long-term economic impact is determined by comparing the benefits to society to the costs accrued. Benefits to society include the benefits to the programme recipient and family.

Costs to society include the benefits foregone from not using the resources for some other use. Due to the large differences in the methodologies adopted by studies aiming to evaluate the economic impact of early year's interventions, it is difficult to compare results across interventions. Nevertheless, a number of studies do provide indications regarding whether early years or other interventions generate benefits in the long term that outweigh the costs.

A number of studies have been conducted which demonstrate these cost benefits and include:

| Policy Area | Illustrative Example |
|---------------|--|
| Mental Health | <p>According to the Mental Health Foundation – Fundamental Facts about Mental Health (2015), In England, early intervention for first-episode psychosis has been calculated to result in savings of £2,087 per person over 3 years as a result of improved employment and education outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A study by the LSE estimated savings of £8 for every pound spent on parenting programmes to prevent conduct disorder over the course of a child's lifetime. The report also stated that "the economic returns from school-based programmes to deal with bullying and other behavioural problems are even larger. • The same study estimates a saving of £18 is for every pound spent on early intervention psychosis teams that work with young people in their first episode of schizophrenia or bipolar disorder • Investment in suicide training for GPs saves £44 for every pound invested, while bridge safety barriers save £54. Screening and brief intervention in primary care for alcohol misuse saves nearly £12 for every pound invested • Workplace mental health promotion programmes save almost £10 for every pound invested. |
| Parenting | The Incredible Years Parenting Programme, which deals with |

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| | children diagnosed with disruptive behaviour, costs around £1,344 to deliver a six month intervention to improve behaviour. It is estimated that without intervention, the continued conduct disorder of an individual costs an additional £60,000 to public services by the age of 28. |
| Early Years (Dartington Report) | It is estimated nationally that if the number of offences by children and young people were reduced by 1%, it would generate £45 million in savings to households and individuals per year. The cost of educational underachievement has been projected at £18 billion per year by the London School of Economics for the Prince's Trust. Statistics highlight intergenerational cycles; daughters of teenage parents are three times more likely to become teenage mothers, and 65% of sons with a convicted father go on to offend themselves, with significant costs to society. Inequality also impacts; a child living in poverty is more likely to have poorer health, lower attainment and less earning potential. |
| Early Years | A UK-based study, contrasted estimated £70,000 per head direct costs to the public of children with severe conduct disorder, with a £600 per child cost of parent training programmes. Although such figures do not demonstrate cost-effectiveness, they highlight the very low costs of early years' intervention compared to later expenditures once the problem is not addressed. |
| Literacy | Poor literacy skills are estimated to cost between £5,000 and £64,000 for each individual over a lifetime with the vast majority of these costs being due to lower tax revenues and higher benefit payments. The cost of a specific intervention with school pupils, in this case the Reading Recovery Programme, costs £2,609 per pupil and has shown that 79% of participants have been lifted out of literacy failure. |
| Economic Development & Skills | It has been argued that early year's interventions should also be portrayed as economic development initiatives and one way of considering this issue is with regards to skills formation. Research suggests that early skills and behavioural disturbances, or antisocial behaviour – during childhood and adolescence found average costs to UK society ranging from £13,000 to £65,000 annually per child. These costs are disproportionately higher than the cost of early prevention/intervention. A failure to obtain skills and qualifications the first time around cannot be made up entirely in adulthood, even with significant investment. The costs of such remedial programmes per person can be more than double the cost per child spent on pre-school or compulsory school education and are not likely to be as effective. |
| Pause | Every local authority within the UK has women with complex and challenging needs to whom multiple children are born and subsequently removed into the care system under child protection proceedings. A Lancaster University study estimates the scale and pattern of recurrent care proceedings over a seven |

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| | <p>year period (Broadhurst et al 2014). The numbers are significant, showing a total of 46,094 birth mothers appearing before the courts of which 15.5% (7,143) were linked to recurrent care applications. As each woman may be linked to more than one child, the total number of care applications associated with this group is as high as 29% of all care applications (22,790). If we estimate that 100 women, with a similar profile to those currently on Pause, were spread over 5 sites over a 5 year period with no intervention, they could potentially have 264* children removed into care at a cost of almost £20million. These are primarily the costs of taking those 264* children into care and do not account for other associated costs.</p> |
| Older People | <p>It is widely acknowledged that falls and fall-related injuries result in major costs to health and care systems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around one in three people over 65 and one in two people over 80 fall at least once each year. • Falls account for around 40% of all ambulance call-outs to the homes of people over 65 and are a leading cause of older people's use of hospital beds. • Each year there are around twice as many fractures resulting from falls as there are strokes in the over 65s. • Falls are a common precipitant for people moving into long-term care, or needing more help at home. <p>A Cochrane review looking at the effectiveness of various interventions in the prevention of falls among older people living in the community, concluded that home safety assessment and modification interventions were effective at reducing the rate and risk of falls.</p> <p>The most common serious injury arising from a fall is a hip fracture. Around 70,000-75,000 hip fractures occur in the UK each year. The annual cost for all hip fractures in the UK, including medical and social care, is about £2 billion (c £26,000 per hip fracture) Applying the New Zealand finding of a 26% reduction in falls achieved by very modest adaptations would indicate a potential reduction of 18,000 falls with resulting savings of half a billion pounds (£500 million) each year</p> |
| Young Adults Positive Behaviour Support Service (PBSS) | <p>In terms of cost reduction over a 6 -7 year period, a single young woman with PBSS and Halton Supported Housing Network (HSHN) staff to support her has saved Halton £578,000 on packages of care. This was able to happen due to an early intervention plan and reward system which ensured Lucy (not her real name) remained engaged and was able to address her issues through training.</p> |
| Telehealthcare | <p>The principal social care and financial arguments supporting the use of Telehealthcare stem from the Department of Health 'Whole System Demonstrator Programme and other controlled studies since such as: Medvivo (2014) which found that the</p> |

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| | <p>following gains were possible in a large group GP practice for patients with COPD:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 45% reduction in patient deaths (mostly among those over 65)• 52% reduction in hospital admissions• 36% reduction in visits to A & E• 35% reduction in GP visits <p>In an attempt to estimate overall cost savings they found the following savings per person per year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• £1,250 in reduced unplanned hospital admissions• £110 in reduced visits to the GP• £480 reduced visits by the community matron• £30 in reduced attendance at A & E <p>This represents a total annual saving per individual with COPD of £1,870 (this figure doesn't include the cost of equipment and training). By 2020 the estimated number of COPD patients in Halton (aged 16+) will be approximately 4,400. This represents a potential saving for COPD overall using Telehealthcare of around £8.25m.</p> |
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| REPORT TO: | Children and Young People Policy Performance Board |
| DATE: | 11 th June 2018 |
| REPORTING OFFICER: | Strategic Director, People |
| PORTFOLIO: | Economic Development & Children, Education and Social Care |
| SUBJECT: | Further developing links between Halton's Businesses and Schools |
| WARD(S) | Borough-wide |

1. **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

The purpose of this paper is to provide the PPB with the final recommendations proposed by the Scrutiny Topic group titled 'Further developing links between Halton's Businesses and Schools.

2. **RECOMMENDATION: That:**

i) **The PPB agree the recommendations.**

3. **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 In January 2017 the PPB agreed a Scrutiny topic titled: Further developing links between Halton's Businesses and Schools. Councillor G. Logan was nominated as the Chair of the Scrutiny topic group and three lines of enquiry were agreed with Councillor Logan, those being:

3.1.1 **Employer engagement**

This line of enquiry will look at:

- The national programmes commissioned by Government and local programmes commissioned by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority to support school and business links.
- The current level of interaction between schools and businesses in Halton, including engagement in the programmes above, work experience opportunities and other programmes schools themselves run.

3.1.2 **Careers education information**

This line of enquiry will look at:

- The statutory duties for schools and the Local Authority.
- The companies delivering Careers Education in Halton.
- The work undertaken by the Local Authority to add value to the work in schools.

3.1.3 Business Needs

This line of enquiry will look at:

- Processes used to gain feedback from employers about their future needs.
- The current report of employer needs in the region.

3.2 Four meetings of the Scrutiny topic group took place, each of the first three meetings reviewing a different line of enquiry from the above list and the final meeting reviewing the result of further actions/investigations agreed during the Scrutiny topic meetings.

3.3 Whilst the scrutiny topic work was taking place the Government released its new Careers Strategy titled: Making the most of everyone's skills and talents. Following this strategy the statutory guidance for schools and colleges about the requirements for delivering careers guidance and linking with employers was updated. These documents were reviewed by the Scrutiny topic group during their final meeting and have also influenced the final recommendations.

3.4 The final recommendations developed by the scrutiny topic group are:

- 1) Request every secondary school to have a **named** Governor responsible for overseeing how the school engages with businesses and develops pupils' employability skills.
- 2) Halton Borough Council officer to check from September 2018 that schools and the College do identify a Careers Leader and that schools publish how outside providers can talk to pupils in schools. This will be reported to PPB annually.
- 3) That all schools implement the requirement to offer every young person at least seven encounters with employers during their education, with at least one encounter taking place each year from years 7-13, ahead of the Government proposed timeline of 2020.
- 4) That the College implements the requirement to offer every young person at least two meaningful encounters with employers per year ahead of the Government proposed timeline of 2020.
- 5) That PPB receives a copy of the published careers programme for each school and the College from September 2018. This will be reported to PPB annually.

- 6) That the Director's report to Governors contains information about Careers Guidance and developing employability skills termly.
- 7) That the Careers and Enterprise Company is requested to update Halton Borough Council termly on the activity of Enterprise Advisers in Halton, and asked to encourage schools to engage directly with the Local Authority to provide feedback about the impact of Enterprise Advisers.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Schools and Colleges are required to have a strategy for the careers guidance they provide to young people which should include:

- Providing access to a range of activities that inspire young people;
- Building strong links with employers – by 2020 this should include at least one encounter(schools) or two encounters (colleges) with an employer each academic year;
- Schools should be widening access to advice on options post-16, for example, apprenticeships, entrepreneurialism, or other vocational routes alongside the more traditional A levels and university route – from January 2018 this includes allowing Post 16 providers to come into schools to talk to young people;
- Providing face-to-face advice and guidance;
- Working with local authorities to identify vulnerable young people and those at risk of not participating in post 16 education and training;
- Providing information to students about the financial support that may be available to help young people stay in education post-16;
- Schools should be working with Job Centre Plus to develop a smoother pathway between education and work.

4.2 Further to several reports commenting on the careers education taking place in schools, and young people's readiness for work, the Government set up the Careers and Enterprise Company in 2014. It provides support to schools and colleges on engaging with business leaders and giving young people frequent access to the world of work.

5.0 **OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None identified.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

The scrutiny topic focuses on children and young people being able to have quality careers guidance, as outlined in 4.1 above this would include links with employers.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Encouraging educational institutions in Halton to provide quality careers guidance to every young person will support them in being ready for employment, and support them in knowing what opportunities there are for employment in Halton.

For Halton Businesses, engaging with schools allows them to influence their future workforce.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

None identified.

6.4 A Safer Halton

None identified.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None identified.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 There are no significant risks arising from this report

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The Scrutiny topic seeks to promote equality of access in regard to how the borough's pupils and students can benefit from strong and consistent relationships between employment and education providers.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None.

REPORT TO: Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 11 June 2018

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, People

SUBJECT: Scrutiny Topic 2018-19

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To ask Board members to select a scrutiny topic for 2018-2019.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the Board

- i. Agree the scrutiny topic for 2018/2019;**
- ii. Agree to the establishment of a scrutiny Topic Group.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 In 2017/2018 a Scrutiny Topic Group was established to consider “Further links between Halton’s schools and businesses”. The work of this group has now concluded and a separate report has been produced outlining the work of the Topic Group, its findings and recommendations.

3.2 Members are now asked to consider the topic they would like to explore during 2018/2019.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCILS PRIORITIES

4.1 It is anticipated that the Scrutiny Topic Group will develop a series of recommendation, for consideration, as a result of their work.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

5.1 No risks have been identified at this stage.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

6.1 N/A

7.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

7.1 There are no relevant background documents to this report.

REPORT TO: Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 11 June 2018

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Enterprise, Community & Resources

SUBJECT: Performance Management Reports for Quarter 3 2017/18

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider, and to raise any questions or points of clarification, in respect of performance management for the second quarter period 01 October 2017 to 31 December 2017.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2017-18 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans, for the various functional areas reporting to the Board as detailed below:
- Education, Inclusion, Provision Services
 - Children and Families Services

The report details progress made against objectives and milestones and performance targets and provides information relating to key developments and emerging issues that have arisen during the period.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Policy and Performance Board

- 1) Receive the third quarter's performance management report;**
- 2) Consider the progress and performance information and raise any questions or points for clarification; and**
- 3) Highlight any areas of interest and/or concern where further information is to be reported at a future meeting of the Board.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Departmental objectives provide a clear statement on what services are planning to achieve and to show how they contribute to the Council's strategic priorities. Such information is central to the Council's performance management arrangements and the Policy and Performance Board has a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no other implications associated with this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Departmental service objectives and performance measures, both local and national are linked to the delivery of the Council's priorities. The introduction of a Thematic Priority Based Report and the identification of business critical objectives/ milestones and performance indicators will further support organisational improvement.

6.2 Although some objectives link specifically to one priority area, the nature of the cross - cutting activities being reported, means that to a greater or lesser extent a contribution is made to one or more of the Council priorities.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Not applicable.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Not applicable.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTIONS 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

9.1 Not applicable

Children and Young People Priority Based PPB Report

Reporting Period: Quarter 3, 01 October 2017 – 31 December 2017

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress that have occurred during the period of the report towards the priority of Children and Young People. The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress is explained within Appendix 1 (section 8).
- 1.2 Please note initials have been provided to indicate which officer is responsible for the commentary to aid Members, as requested by the Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board. A key is provided in Appendix 1 (section 8).

2.0 Key Developments

2.1 Careers Strategy (published December 2017) (AMc)

In December 2017 the Government published the Careers Strategy: making the most of everyone's skills and talents. This was followed in January 2018 with an update to the Careers guidance and access for education and training providers statutory guidance for governing bodies, school leaders and school staff.

The Careers Strategy describes how the Government wants England to move towards a culture of young people and adults having the right advice, in the right place, at the right time, backed up by the experiences with employers and educators that make a difference. Key to this is:

- All young people to understand the full range of opportunities available to them, to learn from employers about work and the skills that are valued in the workplace and to have first-hand experience of the workplace;
- All young people in secondary school and college to get an excellent programme of advice and guidance that is delivered by individuals with the right skills and experience;
- Everyone to get support tailored to their circumstances. All adults should be able to access free face-to-face advice, with more bespoke support for those who most need it;
- Everyone to get the information they need to understand the job and career opportunities available, and how their knowledge and skills can help them in considering suitable careers.

Key actions from the strategy and statutory guidance:

- The teacher responsible for careers will now be known as the 'Careers Leader'. From September 2018, every school will be expected to publish the name and contact details of their Careers Leader on their website.
- From January 2018, the Government will require schools to give providers of technical education, including apprenticeships, the opportunity to talk to pupils about the courses and jobs they offer, and publish how they will do this on their website.
- By 2020 secondary schools should offer every young person at least seven encounters with employers during their education, with at least one encounter taking place each year from years 7-13.

Link to access the Careers Strategy:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careers-strategy-making-the-most-of-everyones-skills-and-talents>

2.2 Children, Young People's & Family Plan (AMc & TC)

Halton's Children, Young People's and Family Plan 2018-2020 is for all children, young people and families who live, grow and learn in the borough. It is a joint, strategic, overarching plan for all partners within Halton Children's Trust and the services they provide for children, young people and families.

The plan sets out our hopes and aspirations for Halton's children, young people and families, and explains how we will achieve our ambitions for them to achieve the best possible outcomes. The best way that agencies can support our children and young people to achieve these outcomes is by jointly planning and delivering services based on the identified needs to improve health and well-being.

As part of this all agencies and services should listen to and involve our children, young people and families in decision-making, to find out what they think is important. This will ensure that our services are delivered in a way that suits their needs and can really make a difference to their lives.

The plan covers all services for children and young people and guides the activity of Halton Children's Trust until April 2020. The plan is written around the three overarching priorities that have been agreed. These priorities are:

- Early Intervention – we want children, young people and families to get help when they need it.
- Achievement and Ambition – we want children and young people to do well at school so that they can get the education, training or job they want.
- Healthy and Safe – we want everyone to feel safe wherever they are and to understand how to look after their health.

Link to access the Children, Young People and Families Plan:

<http://haltonchildrenstrust.co.uk/children-young-peoples-plan-2014-2017/>

2.3 Development of Primary Teaching Schools (AMc)

Halton Primary Schools brought a proposal to the Educational Strategic Board to develop a Primary Teaching School offer within Halton. Halton are included in the Department for Education identified development areas, as we do not currently have a Primary Teaching School within the borough. Teaching Schools fulfil three core functions including providing Initial Teacher Training (ITT); providing school system leadership and providing evidence base professional development for teachers and leaders.

All schools who were interested in developing an offer and met the criteria, met to put forward a proposal for the area. Halton submitted two Primary Teaching School applications in December 2017. A Runcorn offer would include Halton Lodge Primary School, St Martin's Catholic Primary School and St Clement's Catholic Primary school all applying for Teaching School status, but within one alliance group. The Widnes offer would have St John Fisher Catholic Primary School applying as a Teaching School, supported by Ditton Primary as an Alliance deliverer. Halton Borough Council and the Diocese are supporting these applications and would be strategic partners, along with wider partners. A further Secondary Teaching School application has also been submitted by Ormiston Chadwick Academy with a specialist focus on supporting disadvantaged pupils. Halton Borough Council are also supporting this application as strategic partners.

2.4 Behaviour Review (AMc)

The Behaviour Review has now been completed and has been shared with the Education Strategic Partnership Board, the SEN Review Group and the SEND Strategic Partnership. It has been acknowledged that this is a key priority for the Board and a task and finish group is being established with representatives across the key stakeholders, with a focus on improving behaviour borough wide.

2.5 Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy 2017-2020 (TC)

Halton has launched its Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy which sets out the aspirations and priorities for Halton's Children in Care and Care Leavers.

Link to the strategy:

http://haltonchildrenstrust.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/12469CIC_care_Leavers.pdf

2.6 Sufficiency Assessment (AMc)

The sufficiency duty sets out a requirement for local authorities to:

systematically review the current situation in relation to ensuring sufficient accommodation to meet the needs of Looked After Children/Young People and Care Leavers.

The sufficiency duty must be seen as part of a mechanism that provides children and young people with the most appropriate placement to meet their needs and improve their outcomes through quality assessments, care planning and decision making. The guidance also advocates strengthening the links between practitioners working with individual children in care and staff with responsibility for the commissioning function.

Statutory guidance acknowledges the importance of taking earlier, preventative action to support children and families to becoming looked after. This is through the provision of preventative and early intervention services to reduce the need for care proceedings as well as through clear and robust links into universal and targeted services.

Local Authorities need to assess existing commissioning practice and identify how to ensure that in future services commissioned away from the Local Authority can be delivered more locally, wherever this is possible and providing it is consistent with the child's welfare. Although the sufficiency duty lies with the local authority, the duty will be implemented most effectively through a partnership between the local authority and its partners in the Children's Trust.

The guidance is clear that local authorities should not move children from out of authority placements for the sole purpose of meeting the sufficiency duty if their needs are being met by the existing range of services involved.

Within Halton an updated Sufficiency report is in the final stages of completion, the associated action plan will report into the Commissioning Partnership Board and the Children in Care Partnership Board.

2.7 Residential Child Care (TC)

Agreement has been reached regarding a strategic plan for Residential Child Care. The process of commissioning a partners to run a specialist provision based on our sufficiency in Edinburgh Road is to commence in the forthcoming quarter.

2.8 Commissioning of Care Leavers Support (AMc & TC)

In order to develop the offer for Halton Care Leavers, approval has been obtained to commission support in a different manner, linking with the local Registered Social

Landlords sector. Phase 1 of the proposal will be to commission support for young people where this is required. This will include the delivery of the following outcomes:

- Reducing the number of individuals not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- Ensuring young people receive financial support
- Promoting personal safety
- Enabling young people to become valuable members of their local community
- Increasing individual self-esteem and resilience
- Developing tenancy ready young adults

It is envisaged that the Leaving Care outcomes and outputs will be delivered through the Leaving Care Contract Specification which will focus on:

- A requirement, as part of pathway planning, for increased independence for the young people
- To ensure health needs are met
- To motivate to attend education, employment and training, thereby achieving potential
- Each young person working towards an independent living plan, subject to regular review
- To promote family contact where appropriate
- For each property to be well maintained
- For properties to be sustainable post-18.

The type of support required and how many hours required will be clearly defined within the contract specification. As part of this plan the local Registered Social Landlords will utilise voids or early identification of planned voids to the Care Leavers team to both aid planning and make maximum use of the limited supply of housing locally, especially for 1 bedroom properties.

Phase 2 of the proposal will be to work with the local housing providers to develop a small group setting for Care Leavers. This ideally would be a block of 3-4 flats where young people could live with staff on site 24 hours a day to provide tailored support. This could also be an additional base for Personal Advisors to work from and offer support, and if large enough, could offer an emergency bed for homeless 16-17 year olds. Identifying such a property will be challenging and careful consideration needs to be given to the impact of possible voids within such a setting.

2.9 Audits (TC)

A new framework for internal audits within Children's Social Care has been devised and agreed. This is to be implemented in January 2018. This will allow for greater transparency as the audit form will be contained within the social care caseload management system (CareFirst).

3.0 Emerging Issues

3.1 Horizon scanning/National drivers

Children and Social Work Act 2017 (TC)

The Children and Social Work Act requires the authority to produce a 'Local Offer' for Care Leavers. Whilst the regulatory framework is awaited to guide implementation, work is ongoing to build on our SEND Local Offer to develop this piece of work in participation with Halton Care Leavers.

Troubled Families (AMc)

There is a revised financial framework for Troubled Families, which takes effect from January 2018. It reflects local feedback that the payment by results (PBR) approach has provided a much needed emphasis on services achieving real, tangible changes with families. The framework outlines the 'Earned Autonomy' and PBR process of which Halton has agreed to continue with a PBR model this year. The principles set out in the document concerning, for example, family working, service transformation and evaluation will continue to apply to all local authorities and their partners participating in this programme, regardless of funding arrangements. The two main changes to measures are around education and universal credit and these will need to be reflected in a refresh of the Troubled Families Outcome plan in the coming weeks.

Multiplication Tables (AMc)

In June 2020, the government will introduce a new assessment, testing out Year Four pupils knowledge of multiplication tables. This is likely to be an onscreen assessment tool and is currently in the process of being trialled. The Standards and Testing Agency (STA) will be selecting sample schools across the country to take part in the trial and will be notifying schools selected during the spring term.

3.2 Halton Specific

September Guarantee (AMc)

The September Guarantee figures for 2017 dropped 0.6% compared to the 2016 figures, which at 97.6% was higher than the national average of 94.5%. National figures for 2017 are awaited.

School Improvement Conference (AMc)

As Early Years outcomes and child development are a key priority for Halton, the School Improvement team will be holding a School Improvement Conference in January 2018, with a special focus on Early Years. The event will provide a detailed analysis of Early Years data, pattern and trends across the borough and benchmarking. It will also celebrate and share good practice found within the borough.

Funding Schools (AMc)

In December 2017 the Executive Board agreed that Halton would use the National Funding Formula with transitional protection from April 2018. The grant allocation was announced in late December and the schools block for 2018/19 is £84,318,746. The High Needs budget requirement is at least £2.1 million greater than the budget received. School Forum agreed to the transfer of 0.5% from the schools block to the High Needs block, a sum of £421,594 leaving £83,897,152 for distribution to maintained primary and secondary schools and academies. This is a total increase in funding from 2017/18 of £1,177,586. Primary and Secondary schools will receive their budget allocation the week commencing 22 January 2018.

Despite the agreed transfer there is insufficient budget to support High Needs provision. Options to balance the budget were discussed at School Forum 17 January 2018. A full range of proposals will be considered at an additional School Forum meeting in February 2018. There will need to be reductions in funding from Early Years to Post-16 High Needs provision. For Primary, Secondary and Special schools and specialist provision there will be a reduction in the value of top up allocated from 2018. Further information will be provided to schools in the coming weeks.

Young People Mental Health Survey (AMc & TC)

The young people of Halton Youth Cabinet are looking to make a difference to mental health services for young people in Halton. To do this they are asking young people to tell them what they should be doing. Halton Youth Cabinet want to encourage as many young people as possible to complete their mental health support survey. The survey only takes minutes to complete and is anonymous. Any young person can take the survey at:

https://webapp.halton.gov.uk/survey_snap/mental_health.htm

4.0 Risk Control Measures

4.1 Risk control forms an integral part of the Council's business planning and performance monitoring arrangements. As such, directorate risk registers were updated in tandem with the development of the 2017-18 business plan.

5.0 Progress against high priority equality actions













5.1 Equality issues continue to form a routine element of the Council's business planning and operational decision making processes. Additionally the Council must have evidence to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which came into force April 2011.

The council's latest annual progress report in relation to achievement of its equality objectives is published on the Council's website <http://www4.halton.gov.uk/Pages/councildemocracy/Equality-and-Diversity.aspx>

6.0 Performance Overview

6.1 The following information provides a synopsis of progress for both milestones and performance indicators across the key business areas that have been identified by the Directorate. It should be noted that given the significant and unrelenting downward financial pressures faced by the Council there is a requirement for Departments to make continuous in-year adjustments to the allocation of resources in order to ensure that the Council maintains a balanced budget. Whilst every effort continues to be made to minimise any negative impact of such arrangements upon service delivery they may inevitably result in a delay in the delivery of some of the objectives and targets contained within this report.

Objective: Improve outcomes for children and young people through effective multi-agency early intervention (PED01)

| Ref | Measure | 16/17 Actual | 17/18 Target | Current | Direction of Travel | Quarterly Progress |
|----------|--|--------------------------------------|--------------|--|---|---|
| PED01 01 | Monitor the average length of time between a child returning home and their return interview for those missing from care/home (Commissioned Service) | 72 hours | 72 hours | 72 hours |  |  |
| PED01 02 | Reduce the number of young people who repeatedly run away in Halton (SCS SH04) | 156 | 115 | 126 |  |  |
| PED01 03 | Monitor the number of young people going missing in the year | 395 | N/A | 340 | | |
| PED01 04 | Monitor the number of young people flagged as at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (snapshot at the end of the quarter) | 24 | N/A | 38 | | |
| PED01 05 | Reduce the number of children subject of fixed term exclusions | 244 instances 181 children | 270 | 212 instances 131 children (Apr – Dec) |  |  |
| PED01 06 | Reduce the rate of permanent exclusions | 0.046% 42 children (Apr – Dec) | 0.035 % | 36 children (Apr – Dec) |  |  |
| PED01 07 | Increase the number of children involved in early intervention (e.g. CAF) (All those who have had a CAF at any point in the year) | 560 | 650 | 626 |  |  |
| PED01 08 | Monitor the rate of referrals to Children's Social Care per 10,000 0-18 year olds | 368 | N/A | 396 | | |
| PED01 09 | Reduce the number of children and young people who enter the care system | 97 | 70 | 40 |  |  |

Supporting commentary:

PED01 01, 02 and 03: During the quarter there have been 282 missing notifications which come from 111 individuals. This is an increase in number from the previous quarter. There are 43 repeat individuals that are responsible for 219 instances. There have been considerably more males this year, in comparison to previous years.

PED01 04: There is an Operational Group that monitors the number of children at risk of CSE which is multi-agency. Representatives from iCART, alongside other social workers attend this meeting to monitor those children in the care of other local authorities who are considered at risk (CICOLA).

PED01 05 and 06: Data for the year to date (April – December) is suggesting that there may be a reduction in both fixed term and permanent exclusions in the recent months, however the number of exclusions in the Summer term 2017 will mean there is a challenge to reduce the fixed term exclusions from the previous year, and to meet the end of year target.

PED01 07: CAF data shows an increase in those involved in CAF during the year to date and Halton is likely to meet the end of year target.

PED01 08: There was an increase in referrals in quarter 3, and a total of 817 referrals have been received since April 2017.

PED01 09: There is an effective early intervention offer to avoid admissions to care, particularly for older children. Where needs escalate a Community Support Worker is available to offer coordinated support to the young person and their parent alongside statutory social worker intervention. The children in care population remains higher than previously seen and further work is to be undertaken to strengthen both our edge of care offer and to ensure a timely exit from care of younger children via securing permanency at as early a stage as possible. These are to be built into the key priorities for the Children in Care team.

| Ref: | Milestones | Quarterly Progress |
|--------|---|--------------------|
| PED01a | Monitor and review the effectiveness of iCART (June 2017) | |
| PED01b | Establish and implement a multi-agency locality provision (March 2018) | |
| PED01c | Develop a system to identify, assess and support vulnerable adults (March 2018) | |
| PED01e | Develop performance information which ensures that early intervention is responsive to trends of those being referred to children's social care | |

Supporting commentary:

PED01a: Weekly performance meetings with the principal managers, divisional managers and support from the performance team have ensured an ongoing improvement in the percentage of contacts and referrals for both Children's social care and early intervention being authorised within timescales.

PED01b & PED01e: Early Intervention managers participate in a monthly performance challenge meeting with Divisional Managers, Children's Social Care managers, and the Operational Director which monitors trends and performance.

PED01c: Successful outcome in terms of acceptance of MEAM (Making Every Adult Matter) to have continued support from them at no cost and to be involved in a research programme. Attended an initial launch event with other MEAM areas. Hosted a local partner workshop in December 2017 with input from MEAM and an expert by experience. Quarterly reports have been developed. Halton needs to explore strategic reporting and afford considerations to sustainability of the project.

Objective: Raise attainment and progress at Key Stage 2 (PED02)




| Ref | Measure | 16/17 Actual | 17/18 Target | Current | Direction of Travel | Quarterly Progress |
|----------|---|--------------|--------------|---------|---------------------|--------------------|
| PED02 01 | Increase the percentage of children reaching the expected standard in reading at KS2 | 63.4% | N/A | 69% | | |
| PED02 02 | Increase the percentage of children reaching the expected standard in writing at KS2 | 65.9% | N/A | 72% | | |
| PED02 03 | Increase the percentage of children reaching the expected standard in maths at KS2 | 64.9% | N/A | 70% | | |
| PED02 04 | Increase the percentage of children achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths (SCS CYP02) | 46.8% | N/A | 56% | | |
| PED02 05 | Increase the average key stage 1 to 2 progress score for reading | -0.32 | N/A | -0.05 | | |
| PED02 06 | Increase the average key stage 1 to 2 progress score for writing | -1.47 | N/A | -0.48 | | |
| PED02 07 | Increase the average key stage 1 to 2 progress score for maths | -0.51 | N/A | -0.41 | | |
| PED02 08 | Increase the percentage of Children in Care achieving expected outcomes at KS2 (SCS CYP16) | Refer below | | | | |

Supporting commentary:

Separate reporting process with commentary on progress is provided for all attainment data.

PED02 08: Analysis of individual children in care is provided in the Virtual School Annual Report. Overall outcomes for children in care at KS2 have been positive as there has been a diminishing gap between their performance and all their non-care peers across all measures.

| Ref: | Milestones | Quarterly Progress |
|--------|--|--------------------|
| PED02a | Based on data analysis, and feedback from the Cross Service Monitoring Group, undertake categorisation process for all schools by October 2017 and identify actions, including levels of support and intervention, required to improve inspection outcomes (March 2018). | |
| PED02b | Develop data tracking system (March 2018). | |
| PED02c | Conduct the annual analysis of school performance data for all primary schools during September to December 2017 (with further reviews undertaken at key points in the performance data release cycle). | |
| PED02d | Analyse, evaluate and report end of Key Stage 2 achievement outcomes (December 2017). | |

| | | |
|--------|---|---|
| PED02e | Identify areas of need and support for Children in Care and Free School Meals pupils (December 2017). |  |
| PED02f | With schools, monitor the impact of Pupil Premium and its impact on raising achievement (March 2018). |  |
| PED02g | Ensure appropriate deployment of school improvement challenge and support for identified schools and settings, including school to school support and wider system leadership (March 2018). |  |

Supporting commentary:

PED02a: Revised categorisation of schools has been undertaken.

PED02b: Further capacity is required to be able to fulfil this by March 2018.

PED02c: High level performance data on schools performance has been shared with primary and secondary head teachers and the Education Strategic Partnership Board.











PED02d: Attainment outcomes have been shared with PPB in separate reporting.

PED02e: A new Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy has now been launched and will be reviewed through the CIC Partnership Board. Raising educational outcomes for CIC and improving Care Leavers' EET outcomes are 2 key priorities.

PED02f: School improvement officers, including associated School Improvement advisors have continued to support individual schools with strategies to diminish the difference in attainment and progress of vulnerable groups. A diminishing the difference network group provides further challenge and support to those schools who participate in this network.

PED02g: School to school support is provided based on school categorisation. This is to be reviewed in the Spring term based on validated data and any changes in school circumstances.

Objective: Raise achievement in Early Years (PED03)





| Ref | Measure | 16/17 Actual | 17/18 Target | Current | Direction of Travel | Quarterly Progress |
|----------|---|--------------|--------------|---------|---|---|
| PED03 01 | Increase the percentage of children achieving a good level of development in Early Years Foundation Stage (SCS CYP) | 62% | 62% | 61% |  |  |
| PED03 02 | Increase the percentage of 2 year old funded children achieving a good level of development | 47% | 20% | 49% |  |  |
| PED03 03 | Increase the take up of Early Years Entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds | 93% | 92% | 93% |  |  |
| PED03 04 | Monitor the percentage of Early Years settings (pre-schools, day care, out of school clubs, childminders) with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding | 97% | 90% | 97% |  |  |
| PED03 05 | Reduce the good level of development attainment gap for disadvantaged children and their parents at EYFS | 24% | 19% | 23% |  |  |

Supporting commentary:

Separate reporting process with commentary on progress is provided for all attainment data.








PED03 03: A major focus of the marketing and promotional activities of the Halton Families Information Service (FIS) is the increase in the take up of 3 and 4 year olds Free Entitlement places. The take up in this monitoring is encouraging as this is traditionally the quietest period. Local measure in relation to take up of Early Years Entitlement for 2 year olds has exceeded the DfE target by 125 children in the monitoring period.

PED03 04: The quality of PVI sector Early Years provision in Halton remains extremely high and exceeds both regional and national comparators.





| Ref: | Milestones | Quarterly Progress |
|--------|--|---|
| PED03a | Develop data tracking system across early years (March 2018). |  |
| PED03b | Implement recommendations from the Early Years Review and OFSTED Early Years thematic report (March 2018). |  |
| PED03c | Analyse the outcomes of children who have accessed funding two year old placements (January 2018). |  |
| PED03d | Complete RAG categorisation process for all EYFS settings by October 2017, and identify actions, including levels of challenge, support and intervention required to improve quality of educational provision. |  |

| Ref | Measure | 16/17 Actual | 17/18 Target | Current | Direction of Travel | Quarterly Progress |
|--|---------|--------------|--------------|---------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Supporting commentary: PED03a: A "Ready for Reception" tracker and "good level of development" tracker has been developed and are in use. A wider tracking process and tool are currently under development. PED03b: "One Halton" Strategy Parents guide produced a detailed action plan, with actions being implemented. PED03c: Analysis has been undertaken in relation to two year funded reaching the good level of development and achieving their individual early learning goals. PED03d: EYFS settings have been RAG rated. Support and challenge identified as a result of their categorisation and circumstances. | | | | | | |

Objective: Improve the offer for children and young people with SEND (PED04)

| Ref | Measure | 16/17 Actual | 17/18 Target | Current | Direction of Travel | Quarterly Progress |
|----------|---|--------------|--------------|-----------|--|--|
| PED04 01 | Increase participation in the POET Survey (Parent/Guardians) | 109 | 70 | N/A | | N/A |
| PED04 02 | Increase the percentage of Education Health Care Plans completed within 20 weeks | 23% | 80% | 68% |  |  |
| PED04 03 | Increase the number of schools identified as Nurture Champions | 12 schools | 20 schools | 6 schools |  |  |
| PED04 04 | Increase the percentage of Statements converted to Education Health Care Plans to meet published timescales | N/A | 90% | 95% | |  |
| PED04 05 | Increase the number of people accessing the Local Offer (proxy measure of number of page views) | 37,215 | 40,000 | 22,276 |  |  |

Supporting commentary:
 PED04 01: Participation in the relaunched POET Survey is being encouraged. Administration services will be contacting every parent to encourage participation.
 PED04 02 and 04: 22 children/young people are still subject to a statement of special educational needs. All of these conversions have been started and will be completed by March 2018. Performance for timescales is increasing, although unlikely to meet the end of year target. Currently delay is experiences in identifying an appropriate setting for the children and young people with more complex needs.
 PED04 03: There are 16 schools with nurture groups with additional settings who have groups run along nurture principles. Feedback from new groups has been very positive.
 PED04 05: The number of page views has decreased however still represents a good reach. Meeting the end of year target is uncertain.





| Ref: | Milestones | Quarterly Progress |
|--------|--|---|
| PED04a | Develop and refine the annual analysis of progress data for children and young people with additional SEND funding through Enhanced Provision or Education Health Care Plans (March 2018). |  |
| PED04b | Undertake a review of all SEND provision within the borough (March 2018). |  |
| PED04c | Improve provision in Halton for young people with challenging behaviour and social, emotional and mental health challenges (March 2018). |  |
| PED04d | Evaluate qualitative data through Personal Outcomes Evaluation Tool (POET) of family and individual views with the SEND reform process in Halton, to increase satisfaction with their experience (March 2018). |  |

Supporting commentary:
 PED04a: These meetings in schools identified children and young people who may need additional support through Enhanced Provision or Education and Health Care Plan. Schools were challenged on their use of the Graduated Approach and progress data was discussed. Inclusion 0-25 division have identified schools that may benefit from additional support and those who are showing good outcomes for SEND children.
 PED04b: Funding has been identified for this action and research has been undertaken to find experienced professionals to undertake the action.
 PED04c: Capital funding of £500,000 has been granted to the borough to be paid in instalments over the next three years from DfE. This funding is to be used to help meet the needs of children and young people with an Education Health and

Care Plan. Data has been analysed and identifies the need to have more Social Emotional and Mental Health provision in the borough at key stage 1 and key stage 3/4. A public consultation is now in progress to open discussion on our evidence and rationale. This can be found on the Local Offer.

PED04d: Analysis of the POET Survey 2017 showed increased satisfaction with Halton's services and processes for both Children and young people and their families. The 2018 Survey is live on the Local Offer and letters are to be sent to every person who has been involved in the EHC Plan process in the last 12 months.

Objective: Improve participation and skills for young people to drive Halton's future (PED05)



| Ref | Measure | 16/17 Actual | 17/18 Target | Current | Direction of Travel | Quarterly Progress |
|----------|--|---------------|--------------|------------|---|---|
| PED05 01 | Reduce the percentage of 16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training | 4.4% | 4.4% | 4.3% (Nov) |  |  |
| PED05 02 | Reduce the percentage of 16-17 year olds whose activity is not known | 0.8% | 0.8% | 1% (Nov) |  |  |
| PED05 03 | Increase the percentage of 19 year olds achieving a Level 2 qualification | 84.3% (15/16) | 84.3% | Awaited | | |
| PED05 04 | Increase the percentage of 19 year olds achieving a Level 3 qualification | 54.4% (15/16) | 54.4% | Awaited | | |
| PED05 05 | Monitor the percentage of young people progressing to Higher Education (SCS CYP13) | 28% (15/16) | 28% | Awaited | | |

Supporting commentary:

All targets have been revised in line with the publication of 2015/16 data (shown in the 2016/17 data column as published with a timelag) and the new DfE calculations.

PED05 01 and 02: Current performance is November 2017. Whilst the NEET performance is slightly reduced, the Not Known performance has slightly increased. It is expected that as the activity is known for these remaining young people that the NEET performance will increase. There are 9 young people from the 16-17 cohort for whom activity has yet to be identified.

PED05 03, 04, 05: Latest performance is 2015/16. Expected update in Quarter 4.

| Ref: | Milestones | Quarterly Progress |
|--------|---|---|
| PED05a | Develop the 14-19 Commissioning Statement to reflect Local Enterprise Partnership priorities (March 2018). |  |
| PED05b | Develop a Post 16 monitoring framework to demonstrate how providers are supported and challenged in the borough (March 2018). |  |

Supporting commentary:

PED05a: The previous 14-19 Commissioning Statement document format has been revised to better meet the needs of the 14-19 team and Strategic Analysis and Work Priorities. The document has been ratified by Senior Leadership Team and shared with the Halton Association of Secondary Headteachers and Children and Young Peoples PPB.

PED05b: Monitoring framework has been written in draft form so it can be linked to School Improvement Strategy when revised.

7.0 Financial Summary

7.1 EDUCATION, INCLUSION AND PROVISION

Revenue Budget as at 31st December 2017

| | Annual Budget £'000 | Budget To Date £'000 | Actual To Date £'000 | Variance to Date (Overspend) £'000 |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Expenditure | | | | |
| Employees | 5,970 | 4,313 | 4,342 | (29) |
| Premises | 112 | 45 | 55 | (10) |
| Supplies & Services | 2,624 | 1,449 | 1,306 | 143 |
| Transport | 5 | 0 | 5 | (5) |
| Schools Transport | 926 | 528 | 745 | (217) |
| Commissioned Services | 2,677 | 1,638 | 1,638 | 0 |
| Agency Related Expenditure | 1,595 | 1,116 | 1,085 | 31 |
| Independent School Fees | 2,463 | 1,867 | 1,867 | 0 |
| Inter Authority Special Needs | 175 | 32 | 32 | 0 |
| Pupil Premium Grant | 73 | 82 | 82 | 0 |
| Nursery Education Payments | 5,199 | 3,266 | 3,266 | 0 |
| Special Education Needs Contingency | 1,250 | 1,172 | 1,172 | 0 |
| Schools Contingency | 416 | 180 | 180 | 0 |
| Capital Finance | 150 | 119 | 118 | 1 |
| Total Expenditure | 23,635 | 15,807 | 15,893 | (86) |
| Income | | | | |
| Fees & Charges | -301 | -377 | -362 | (15) |
| Government Grants | -639 | -608 | -608 | 0 |
| Reimbursements & Other Income | -933 | -637 | -700 | 63 |
| Schools SLA Income | -181 | -278 | -283 | 5 |
| Transfer to/from Reserves | -587 | -487 | -487 | 0 |
| Dedicated Schools Grant | -14,686 | -11,015 | -11,015 | 0 |
| Inter Authority Income | -578 | -333 | -23 | (310) |
| Rent | -104 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Income | -18,009 | -13,735 | -13,478 | (257) |
| Net Operational Expenditure | 5,626 | 2,072 | 2,415 | (343) |
| Recharges | | | | |
| Central Support Services Costs | 1,770 | 1,253 | 1,253 | 0 |
| HBC Support Costs Income | -79 | -59 | -59 | 0 |
| Premises Support Costs | 226 | 169 | 169 | 0 |
| Transport Support Costs | 209 | 145 | 145 | 0 |
| Net Total Recharges | 2,126 | 1,508 | 1,508 | 0 |
| Net Department Expenditure | 7,752 | 3,580 | 3,923 | (343) |

Comments on the above figures

Employees are showing as being over budget due to the COP Management division having a large over spend salary costs. This will be looked at during the budget setting process to ensure that the Budget Holder is aware of this pressure.

Supplies and services are currently projected to be under budget. This is across all divisions with the exception of the Inclusion division. These budgets have been monitored closely all year and budget holders are aware of the need to reduce spending and this is reflected in this budget.

Schools Transport is still showing quite a large over spend against budget. This has continued a trend of the past couple of years with the figures above are based on current projections. The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide Special Educational Needs pupils with transport and there has been a large demand for this service. All efforts are being made to try and identify where efficiencies in the service could be made.

Agency Related Expenditure is still showing spend being below budget for the year to date. This is needs led expenditure and could increase if schools require additional support from the Council.

Fees and Charges are not expected to achieve the budgeted target for the year primarily relating the budgeted income target for Excluded Pupils. As it is not in the Councils interest to exclude pupils we do not receive the required income back from schools once pupils leave. This is an ongoing financial pressure.

Reimbursements and Other Grant Income is showing a healthy over achievement of income. This is due to the Educational Psychology service being in demand and schools are buying additional hours back from them.

Inter Authority Income will not achieve its income target. This is because the Council has a reduced number of pupils in maintained schools that are from other authorities.

Budget Holders are making every effort to ensure spend is restricted where possible and kept to a minimum. Controllable budgets will be monitored closely throughout the remainder of the year, although current forecast shows the department could be overspent by approximately £0.5m by year-end.

Capital Projects as at 31st December 2017

| Capital Expenditure | 2017/18 Capital Allocation £'000 | Allocation to Date £'000 | Actual Spend £'000 | Total Allocation Remaining £'000 |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|---|
| Asset Management Data | 5 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Capital Repairs | 692 | 441 | 441 | 251 |
| Asbestos Management | 38 | 12 | 12 | 26 |
| Schools Access Initiative | 15 | 2 | 2 | 13 |
| School Modernisation Projects | 67 | 67 | 67 | 0 |
| Lunts Heath | 200 | 174 | 174 | 26 |
| Universal Infant School Meals | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Early Education for 2yr Olds | 8 | 8 | 8 | 0 |
| Hale Primary | 3 | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| Fairfield Primary School | 760 | 760 | 760 | 0 |
| Weston Point Primary | 140 | 137 | 137 | 3 |
| Kitchen Gas Safety | 50 | 0 | 0 | 50 |
| Small Capital Works | 101 | 48 | 48 | 53 |
| The Bridge School vocational centre | 15 | 0 | 0 | 15 |
| Total Capital Expenditure | 2,096 | 1,655 | 1,655 | 441 |

Comments on the above figures.

Asset Management (CADS) works, kitchen gas safety works and small capital works will continue in response or in line with any emergency Health and Safety issues. Asbestos programme surveys are being updated and remedial work carried out where necessary.

Some Capital Repairs works were completed during the Easter and Summer holiday. Remaining works are planned to be completed before financial year end.

Work has been completed on Lunts Heath classroom. Final invoices are awaited.

School modernisation project works have been completed.

Hale Primary classroom extension, Early education for 2yr olds and Universal School Meals projects are complete.

Fairfield Primary construction work to the infants and junior schools and MUGA pitch are now complete. Works have commenced to enhance the grass playing field but these cannot be completed until Spring 2018.

Weston Point classroom extension works have been completed.

A feasibility study has been carried out and tender documents are currently being prepared at The Bridge School vocational centre. Work is expected to be completed by end of August 2018.

7.2 CHILDREN AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 31 December 2017

| | Annual Budget | Budget To Date | Actual To Date | Variance to Date (Overspend) |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 |
| Expenditure | | | | |
| Employees | 8,576 | 6,264 | 6,222 | 42 |
| Premises | 264 | 155 | 148 | 7 |
| Supplies and Services | 984 | 641 | 697 | (56) |
| Transport | 6 | 4 | 77 | (73) |
| Direct Payments/Individual Budgets | 228 | 212 | 437 | (225) |
| Commissioned Services | 277 | 139 | 139 | 0 |
| Out of Borough Residential Placements | 4,112 | 2,654 | 4,469 | (1,815) |
| Out of Borough Adoption | 80 | 60 | 90 | (30) |
| Out of Borough Fostering | 834 | 370 | 1,539 | (1,169) |
| In House Adoption | 207 | 153 | 209 | (56) |
| Special Guardianship | 1,092 | 824 | 1,061 | (237) |
| In House Foster Carer Payments | 1,637 | 1,153 | 1,153 | 0 |
| Care Leavers | 188 | 157 | 143 | 14 |
| Family Support | 53 | 40 | 46 | (6) |
| Emergency Duty Team | 89 | 36 | 43 | (7) |
| Contracted Services | 4 | 2 | 3 | (1) |
| Capital Finance | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Early Years | 97 | 52 | 178 | (126) |
| Total Expenditure | 18,734 | 12,916 | 16,654 | (3,738) |
| Income | | | | |
| Adoption Placements | -45 | -23 | 0 | (23) |
| Fees and Charges | -19 | -19 | -19 | 0 |
| Sales Income | -45 | -45 | -46 | 1 |
| Rents | -87 | -43 | -43 | 0 |
| Dedicated Schools Grant | -47 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Reimbursements & Other Grant Income | -497 | -429 | -424 | (5) |
| Government Grants | -134 | -134 | -134 | 0 |
| Transfer from Reserves | -93 | -93 | -93 | 0 |
| Total Income | -967 | -786 | -759 | (27) |
| Net Operational Expenditure | 17,767 | 12,130 | 15,895 | (3,765) |
| Recharges | | | | |
| Premises Support | 358 | 268 | 268 | 0 |
| Transport Support | 47 | 34 | 34 | 0 |
| Central Support Service Costs | 2,231 | 1,651 | 1,651 | 0 |
| Net Total Recharges | 2,636 | 1,953 | 1,953 | 0 |
| Net Department Expenditure | 20,403 | 14,083 | 17,848 | (3,765) |

Comments on the above figures

The net departmental expenditure is £3.77m above budget profile at the end of the third quarter of the financial year, most of which directly relates to Social Care Services.

Expenditure relating to Employee costs is £42,000 below budget profile at the end of the third quarter. This is due to some vacancies not being backfilled whilst the recruitment process takes place. Where possible, workloads have been managed internally and agency staff have only been utilised when absolutely necessary.

Supplies and Services expenditure is above expected budget to date. Managers across the department carefully monitor this expenditure, making sure that only essential goods and services are purchased. However, included within the Supplies and Services expenditure are court costs of £127,402, which are £72,000 over budget at the end of the third quarter and are expected to be approximately £100,000 overspent at the end of the financial year. One reason for the rise in costs is due to the teams making applications for amendments to the court timetable, which cost £450 per application. Any application which is going to incur additional costs must be agreed by a Divisional Manager who will need to understand why the amendment is required and look at ways this can be avoided. These costs are difficult to control as they are dependent upon the number of court cases and the outcome of these cases. This area will continue to be a budget pressure this financial year.

Transport related expenditure is also above anticipated budget at the end of the third quarter. There has been an increased demand for this service throughout the financial year. Contracts will need to be reviewed on a regular basis to make sure that they are for essential journeys only and that the best contract price possible is being obtained.

Expenditure relating to Direct Payments/Individual Budgets is over budget profile. This is due to the demand continuing to grow in this area and the number of children coming into the service with additional complex needs is increasing. Halton Clinical Commissioning Group (HCCG) is robustly carrying out Continuing Healthcare Assessments, which has resulted in the number of joint funded packages of care reducing. Where possible, packages of care need to be regularly reviewed to see if any costs can be reduced, whilst ensuring the outcomes for the individual children are still being achieved. This continues to be a pressure area throughout the financial year.

Out of Borough Residential placement costs are significantly above budget to date and will continue to be a budget pressure for the remainder of the year. The anticipated outturn forecast for 2017/18 is estimated to be an overspend position of £2,420,000. Work continues to try and reduce the numbers and costs of placements and in quarter three there was a significant reduction in the number of children coming into the service and needing a residential placement compared to previous quarters. Going forward into quarter four and beyond for the young people who are aged 16+ and moving into semi-independent accommodation a block contract will be negotiated with one provider, which will reduce costs, as placements will no longer be negotiated on an individual basis. Other placements are being reviewed and costs are being looked at in detail alongside what the expected outcomes of the placement are. A few placements have also been identified as having some elements which could potentially be part funded with Health, so this will be looked at in greater detail and discussed with the Halton Clinical Commissioning Group. The in house residential provision, Edinburgh Road will not be utilised this financial year, so £350,000 budget has been used in quarter three to offset some of the over spend on Out of Borough Residential placements. Going forward it is hoped that Edinburgh Road will become a step down facility for children in residential care to prepare them for fostering, thus reducing residential costs further. This is a snapshot of the service at this point in time and there is a risk that additional pressures from new service users will increase overspend levels during the remainder of the financial year.

Costs relating to Out of Borough Fostering placements are also significantly over budget to date and they will continue to place pressure on the budget. The anticipated outturn forecast for 2017/18 is estimated to be £1,531,000 over budget. In quarter three, as with residential placements there was a significant reduction in the number of children coming into the service needing fostering placements compared to previous quarters. Every effort is made to utilise in house foster carers but due to the lack of available foster carers in the borough that is not always possible, therefore out of borough placements need to be sought at a higher weekly cost. As the use of in house foster carers is limited and the fostering collaboration is unlikely to be up and running this financial year, £250,000 from the in house fostering budget has been used in quarter three to offset some of the over spend on Out of Borough Fostering placements.

Expenditure relating to In House Adoption is above budget to date. This mainly relates to Residence Orders and Adoption Allowances. Residence Orders are similar to Special Guardianship Order, but the carer does not

have parental responsibility. At present there are twenty six children subject to a Residence Order, at a total cost of £1,801.98 per week. There are twelve families with a total of eighteen children receiving an adoption allowance at a total cost of £1,789.76 per week. As with Special Guardianship Orders these are made by the family court and not the council, so it is difficult to estimate how many more will be agreed throughout the financial year.

Income relating to adoption placements is underachieving against budget. It is difficult to know if/when an Out of Borough Adoption placement will be agreed, so as a result it will be difficult to predict if this income will be achieved.




Special Guardianship Orders expenditure is also over budget profile and will continue to be a budget pressure this financial year. At present there are one hundred and twenty eight children subject to a Special Guardianship Order at a total cost of £28,601.95 per week. A Special Guardian has parental responsibility until a child reaches 18 years of age and as these orders are made by the family court and not the council it is difficult to estimate how many more of them will be agreed throughout the financial year.

The Early Years net divisional expenditure is £126,500 over budget at the end of the third quarter. Expenditure relating to employee costs at the two day care centres, Warrington Road Integrated Centre and Ditton Early Years Centre is £5,600 over budget profile as a result of expenditure on agency staff. Halton Borough Council's day care centres offer full cover for 0-5 year olds between 8am to 6pm. However employees are contracted to a 37 hour week, whereas in the private sector it is 40 hours allowing them to cover this 10 hour day without the need for overtime or agency staff. Income to date is below target by £122,000; Warrington Road Integrated Centre £79,500 and Ditton Early Years Centre £42,500 are the main areas of concern and this level of underachievement is expected to continue in the final quarter of 2017/18. If full occupancy levels could be achieved, this would lead to an increase in variable costs, particularly employee costs due to statutory minimum staffing ratios required and therefore this would not be enough to produce a balanced budget. Fees had not increased since 2013/14 until a review was carried out and a £1.00 per day increase was implemented at the beginning of the new academic year which started in September. However, if the fees were to increase again to a level at which the day care centres became self-sustaining, they could find it difficult to compete with places offered in the private sector and occupancy levels could fall. Therefore this option would also not be enough to provide a balanced budget. This area needs to be carefully monitored throughout the remainder of the financial year and will continue to be a pressure area for the remainder of the year and beyond

The expected outturn position for the department to 31 March 2018 is anticipated to be circa £5m net overspend against budget, based on the current levels service demand.




8.0 Appendix I

8.1 Symbols are used in the following manner:

| Progress | | Milestone | Measure |
|----------|---|--|---|
| Green |  | Indicates that the milestone is on course to be achieved within the appropriate timeframe. | Indicates that the annual target is on course to be achieved. |
| Amber |  | Indicates that it is uncertain, or too early to say at this stage whether the milestone will be achieved within the appropriate timeframe. | Indicates that it is uncertain or too early to say at this stage whether the annual target is on course to be achieved. |
| Red |  | Indicates that it is unlikely or certain that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe. | Indicates that the target will not be achieved unless there is an intervention or remedial action taken. |

8.2 Direction of Travel indicator

Where possible measures will also identify a direction of travel using the following convention:

| | | |
|-------|---|--|
| Green |  | Indicates that performance is better compared to the same period last year. |
| Amber |  | Indicates that performance is the same as compared to the same period last year. |
| Red |  | Indicates that performance is worse compared to the same period last year. |
| N/A | | Indicates that the measure cannot be compared to the same period last year. |

8.3 Key for responsible officers:

AMc Ann McIntyre, Operational Director, Education, Inclusion and Provision Service
TC Tracey Coffey, Operational Director, Children and Families Service