

## **BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

### **CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**WEDNESDAY, 13 FEBRUARY 2019 AT 10:00 HOURS**  
**IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, COUNCIL HOUSE, VICTORIA SQUARE,**  
**BIRMINGHAM, B1 1BB**

## **A G E N D A**

### **1 NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST**

The Chairman to advise/meeting to note that this meeting will be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site ([www.civico.net/birmingham](http://www.civico.net/birmingham)) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there are confidential or exempt items.

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Members are reminded that they must declare all relevant pecuniary and non pecuniary interests arising from any business to be discussed at this meeting. If a disclosable pecuniary interest is declared a Member must not speak or take part in that agenda item. Any declarations will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

### **3 APOLOGIES**

To receive any apologies.

**3 - 12**

### **4 ACTION NOTES**

To confirm the action notes of the meetings held on the 8th January 2019 and 16th January 2019.

**13 - 50**

### **5 OFSTED INSPECTION OF CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE SERVICES**

Andrew Christie, Chair, Andy Couldrick, Chief Executive, Children's Trust and Councillor Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing in attendance.

### **6 UPDATE ON THE CHILD POVERTY ACTION FORUM**

Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, Community Safety & Equality and Suwinder Bains, Cohesion and Partnerships Manager in attendance.

7 **WORK PROGRAMME**

For discussion.

8 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 13 March 2019 at 1000 hours in Committee Room 2, The Council House.

9 **REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)**

To consider any request for call in/councillor call for action/petitions (if received).

10 **OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

To consider any items of business by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) that in the opinion of the Chairman are matters of urgency.

11 **AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS**

Chairman to move:-

'In an urgent situation between meetings, the Chairman jointly with the relevant Chief Officer has authority to act on behalf of the Committee'.

## BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

# CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (O&S)

## COMMITTEE – PUBLIC MEETING

13:00 hours on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2019, Committee Rooms 3 & 4 - Actions

---

**Present:**

Councillor Mohammed Aikhlaq (Chair)

Councillors: Diane Donaldson and Shabrana Hussain

**Also Present:**

Councillor Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing

Councillor Debbie Clancy

Councillor Ken Wood

Councillor Mary Locke, Learning, Culture and Physical Activity O&S Committee

Anne Ainsworth, Acting Corporate Director for Children and Young People

Rose Kiely, Group Overview & Scrutiny Manager

Jennifer Langan, Travel Assist Lead

Sharon Scott, Acting AD for SEND

Amanda Simcox, Scrutiny Officer

---

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillors: Charlotte Hodiola, Kerry Jenkins, Lucy Seymour-Smith and Alex Yip.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

The Chair declared that he is on the Board of Directors for the Leigh Academy Trust.

**3. REQUEST FOR CALL IN: TRAVEL ASSIST**

(See documents 1, 2 and 3)

The Chair advised Members that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss whether the Committee should, or should not, exercise its power of Call In – that is: whether to formally request that the Executive reconsiders its decision. Members of the Learning, Culture and Physical Activity O&S Committee are also invited to attend committee meetings when SEND and Travel Assist is being discussed and the Chair welcomed Councillor Mary Locke to the meeting.

Councillor Wood's reasons for the request for call in included:

- There is increasing demand and it is vital to get this right.
- There is insufficient / omitted information:
  - No risk assessment attached.
  - Does not include potential spend.
  - There are no timelines.
- There is a policy error as there should be two clear policies rather than one policy. These would assist with administering the policies and handling appeals:
  - A clear policy for distance of walking to school.
  - A clear policy for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- The policy mentions the nearest qualifying school, what about schools that are named in the Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP)?
- It does not take into account lessons from the past, for instance, Personal Transport Budgets (PTBs) are a huge issue and do not really work in a lot of cases. Also, will PTBs cover the cost of driving through the Clean Air Zone (CAZ)? In addition, the wording in the policy states an 'increased emphasis on the use of Personal Transport Budgets' and officers will therefore steer families towards PTBs.
- The policy mentions exceptional circumstances but this needs to be clearer.
- The Council is putting the 'cart before the horse' as it is consulting on a policy when it has already agreed the commissioning strategy. Travel Assist is a historically huge issue, whereby children are legally entitled to assistance which they do not always get. Therefore, there needs to be a spending risk assessment.
- There is controversy as the policy needs to put the children first. There have already been protests in Walsall regarding proposed cuts to assisted travel.

Councillor Clancy's reasons for the request for call in included:

- This is a budget led approach which is overshadowing a child led approach.
- Criteria No 5: the Executive appears to have overlooked some relevant consideration in arriving at its decision.
  - Cabinet receives a summary of performance and the EHCPs have a red flag rating. This is due to them not being assessed in a timely manner and this could have an effect on Travel Assist. This rating has been overlooked when making the decision.
- Criteria No 6: the decision has already generated particular controversy amongst those likely to be affected by it or, in the opinion of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it is likely to do so:
  - Independent travel training was discussed when Councillor Clancy was on the Education and Vulnerable Children O&S Committee. This is now being discussed again and it says this is well received by schools. Councillor Clancy queried how the Committee can measure and scrutinise whether the independent training has succeeded?
- Criteria No 8: there is a substantial lack of clarity, material inaccuracy or insufficient information provided in the report to allow the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to hold the Executive to account and/or add value to the work of the Council:

- Lack of transparency as the risk register has not been included.
- Paragraph 3.4 refers to developing more local special educational provision within the city. This is a good way forward, however, no information is given as to how this will be done. How can this then be scrutinised? For instance, what are the forecasts and will demand be met by using existing or new buildings etc?
- Criteria No 9: the decision appears to give rise to significant legal, financial or propriety issues:
  - Paragraph 3.5 refers to over 330 additional families having successfully applied for specialist transport during the 2017/18 academic year and the numbers of children being transported across the city has grown year on year. Therefore, this could happen in future years and there is not enough information on the indication of future demand.
  - PTBs in many cases do not work. This may lead to an increase in cars and congestion. Also, schools are already congested with some having only one exit/entrance. In addition does the Personal Transport Budget cover the cost for the CAZ?
  - There is no risk register attached and what is the risk methodology?
  - A lot of residents go to Councillors with help with Travel Assist and therefore where is the democracy if you remove Councillors from the stage 2 appeals process?
- The policy does not meet the Council Plan's priorities and as per Councillor Wood's point, there should be two policies.
- There is no reference in the policy that it will feed into the SEND process.
- There has already been an issue with guides and this service needs to be "child centred".

Councillor Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing and Anne Ainsworth, Acting Corporate Director for Children and Young People welcomed the opportunity to feed back to the Committee and presented the reasons for the decision and these included:

- They are looking for approval to consult on the policy and they have taken into account legal advice and best practice. They have had conversations with the barrister and it is good practice nationally to have one policy. They will discuss this as part of the consultation.
- They very much welcome early conversations and the consultation will be robust and genuine and this will shape the final policy.
- The contract has been extended 13 times and the commissioning needs to be undertaken, as per the June 2018 Cabinet report the contract expires on 31 October 2019.
- PTBs have a bad reputation in Birmingham and prior to 2010 these were not organised well. They have taken legal advice in the last 4 – 5 months and they are looking at moving more towards best practice. Some schools do have access problems and they have spoken to Head Teachers about congestion. Also, more PTBs do not necessarily mean more cars, as families can look at alternatives, such as car sharing. They cannot push families towards PTBs and they will be bespoke to the family.

- They are trying to make the policy clearer and transparent and they are working towards a more modern contract with both the policy and commissioning working in tandem.
- They are cognisant that there is an increase nationally in demand. Travel Assist is a part of the broader SEND offer and the Written Statement of Action is looking at a range of options, one being more places in the city closer to where the need is. Therefore, they are looking at a holistic offer.
- They can add into the policy that it will feed into the SEND process and the Written Statement of Action.
- Changes to the stage 2 appeals is part of the consultation and this change reflects good practice. The current arrangement was not seen as good practice by the Kerslake Review and the Birmingham Independent Improvement Panel. Also, other local authorities are surprised at the current stage 2 appeals arrangement.
- They are cognisant of the legal challenges on cuts to SEND nationally and since August they have engaged a barrister.
- Travel Assist has received a lot of media attention and they want to get this right.
- They are looking at improving the EHCP process.
- Good practice is to undertake the consultation in 28 working / school days. However, they are looking to undertake this in 32 school days and would welcome any suggestions on additional groups they could consult with.
- The aim is to improve the service and the Acting Corporate Director is more than happy to bring the requested information to scrutiny. Also, Members discussed Travel Assist at their November 2018 committee meeting and the Written Statement of Action was discussed with Rachel O'Connor, Director of Planning & Performance, Birmingham and Solihull CCG in October and they will come back to update the Committee.
- They do not want the service to be procurement driven and they can talk about different options, as mini buses are not the only solution.

The Chair highlighted that Members were still awaiting the risk assessment from the previous call in regarding the Written Statement of Action. The Acting Corporate Director stated they will provide the risk assessments and moving forward it was acknowledged they need to be taken together with the Cabinet reports.

The Cabinet Member is very keen to consult and they want to move to a new commissioning strategy in the Autumn.

Members discussed the request for call-in and it was agreed that the decision would not be called in.

**RESOLVED:**

That the decision would not be called in and a letter would be sent to the Cabinet Member expressing serious concerns regarding the proposal to change the Stage 2 Appeal Panel from a Members Panel to an Officers Panel and the risk assessment / register is to be forwarded to the Committee.

**4. REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)**

No further requests for call in had been received.

**5. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

**6. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS**

**RESOLVED:**

That in an urgent situation between meetings the Chair, jointly with the relevant Chief Officer, has authority to act on behalf of the Committee.

---

The meeting ended at 14.15 hours.





## BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

**CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (O&S)  
COMMITTEE – PUBLIC MEETING**

10:00 hours on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2019, Committee Room 2 - Actions

---

**Present:**

Councillor Mohammed Aikhlaq (Chair)

Councillors: Diane Donaldson, Shabrana Hussain, Kerry Jenkins, Kath Scott and Alex Yip

**Also Present:**

Trevor Brown, Head Of Youth Offending Service  
Rose Kiely, Group Overview & Scrutiny Manager  
Dawn Roberts, AD, Early Help  
Amanda Simcox, Scrutiny Officer

---

**1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST**

The Chairman advised that this meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site ([www.civico.net/birmingham](http://www.civico.net/birmingham)) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

The Chair declared that he is on the Board of Directors for the Leigh Academy Trust and Councillor Yip declared he is a magistrate.

**3. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair brought the item forward on the agenda and welcomed Councillor Debbie Clancy in place of Councillor Charlotte Hodivala and Councillor Kath Scott in place of Councillor Lucy Seymour-Smith as Members on the Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

Councillor Debbie Clancy and Councillor Kath Scott noted as Members on the Committee.

#### **4. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillor Debbie Clancy.

#### **5. ACTION NOTES**

(See documents 1 and 2).

##### **RESOLVED:**

- The action notes of the meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018 were confirmed.
- The action notes of the meeting held on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2018 were confirmed with the following amendments added to the notes:
  - The Cabinet Member has just been made aware that there are documents that sit behind the WSoA that provide much more detail and clarity – these include an action plan and risk register.
  - The Chair stated that there had been a lack of openness and transparency, a breakdown in communication and lessons needed to be learned.

#### **6. YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN**

(See documents 1, 2 and 3).

Dawn Roberts, AD, Early Help and Trevor Brown, Head Of Youth Offending Services attended for this item.

In discussion, and in response to Members' questions, the following were among the main points raised:

- They are preparing to bring the next Youth Justice Strategic Plan earlier – July 2019. The plan will include how many short term custodial sentences there were.
- They are measured on three national indicators:
  - First time entrants into the criminal justice system – they worked with 968 young people on court ordered and preventative programmes representing a decrease of 14.9% from 2016/17.
  - Reducing re-offending – first time entrant rate fell and they do not count community resolution.
  - Reducing the use of custody – Birmingham has a higher rate of custodial sentences than the national average, although this is within the range of other core cities (94 custodial sentences).
- Offending remains a predominantly male activity and black young men are over-represented in the criminal justice system.
- The budget is a constant challenge and they have a budget of £7.9m for the basic service. However, the total cost of remands is not met by the Youth Justice Board Remand Grant and, therefore, they have a projected overspend of £900,000 / £1m. They are working on a system wide approach, to reducing

the budget pressures, by holding back some staffing posts and working on prevention that will hopefully reduce violent and persistent crime.

- The Service continues to seek additional funding and they have been successful with a number of bids. They are also working closely with the Gangs Commission's bid writer and working collaboratively with partners.
- They are working on reducing the inappropriate use of custody and improving the custody experience.
- Offender management is a key duty for the Service.
- There is a lot more complexity with the young people having a lot more needs and therefore the assessments are more robust.
- They use a trauma based approach and work with a Psychologist, Assistant Psychologist and seven Psychology students from Birmingham University and partners, including Forward Thinking Birmingham who support this work. They also work with the Council's Educational Psychologist Service.
- A Contextual Safeguarding Board has been set-up in the Trust, as it is often the pull of peers etc. and not the family that is of concern. Therefore, they need look at extra-familial risks.
- They have to work collaboratively to reduce crime and vulnerability and they have very good relationships. Partners, such as Forward Thinking Birmingham are in the Trust and the Youth Service sits around the table.
- Criminal exploitation – 50% of young people who are being exploited are not known to the Youth Offending Service. They are raising awareness and have launched new practice guidance and a screening tool for criminal exploitation.
- They have a Sustaining Inclusion Agenda to reduce exclusions and exclusions are falling in Secondary Schools, but they have particular concerns regarding primary school exclusions. There is an Education Triage Panel who are accountable for getting excluded pupils back into school.
- Knife crime nationally is rising.
- With regards to pupils carrying knives into schools – there is a protocol in place and schools should call the Police if a pupil is carrying a knife. Some schools have purchased their own knife arches and knife wands and the Police have deployed them in four places on an ad-hoc basis.
- The Government has released guidance regarding supporting children in care and they continuously look at how the services are working together to support children in care. For instance, they work with the Virtual Head Teacher and they are increasing apprenticeships.
- Young people can be victims and perpetrators and they assess both vulnerability and risk and both are in the plans.
- In relation to setting targets, they have gone in the main for an increase of 5%.

#### **RESOLVED:**

The Committee discussed the Youth Justice Strategic Plan and requested:

- Breakdown of ethnicity (including Gypsy Roma Traveller).
- Latest re-offending data broken down to include type of offences etc.

**7. WORK PROGRAMME**

(See documents 4).

The Committee noted the agenda.

**8. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The Committee noted the next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 13 February 2019 at 1000 hours in Committee Room 2, The Council House.

**9. REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)**

None.

**10. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS**

**RESOLVED:**

That in an urgent situation between meetings the Chair, jointly with the relevant Chief Officer, has authority to act on behalf of the Committee.

**11. EXCLUSIONS OF THE PUBLIC**

That in view of the nature of the business to be transacted which includes exempt information of the category indicated the public be now excluded from the meeting:-

Exempt Paragraph 3

The Committee agreed the resolution.

**PRIVATE AGENDA**

**12. ACTION NOTES**

(See document 5).

Councillor Alex Yip queried whether the request for call in regarding the Written Statement of Action (WSOA) discussion should have been in public (the Executive had stated that the report was private due to 'embargoed/subject to an obligation of confidentiality').

The action notes for the private part of the meeting held on the 17th December 2018 were agreed.

**13. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS (EXEMPT INFORMATION)**

None.

---

The meeting ended at 11.25 hours.

# Birmingham City Council

## Inspection of children's social care services

**Inspection dates: 3 December 2018 to 14 December 2018**

**Lead inspector: Pauline Higham**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Grade</b>
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Requires improvement to be good
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Requires improvement to be good
The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers	Requires improvement to be good
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement to be good

The local authority, the shadow board, and since its inception in April 2018, Birmingham Children's Trust (BCT), have made progress from a low base in improving the quality of services to children and families. They have made good use of monitoring visits since the 2016 inspection, and many of the recommendations for improvement from that inspection have been acted on effectively. The delegation of statutory functions to BCT has enabled the re-vitalisation of both practice and working culture, and, as a result, progress has been made in improving the experiences and progress of children.

Considerable and focused work has resulted in a more effective response to the needs of children and families at the point of contact. Significant improvements now ensure that all domestic abuse incidents are evaluated quickly and that there is clear identification of and an effective response to child protection issues. Most children in care live in stable placements, but for some children where adoption is not planned, there is delay in achieving permanence. Young people who are leaving care and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children receive a good service that meets their needs and ensures that they receive support to thrive and become independent.

While improvements are evident, these are not yet resulting in consistently good services or social work practice. In some areas gaps remain, along with a lack of pace for

improvement. The quality of partnership working across agencies has not improved at a fast enough pace, and police support in a small minority of cases is inconsistent. Long-standing concerns over the efficacy of legal services have not been resolved, and this has contributed to a lack of assurance and trust in the service by the judicial system. This means that, for some children, social work assessments and care plans are not acceptable to the court.

Birmingham city council virtual school leaders do not have a clear enough understanding of the progress made by children in care over time. This is because systems to monitor pupils' progress have not provided them with sufficient information about how well pupils are progressing from their starting points.

BCT has improved their evaluation of performance overall, but gaps remain in their understanding of the effectiveness of the fostering service.

BCT are aware of all these issues but accept that further work is required in order to ensure that all services are consistently good for all children.

## **What needs to improve**

- The quality, effectiveness and pace of partnership working with external agencies, including partner-led early help services.
- Trust and confidence between the courts and BCT.
- Effectiveness of the fostering service.
- Robust and timely focus on all permanence options for children.
- Alignment of the approach to contextual safeguarding.
- The impact of the virtual school in improving provision for children in care.

## **The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection requires improvement to be good**

1. A growing number of children in Birmingham are beginning to benefit from early help services provided by better engaged partner agencies. However, the quality of assessments completed by partners requires improvement and BCT has yet to make any significant impact on ensuring that partners better understand the purpose of good-quality assessments. This means that, in some instances, early intervention is ineffective, leading to inappropriate escalation to BCT internal family support services. Children are not yet receiving a consistent response from partner agencies in order to improve their experiences or progress.
2. Children were not found to be in situations of unassessed or unmanaged risk. Referral thresholds are appropriate for most children. Partners are co-located and effectively engaged in the Children's Advice and Support Service/Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (CASS/MASH), which ensures that arrangements are in place to share information and safeguard children. Re-referral rates are above the national average, and children's circumstances are not always improved or being sustained as a result of recent interventions. BCT recognised that some children would have benefited from step down to early help support rather than their cases being closed.
3. A small minority of decisions to step down children's cases are made with insufficient information and without full consideration of historical information and the cumulative impact that this has had on the child. During the inspection, BCT took immediate action to address this, with an assurance that all agency checks will now be completed before cases leave CASS/MASH.
4. Police triage of domestic abuse notifications is effective, with a quality control in place to ensure that early help intervention is considered for lower level

need. Where children have specific needs, for example needs relating to homelessness, child sexual exploitation and domestic abuse, these are quickly identified, and workers effectively use relevant assessment and intervention tools to assess and address risk to children.

5. Work to tackle the risks posed to children from child sexual exploitation and going missing are, in most cases, well addressed by assessment and short-term intervention (ASTI) and safeguarding teams, but this is not consistently the case. Multi-agency sexual exploitation meetings provide a good forum for sharing information. However, alongside child sexual exploitation risk assessments and return home interviews, these meetings are not consistently used to best effect to shape children's plans.
6. The majority of child protection enquires are thorough and evidence multi-agency contribution, informing appropriate decisions about next steps. In a small minority of cases where agreements to undertake joint s47 enquiries were made, the police did not subsequently attend with social workers. This means that families in complex situations were not always fully supported by an appropriate multi-agency response. Strategy meetings are appropriately held, but not all relevant agencies attend. This limits their effectiveness in the sharing of information that informs planning and decision-making for children.
7. BCT designated officer arrangements to manage allegations against professionals and persons in positions of trust are robust, timely and well recorded. The interface between the designated officers and key partners results in good sharing of information and swift decision-making. Action plans to protect children and coordinate multi-agency responses are clear, time bound and subject to effective review.
8. Assessments carried out by the ASTI service are completed within children's timescales, and, in most cases, are thorough, exploring background history, presenting issues and information from partners. When analysing children's needs, social workers make effective use of practice methodology, clearly identifying risk and protective factors, danger statements and safety goals that appropriately inform future actions. Management overview is evident, and the majority of assessments contain clear rationale for recommended action that is proportionate to children's levels of need.
9. Effective management arrangements and close working relationships between Family Support and ASTI teams underpin well-managed step up and step down practice. However, the rationale for requesting children's cases to step up from family support to social work assessment teams is not always clear.
10. Within family support teams, thresholds are applied appropriately and assessments are completed within the child's timescales. Family support plans are thorough but are not always clear enough so that the desired impact,



timescale for change to take place and outcomes for the child are easily understood by families.

11. Child protection and child in need plans are consistently in place and contain appropriate actions that are used to progress work that improves experiences and progress for children. Plans are not always clear enough, meaning that parents do not always understand what needs to change, and by when, to improve their child's circumstances.
12. A small minority of children remain on a child protection plan for too long, without the necessary changes being made to improve their experiences. For these children, management oversight to challenge the lack of progress in making sustained change has been ineffective.
13. Core group meetings and child in need review meetings are held regularly and are mostly well attended. They are not always promptly recorded, or minutes distributed to ensure that all parties are clear about what actions are required. Better quality work shows where children are making measurable progress.
14. BCT services for disabled children in need have improved since the last inspection. For example, children are seen regularly and receive services that meet their needs.
15. In most cases, private fostering assessments take significantly too long to complete, meaning that BCT cannot be fully assured that such arrangements are suitable. Despite this, in most cases, children's experiences and progress have improved because of the private fostering arrangement.
16. BCT edge of care service is impressive and delivers good-quality, successful personalised interventions. An absolute focus on engagement with families has increased the number of children in receipt of this service who do not enter care subsequently. Edge of care workers undertake effective practice with families and children to bring about lasting change. Families value the service and inspectors saw feedback from families that noted significant satisfaction with service delivery and outcomes.
17. Homeless young people who are 16 and 17 years old receive swift and well-targeted support that includes a wide range of suitable accommodation options. This is supported by effective assessments and often tenacious and skilful work to engage young people.
18. Systems to identify and track children missing from education are effective. Robust risk assessment processes ensure that immediate attention is directed to the most vulnerable children. Workers use a wide range of appropriate information sources to try and establish the whereabouts of the child.

19. The local authority fulfils its responsibilities for the provision of children who are electively home educated, and appropriate safeguarding measures are in place. There are clear processes in place for schools to refer any cases of electively home educated children to the local authority. Leaders analyse referrals and effective action is taken if, for example, they identify a situation of a school potentially off-rolling.

## **The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers requires improvement to be good**

20. Children enter care appropriately. Once in care, most children enjoy timely support and frequent visits from social workers who know them well.
21. Decision-making for a minority of children demonstrates a history of missed opportunities to intervene effectively to improve their circumstances. Some current delays for a small number of these children are compounding their previous experience.
22. BCT does not yet have a clear focus on permanence for children outside of adoption. Practice to secure permanence for children lacks pace and maturity. While practitioners and managers have an improving focus, the impact of this on outcomes for children remains inconsistent. For example, parallel planning for children to achieve permanence is not routinely considered or used by social workers.
23. The quality of legal advice available to social workers and managers has been inconsistent and has not ensured that children routinely benefit from swift, purposeful and decisive action when they need to come into care. While more effective decision-making is beginning to be evident, this is not yet sufficiently widespread. The introduction of a legal tracker tool has yet to routinely identify and remedy drift and delay for children through the pre-proceedings stage.
24. The quality of social work practice within the Public Law Outline is not consistently good and can add to delay for some children. Letters before proceedings explain to families what issues are of concern but fail to explain what impact these issues are having on the child. This limits families' understanding of professionals' concerns and of what needs to change. The quality of recent social work assessments in care proceedings is beginning to improve, and this has been recognised by the local judiciary and the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass).
25. The voice of the children in care is given high priority and is consistently well considered by social workers. Children are seen regularly and are seen alone by their social workers, including those children placed out of the Birmingham area. This means that children are able to develop meaningful and trusting relationships with their social workers.

26. Social workers are actively engaged in doing direct work with children, which helps them to understand what is happening to them. This is not always recorded well, meaning that important information about children's histories and experiences are not available to them.
27. Children are actively encouraged to participate in their reviews. Most young people reported positively on the availability of independent reviewing officers (IROs) and described sustained and positive relationships with them. Children benefit from the impact of IRO scrutiny and oversight. This is consistently demonstrated in case records and is beginning to contribute to swifter decision-making to achieve permanence for children. IROs are beginning to escalate cases appropriately, and, while there are low numbers of escalations, this is helping to improve care planning for children.
28. The quality of children's reviews and subsequent care plans is improving, although senior leaders recognise that the specificity of plans requires further refining and improvement. Children's needs are, for the majority, well identified, and plans are becoming more outcome-focused to care for their needs holistically. Risk to children, including child sexual exploitation, is mostly well identified and care plans reflect risk-reducing strategies that help young people keep themselves safe.
29. Advocacy is not routinely considered for children and their families and this limits their access to independent advice and representation.
30. Young people are positive about changes in practice since the shadow board arrangements and the inception of BCT. They say that there are now fewer changes of social worker and IROs than previously and that senior leaders are accessible and listen to their views. Young people reported that when the Children in Care Council raise concerns or make suggestions, changes are made more quickly than previously.
31. Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children receive responses that are swift, comprehensive and highly effective. Young people are placed in supported accommodation in a timely and well-planned manner, with education, health and home office arrangements immediately addressed by dedicated and committed workers.
32. Children seen during the inspection were living in appropriate placements that met their needs, with evidence of improved experiences and progress. Most children are matched with suitable and experienced carers. BCT recognises the need to recruit specialist foster carers as well as carers who have the skills to provide care for teenagers.
33. When children's placements end unexpectedly, disruption meetings are not always held, and this does not enable effective information-sharing or

facilitate better planning for individual children. Learning from disruptions is not understood or shared within the service in order to help children more widely.

34. Children seen during the inspection who were placed in emergency duty team (EDT) placements were not well matched, and information-sharing with the foster carers about the needs of the children was limited. The use of EDT placements, their quality and the appropriateness of matching is not effectively evaluated or monitored. This means that BCT are not assured that these placements meet the diverse needs of children.
35. When children in care have been missing, including those placed in other local authority areas, they are always offered a return home interview. This is a real improvement. Take-up of interviews by children in care is also improving, although less than half of young people are interviewed, and some were not seen in a timely way. This limits professionals' understanding of risks and their ability to plan to mitigate risks effectively.
36. Children's social workers, independent reviewing officers and team managers, through their supervision, show a good awareness of child sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation, in particular gang affiliation. However, the quality and impact of work to address these issues are not consistently good. For example, return home interviews are not always included in children's electronic case files, and when they are, it is not clear how they have been used to shape plans or interventions.
37. Children in care who have a plan to return to the care of their birth families experience a carefully planned and well-managed transition. Comprehensive parenting assessments help to ensure that such decisions are made safely and are in the best interests of the child. On return to their birth families, the welfare of children is well monitored by social workers and partners.
38. Children whose permanence plan is adoption receive an effective and mostly timely service. Children's permanence reports are thorough. Contact arrangements are thoughtful and well managed. Foster-to-adopt is not routinely considered or pursued by social workers. For some children, this is a missed opportunity to promote early attachments and avoid delay in them achieving permanence.
39. For some children, where adoption is not the permanence plan, there is delay in achieving permanence within the child's timescales. For some children in long-term foster placements, these have not yet been formally confirmed as children's permanent homes. Stability for these children in order to allow them to develop and sustain permanent attachments is not being achieved in a timely way. Children's case records were not able to evidence matching rationale for long-term matches and do not easily evidence child-focused decisions.

40. BCT is not currently evaluating placement stability, success and disruptions in relation to children's experience and progress in their foster homes. This was identified in the September 2016 SIF inspection and remains a challenge for the fostering service. BCT cannot therefore be assured that all children are living in a placement that continues to meet their individual needs. BCT responded with urgency to the issues raised by inspectors and expedited the appointment of a senior manager to progress this area of work.
41. While the quality of life-story work is good, the initiation of this work is not sufficiently timely. Too many children do not have life-story work completed in a timely way. This means that carers do not have a comprehensive and accessible account of a child's life and children themselves do not have the opportunity to understand their experiences and histories.
42. Children in care receive good access to health and dental services and these are well prioritised by social workers. Health passports are now being introduced and disseminated to children in care following a co-production with the children in care council (CICC) and care leavers' forum (CLF). Children in care receive good access to mental health services and are well supported by therapeutic and emotional support services.
43. The quality of education for children in care is not consistently good. End of key stage outcomes for children in care are typically low when compared with other pupils nationally. At the end of key stage 2 in 2018, pupils made noticeably better progress than the previous year, particularly in relation to reading and mathematics. However, at key stage 4, children in care mostly progress similarly to other children in care nationally, although grades are low, especially for boys.
44. Effective support is provided for the growing number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. This support helps them to settle quickly into education and reduces their barriers to learning. The guidance in place for care leavers is strong and helps them to achieve their aims and next steps in education, employment or training.
45. The virtual school's work to reduce permanent exclusion of children in care has been successful and there have not been any permanent exclusions of children in care in the last academic year.
46. The virtual school has worked effectively to overhaul the e-Personal Education Plan system, with the overall quality of Personal Education Plans starting to improve. Until recently, the virtual school did not evaluate its work with enough rigour to check that its actions were bringing about intended improvements. This is now improving, and collaboration and sharing of information between different teams is proving beneficial and helping to meet the needs of vulnerable pupils more swiftly. The attendance of children in

care at school has declined overall this year. This has not been analysed sufficiently well and is not understood by leaders. The virtual school headteacher has invested time, with growing success, in developing systems of support for children in care across groups of schools.

47. Care leavers receive a strong service that makes a positive difference to their well-being and prospects. Personal advisors do well at keeping in touch with care leavers, often going 'the extra mile' to build relationships with more challenging or difficult to reach young people. BCT successfully ensures that a good range of suitable accommodation options are available for care leavers and that the numbers who are in education, employment or training continue to rise from a low base. Pathway plans are reviewed regularly, and they effectively reflect young people's current needs and circumstances. The BCT offer to care leavers is strong and provides a broad range of good-quality advice and information about services to care leavers.

### **The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families requires improvement to be good**

48. BCT, the local authority, leaders and staff know themselves well and are building on progress to date in order to achieve lasting change. They have shown a dogged determination to ensure a focus on the well-being, safety and improving outcomes of children in Birmingham.
49. Sufficient improvements have been made to ensure that BCT initial point of contact response to the needs of children and families is robust and in the majority of cases effective. BCT acknowledges that further work is needed to reduce the rates of re-referrals. Following analysis, several measures have been introduced to address this. While all children who need one now have a plan, which was not the case at the last inspection, the quality of plans requires improvement if they are to be fully effective. This will be progressed through a BCT practice evaluation approach. BCT has sustained the quality of services for children in care and improved those services for children with an adoption plan and young people leaving care. Most children in care are living in stable, safe placements. BCT knows that permanence planning for children who are not being adopted needs to improve and plans to address this with several initiatives to include embedding family group meetings, family placement transformation and a joint system review with the judiciary. Young people who are leaving care and unaccompanied asylum seekers receive a good-quality service and there are notable improvements in the numbers of those aged 19–21 in education, training or employment since the last inspection.
50. BCT has developed a quality assurance system and performance information database that enables it to measure and track performance in the majority of service areas. This enables senior leaders to track progress against targets

and identify effectively where further work is required in almost all areas. BCT has been able to produce a good-quality evaluation of its own effectiveness that has identified the vast majority of areas where improvements had been made as well as those areas where more progress is needed. Evaluation of performance has improved overall, but gaps remain, particularly in relation to understanding the effectiveness of the fostering service.

51. A well-developed case audit format enables a focus on the quality of practice, but not all managers are routinely completing these and there remain inconsistencies in the quality of audits.
52. Virtual school leaders do not have a clear enough understanding of the progress made by children in care over time. This is because their systems to monitor pupils' progress have not provided them with sufficient information about how well pupils are progressing from their starting points. Leaders do not gather and analyse information from schools quickly enough or use it effectively to identify and rectify weaknesses with provision. This had been recognised by leaders, who have begun to address this issue and have recently introduced a new assessment process which should provide a more accurate picture of pupils' achievement.
53. BCT has undertaken much work to engage positively with both Cafcass and the judiciary. Both acknowledge recent improvements in the overall quality of work presented to the courts. They also report that inconsistencies in the quality of work presented result in a high number of court requests for independent social work assessments. An enduring lack of trust and confidence between the courts and social care means that too many assessments are rejected by the courts. This is de-moralising and, in some cases, leaves BCT with orders inappropriate for the child's circumstances. These issues have yet to be resolved.
54. BCT has worked hard with police and other partners to enhance the quality and efficacy of services for children and young people at risk from child sexual exploitation, going missing from home or care and criminal exploitation, including gang affiliation. Despite this, measures to better align work around child sexual exploitation, children going missing, children missing education and wider contextual safeguarding are still at a relatively early stage. BCT is aware that this needs to be strengthened further, along with making stronger links to information about children missing education and being persistently absent. Data and intelligence are not consistently used proactively or to best effect to move from a predominantly reactive to a more proactive response. BCT and West Midlands police have only very recently jointly appointed a data analyst to help progress this work, but it is too early to measure their impact.
55. The workforce profile has significantly improved since the last inspection and progress has been accelerated by BCT. Development of staff is a priority and

a comprehensive and focused approach contributes to staff having the right core skills. Average caseloads have reduced. Social workers and social care staff are proud of where they work and what they do to help children. Use of agency staff has significantly reduced as has the rate of staff turnover. Staff are enthusiastic about working for BCT and are keen to demonstrate their commitment to improvement.

56. The voice of the child is often well represented across the Trust and in social work records and reports. CICC and CLF are dynamic and active, reporting positively about what they see as better engagement with them by BCT. This includes the visibility of senior managers, their ability to be actively engaged in the appointment of senior staff and the opportunity to discuss issues that are important to them.
57. The local authority has proportionate scrutiny arrangements in place to ensure that they fulfil their role as the corporate parent. Corporate parenting board members actively engage with children and social workers in order to understand and influence children's circumstances. BCT and the board have ensured that a 'Birmingham Pledge' is in place, based on what children in care told them is most important to them.





The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2018





# **Report to OCG**

## **Contract Key Performance Indicators of Birmingham Children's Trust**

### **December 1st– 31st 2018**

---



No.	Indicator
<b>KPI 1</b>	% of all referrals with a decision within 24 hours
<b>KPI 2</b>	% of re-referrals to children's social care within 12 months
<b>KPI 3</b>	% assessments completed within 45 working days
<b>KPI 4</b>	Child in Need cases open for more than 2 years
<b>KPI 5</b>	% Initial CP Conferences (ICPCs) held within 15 working days
<b>KPI 6</b>	% of children who become the subject of a CP plan for a second or subsequent time within the last 2 years
<b>KPI 7</b>	% of children (under 16 years) who have been looked after for 2.5 years or more, and in the same placement (or placed for adoption) continuously for 2 years or more
<b>KPI 8</b>	% of looked after reviews held on time
<b>KPI 9</b>	% of care leavers who are in Education, Employment, and Training (EET)
<b>KPI 10</b>	Average time between the LA receiving court authority to place a child and deciding on a match (A2)
<b>KPI 11</b>	% of young offenders that re-offend
<b>KPI 12</b>	% of agency social workers (including team managers)
<b>KPI 13</b>	% child protection plans ending within 3 months or less
<b>KPI 14</b>	Average caseload of qualified social workers
<b>KPI 15</b>	% of social workers who have had supervision (in month)
<b>Bi-monthly</b>	Practice Quality: Audit and Evaluation Report, setting out what PE/Audit/Review work has been done in the period, and the outcomes/impact

## 1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To provide contractual performance information.

## 2. Background

2.1 The contractual and performance of Birmingham Children's Trust is monitored monthly through the Operational Commissioning Group.

2.2 BCT went live on April 1<sup>st</sup> 2018.

2.3 Information contained within this report will include all 15 of the Key Performance Indicators judged against target, tolerance, trend chart and narrative from operational staff.

2.5 The performance information relates to the period 1<sup>st</sup> to 31st December 2018.



## Comparisons of headline rates per capita to published statistics

Rate per 10000	Latest published statistics				
	Dec-18	Birmingham	SN	National	WM
		Mar-18			
Referrals	492 (Rolling 12M)	605	685	553	649
Assessments completed	503 (Rolling 12M)	513	660	532	569
Children subject to S47 enquiries	152(Rolling 12 M)	159	241	167	192
Children subject of an ICPC	63 (Rolling 12 M)	64	94	67	76
Children in Need	295	312	410	341	369
Children with a CP Plan	43	41	61	45	47
Children in Care	67	67	77	64	78

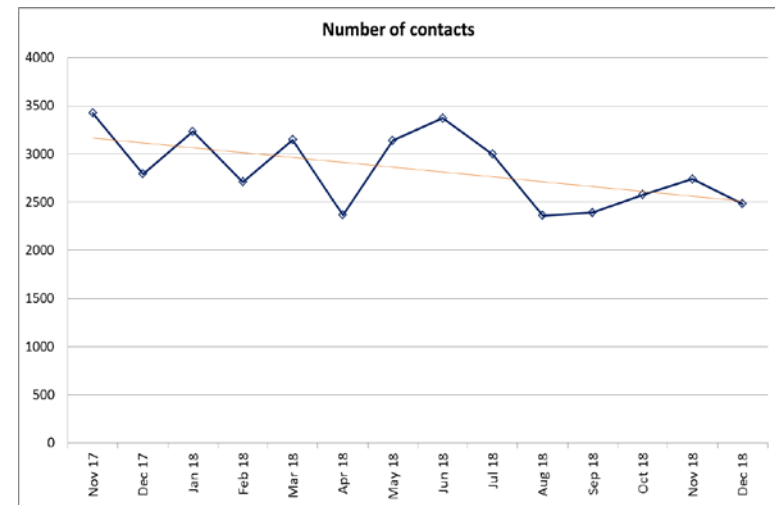


## Number of contacts received: CASS

No of contacts	Prev. 12 months	Dec-18
	average	
	2,818	2,482

### Commentary

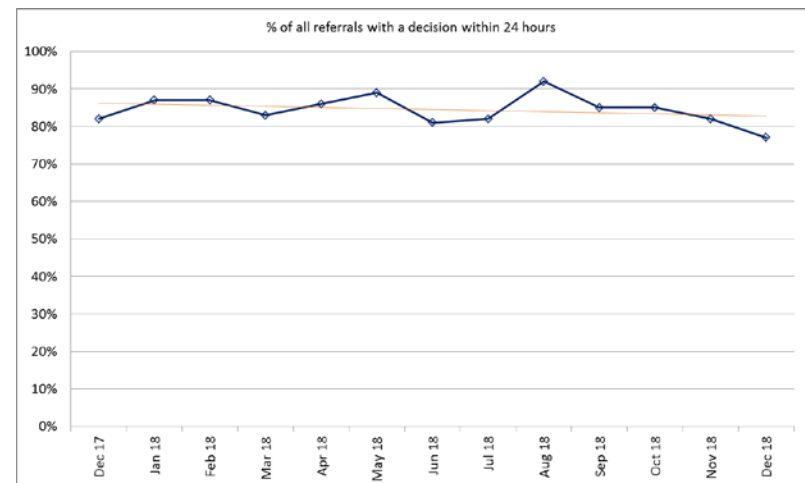
The number of contacts received has been reducing over the past 12 months. There are seasonal variations during school holidays where numbers being referred from schools decline, but start to increase again from the beginning of term. This month saw a further reduction in contacts but that may be linked to the holiday period.



Performance Indicator 1	% of referrals with a decision within 24 hours Good = High/Increasing	Target 18/19 85%	Tolerance 75 - 95%
		Prev. 12 months cumulative	Dec-18
Referrals with a decision within 24 hours		9,736	423
Total Referrals Authorised		11,456	548
% of all referrals with a decision within 24 hours		85%	77%

## Commentary

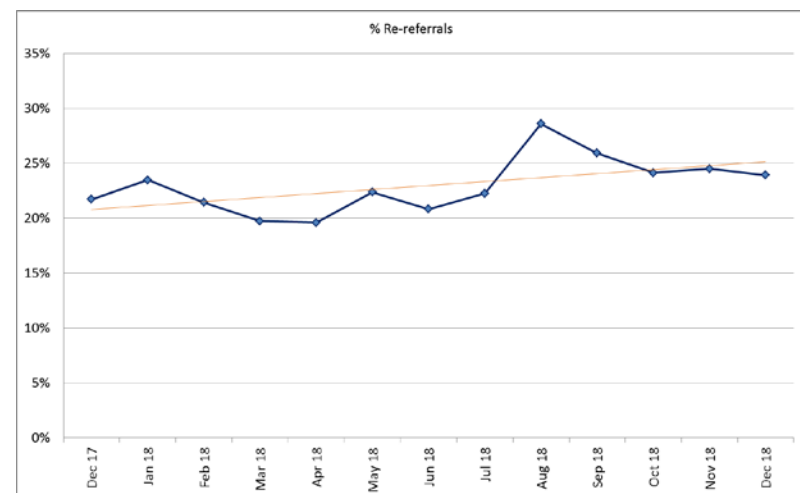
There has been a reduction in performance. There is now a greater focus on the quality of lateral checks to ensure appropriate decision making and to support fewer inappropriate referrals and re-referrals. This indicator remains within tolerance. This means that children are receiving a timely response when they are first referred to the Trust.



Performance Indicator 2	% of re-referrals to children's social care within 12 months Good = Low/Decreasing	Target 18/19 21%	Tolerance 17-24%
		Prev. 12 months cumulative	Dec-18
No. re-referrals		3,289	216
Total Referrals Initiated		14,513	903
Re-referrals %		23%	24%

## Commentary

Extensive work has been completed to understand why re-referrals have previously exceeded the target. An increased focus on practice oversight has resulted in the number of children referred for a second or subsequent time reducing and remaining within tolerance. We continue to have a number of measures in place to support improvements in practice in this area, both to assure ourselves that we do not close cases too soon, and to ensure that we do not intervene in family life unnecessarily.



National average	22%
Statistical Neighbours average	23%

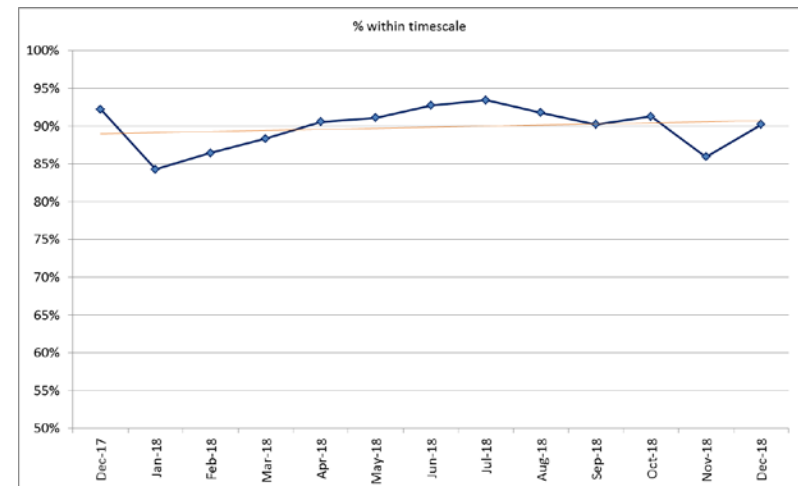




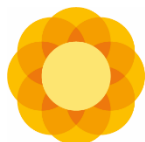
<b>Performance Indicator 3</b>	<b>% of assessments completed within 45 working days</b> <b>Good = High/Increasing</b>	<b>Target 18/19</b> <b>85%</b>	<b>Tolerance</b> <b>80-90%</b>
		<b>Prev. 12 months average</b>	<b>Dec-18</b>
No. inside		1,091	811
No. outside		126	88
Total		1,217	899
% Inside		90%	90%

## Commentary

The rate of assessments being completed within 45 days has improved this month. Performance remains above target, statistical neighbours and the national average. Regular sampling of assessments helps us to understand the quality of assessments. This is an improving area.



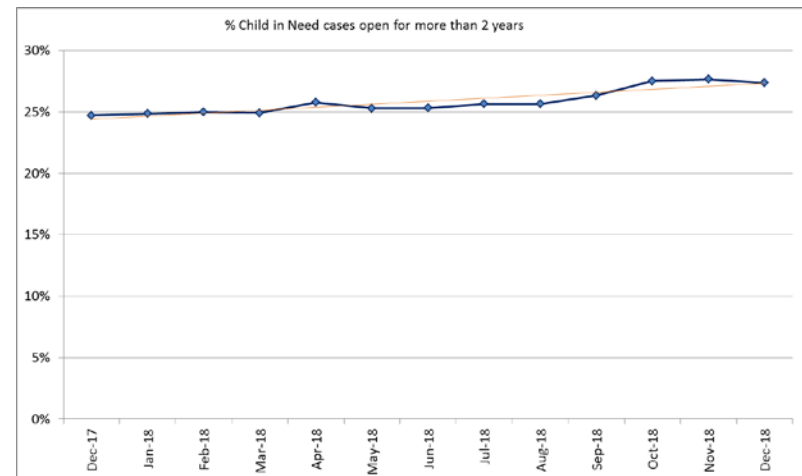
National Average	83%
Statistical Neighbours Average	83%



Performance Indicator 4	Child in need cases open for more than 2 years Good = Low/Stable	Target 18/19 30%	Tolerance 24-36%
		Prev. 12 months average	Dec-18
Total of CIN cases open for more than 2 years		2,210	2,161
Total Number of CIN Cases		8,801	7,897
% of Child in Need cases open for more than 2 years		26%	27%

## Commentary

Performance is stable and remains within tolerance. We are always likely to have a lower than national average of open children in need cases, as we have a strong Family Support service working with families below the statutory threshold.



National Average	31%
Statistical Neighbours Average	30%



Performance Indicator 5	% Initial CP Conferences (ICPCs) held within 15 working days Good = High/Increasing	Target 18/19 80%	Tolerance 75-85%
At least one visit in a month		Prev. 12 months average	Dec-18
Number of ICPC's held within 15 working days		128	46
Number of ICPC's		158	51
% of ICPC's held within 15 working days		81%	90%

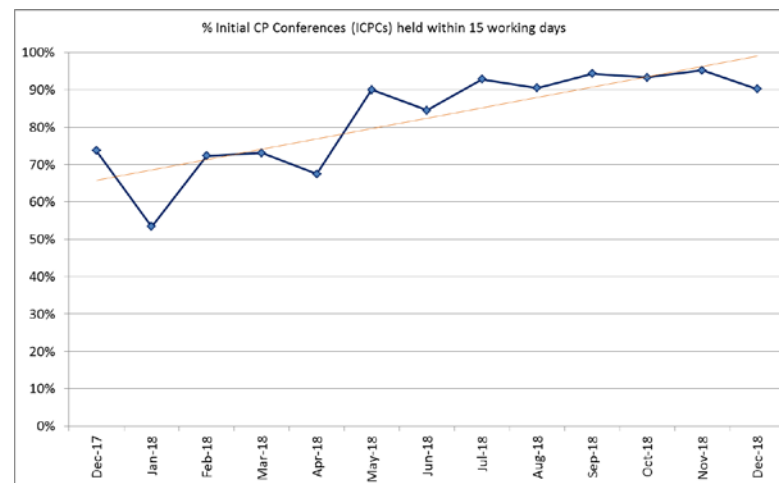
## Commentary

We continue to exceed the upper tolerance which indicates very good performance. The rolling 12 month figure continues to improve.

We are currently performing better than the national average and our statistical neighbours.

Significant work has taken place to ensure that initial child protection conferences take place within 15 working days of the decision.

We have put measures in place to maintain this target and we continue to closely monitor performance.



National Average	77%
Statistical Neighbours Average	81%

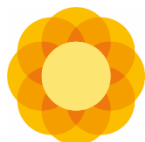
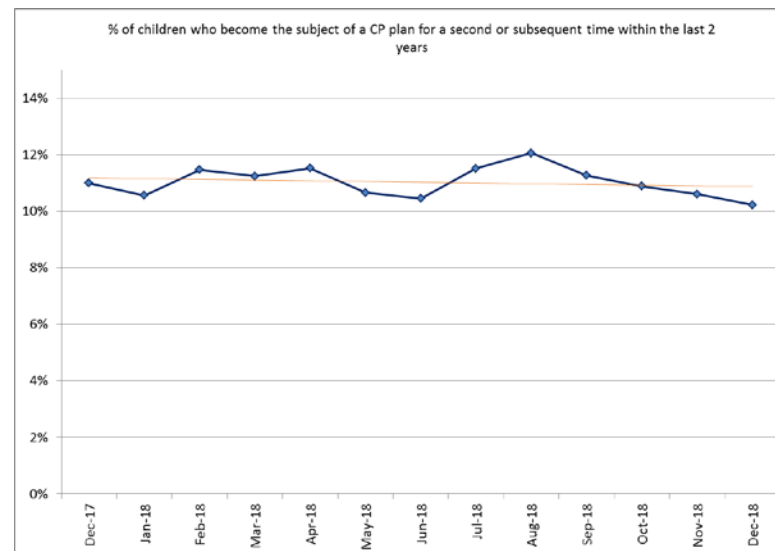


Performance Indicator 6	% of children who become the subject of a CP plan for a second or subsequent time within the last 2 years Good = Low/Decreasing	Target 18/19 12%	Tolerance 9-14%
		Prev. 12 months average	Dec-18
Number of children on a CP Plan		1,752	1,820
Number of children who become the subject of a CP plan for a second or subsequent time within the last 2 years		195	186
% of children who become the subject of a CP plan for a second or subsequent time within the last 2 years		11%	10%

## Commentary

Performance in this area is stable. A lower number indicates that multi-agency child protection intervention is becoming more effective in preventing a second or subsequent period of CP planning .

This indicator is monitored monthly by examining individual children's situations and collating results to identify trends. We understand the issues leading to children having repeat CP plans and are working across the Trust and partnership to ensure more robust long-term support is in place for children stepping down from CP.



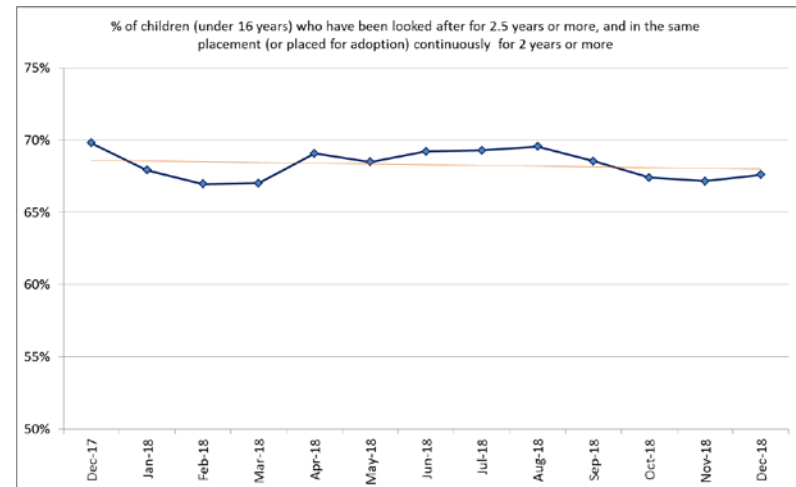
<b>Performance Indicator 7</b>	<b>% of children (under 16 years) who have been looked after for 2.5 years or more, and in the same placement (or placed for adoption) continuously for 2 years or more</b>	<b>Target 18/19 65%</b>	<b>Tolerance 62-69%</b>
	<b>Good = High/Increasing</b>		

	Prev. 12 months average	Dec-18
Looked after > 2.5 years, same placement > 2 yrs, or placed for adoption	472	463
Total Children	691	685
%	68%	68%

## Commentary

This is a long-term indicator that should not vary greatly month by month. We are performing above target, and remain within tolerance. However, we are below our statistical neighbours and the national average. Attention is being paid to this area as we increase our focus on permanence planning for children in care.

The majority of children in care experience stable, long term placements.



National Average	70%
Statistical Neighbours Average	69%



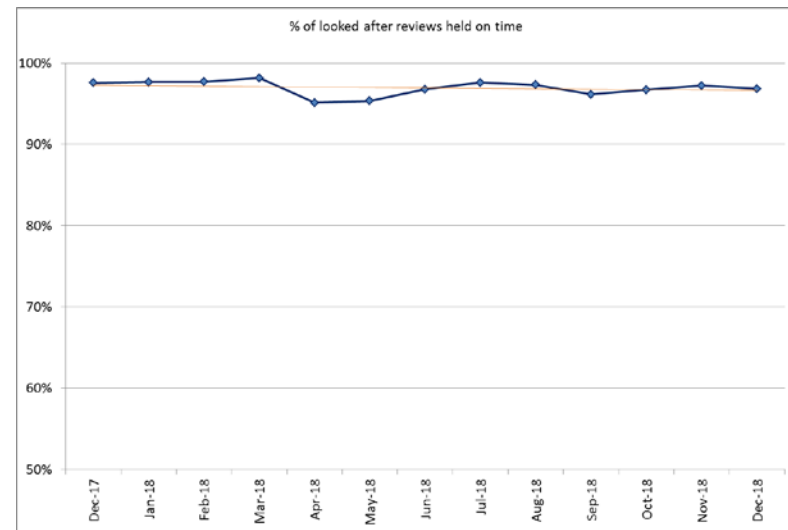
<b>Performance Indicator 8</b>	<b>% of looked after reviews held on time</b> <b>Good = High/Increasing</b>	<b>Target 18/19</b> <b>96%</b>	<b>Tolerance</b> <b>86-100%</b>
--------------------------------	--	-----------------------------------	------------------------------------

	Prev. YTD	Dec-18
<b>In Time (YTD)</b>	3,198	3,513
<b>Total LAC Reviews (YTD)</b>	3,289	3,628
<b>%</b>	97%	97%

### Commentary

Performance in this area is stable and remains within tolerances, exceeding the target again this month. There is ongoing work to ensure both the timeliness of reviews and the recording of the meetings.

The vast majority of children have their care plans reviewed in a timely way. This is good practice. We continue to review the 3% of children who have not received their reviews on time to understand why this is the case and we take action if necessary.



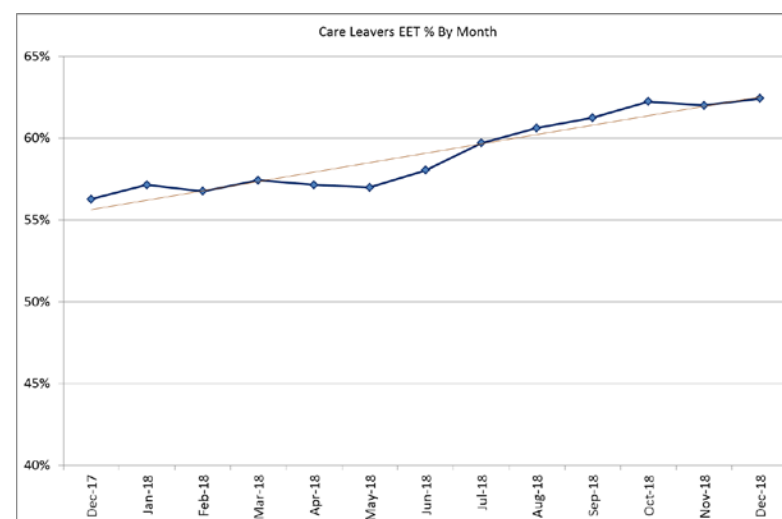
<b>Performance Indicator 9</b>	<b>% of care leavers who are in Education, Employment and Training (EET)</b> <b>Good = High/Increasing</b>	<b>Target 18/19</b> <b>55%</b>	<b>Tolerance</b> <b>50-80%</b>
--------------------------------	---	-----------------------------------	-----------------------------------

	Prev. YTD	Dec-18
Care leavers in EET (YTD)	261	305
Total care leavers (YTD)	421	479
EET %	62%	64%

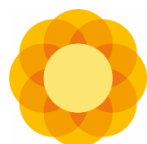
## Commentary

Performance continues to improve in this area. This is an area of good practice. We are performing better than statistical neighbours and the national average.

Work continues to maintain performance and to ensure that care leavers have the best possible opportunities to access education, employment and training.



National average	51%
Statistical Neighbours average	52%



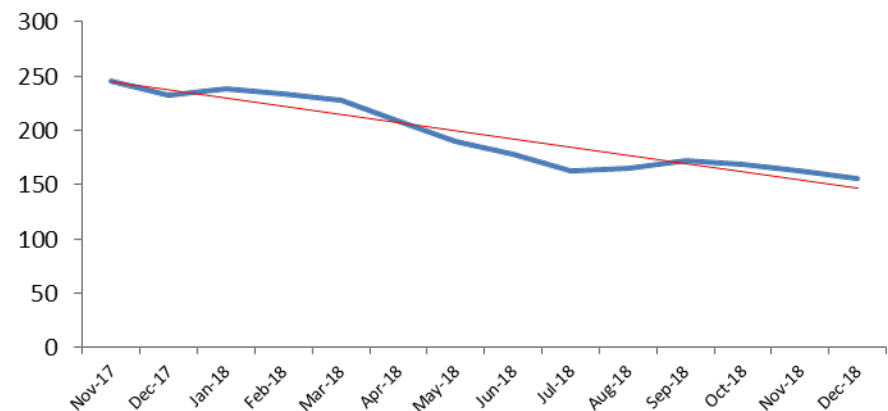
<b>Performance Indicator 10</b>	<b>Average time between LA receiving court authority to place a child &amp; deciding on a match (A2)</b> <b>Good = Low/Decreasing</b>	<b>Target 18/19</b> <b>240 days</b>	<b>Tolerance</b> <b>220-260 days</b>
---------------------------------	--	--	---

	<b>3 Years Average</b>	<b>Dec-18 (Rolling 12 Mon)</b>
<b>Average no. of days taken to match decision</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>156</b>

## Commentary

Performance on the three year figure is within tolerance whilst the rolling 12 month figure is considerably better than target. Our 3 years average is now better than statistical neighbours. As the graph shows, there has been a sustained and significant improvement in performance over the last 12 months which reflects an improved adoption offer.

Despite some challenges in the timeliness of court care proceedings, children are matched to their adopters quickly. This is good practice.



National Average (2017)	220
Statistical Neighbours Average (2017)	252





Performance Indicator 11	% young offenders that re-offend within 1 year Good = Low/Decreasing	Target 18/19 45%	Tolerance 30-60%
		Oct 15-Sept 16	Jan 2018 – Dec 2018
Re-Offenders		401	383
Cohort		1110	1109
%		36.1%	34.5%

### Commentary

Data comes from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), reported in August 2018. Performance is reported every 3 months and aggregated for a 12 month cohort. The cohort consists of all young people who received a pre-court or court disposal or were released from custody in a 12 month period. This indicator is reported after a big time lag nationally to determine how many offenders go on to reoffend in the subsequent year.

The performance for Birmingham at 34.5% is 6.5 percentage points **better** than the national average of 41% as the figures below always have a negative connotation. We are 6 percentage points below the WM average.

Performance is in the top quartile of all YOTs

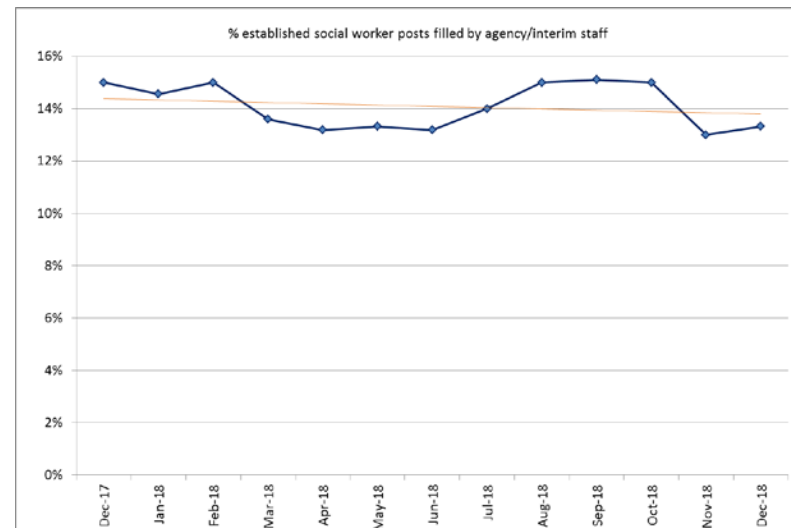
National Average	41.0%
WM average	40.5%
YOT family	44.7%



Performance Indicator 12	% established social worker posts (including team managers) filled by agency / interim staff Good = Low/Decreasing	Target 18/19 13%	Tolerance 10-15%
Prev. 12 months average			
% agency social workers		14%	13%
% agency team managers		7%	9%
% agency total (Social Workers & TM's)		13%	13%

## Commentary

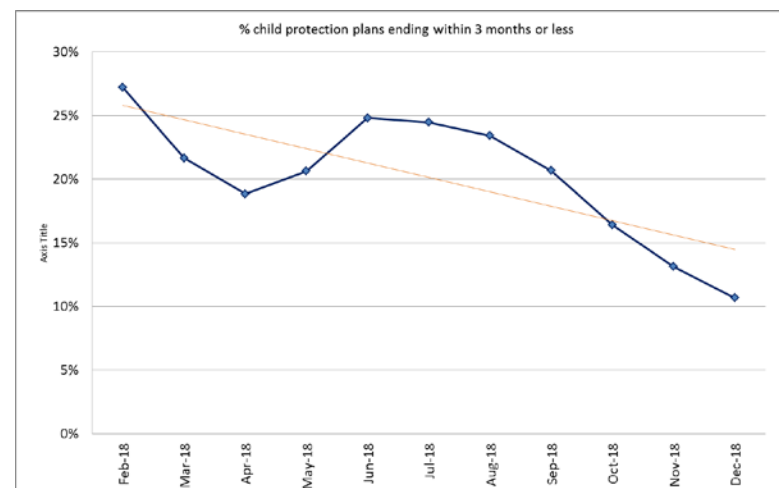
Rapid recruitment campaigns have been introduced to drive and add pace to permanent recruitment. This will in turn reduce the reliance on agency workers. Closer monitoring of agency staff has been introduced to ensure that assignments are closed promptly when a position is filled. We have introduced a fast track recruitment process for final year students to support them into social work posts as soon as possible.



Performance Indicator 13	% child protection plans ending within 3 months or less Good = Low/Decreasing	Target 18/19 25%	Tolerance 20-30%
		Prev. 12 months average	Dec-18
child protection plans ending within 3 months or less		82	38
Total CP Plans de-listed during 3 months to reporting month end		374	356
%		22%	11%

## Commentary

Performance is now well below target which is very positive. We are performing significantly better than our statistical neighbours and the national average. Work is underway to assure ourselves that practice remains good in this area as we are an outlier. We need to be confident that plans do not end too soon or that children are made subject to child protection plans unnecessarily.



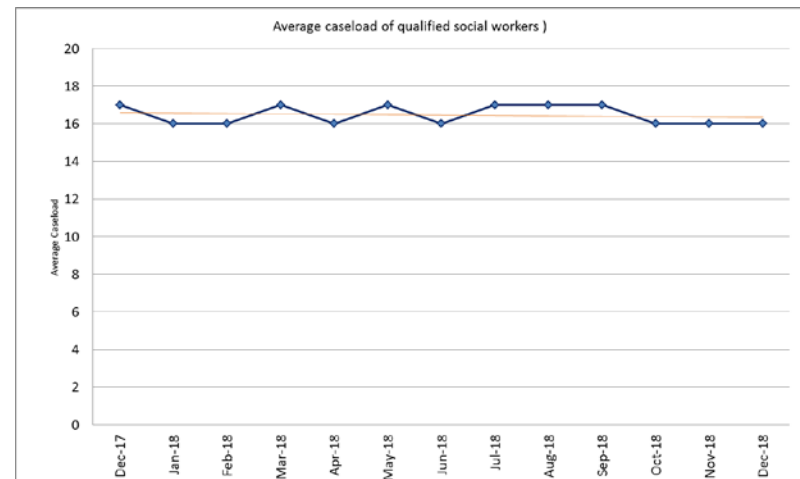
National Average (2017)	20%
Statistical Neighbours Average (2017)	26%



<b>Performance Indicator 14</b>	<b>Average caseload of qualified social workers</b> Good = Low/Decreasing	<b>Target 18/19</b> 15	<b>Tolerance</b> 12-20
		<b>Prev. 12 months average</b>	<b>Dec-18</b>
<b>Average Caseload - City</b>		17	16

## Commentary

Caseload averages continue to be better than the national average and those of our statistical neighbours. We continue to monitor caseloads across all teams on a weekly basis to ensure consistency.



National Average*	18
Statistical Neighbours Average	18
*Experimental statistics	



Performance Indicator 15	% of social workers who have had supervision (in month) Good = High/Increasing	Target 18/19 86%	Tolerance 80-90%
Prev. rolling 12 months average			
Supervisions		454	379
Total No. of social workers		518	460
% supervised		88%	82%

## Commentary

Performance remains within the tolerance. There has been a dip in performance during December due to Christmas holidays and Ofsted inspection.

Social workers are being supervised to the required level and we would expect to see social workers supervised at least 10 times per year.



Council Business Plan Measure	First time entrants into the youth justice system (per 100,000 population aged 10 to 17) Good = Low/Decreasing	Target 18/19	Tolerance
			Dec-18
			Jul 2017 - June 2018
First time entrants into the youth justice system			416

## Commentary

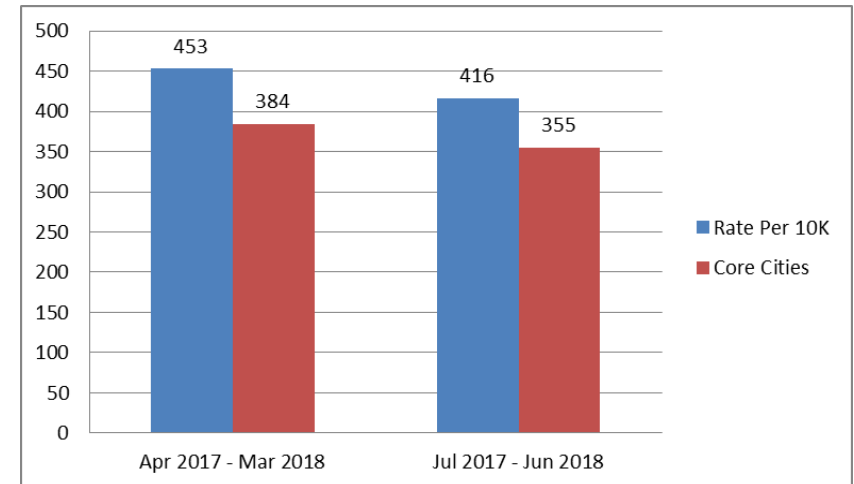
While we are not performing as well as core cities, our performance has improved on the last period by 3%.

Improvement actions in place:

Review decision making and guidance with Police and CPS for Community Resolutions and entry into formal youth justice system.

Greater analysis of those most likely to enter the system including those young people on Education, Health and Care Plans or with Special Educational Needs.

Support the OPCC's commissioning of intensive mentoring across the city and a broader community and faith offer for young people not in the formal youth justice system but at risk of gang affiliation and criminal exploitation. Identify funding sources to wrap support around those young people subject to community resolutions, those at risk of exclusion and SEND young people.



Core Cities (Jul 2017 - Jun 2018)	355
Core Cities (Apr 2017 - Mar 2018)	384



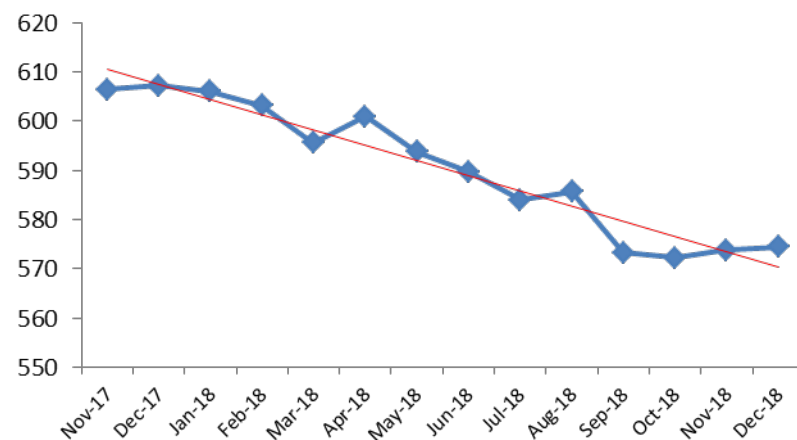
<b>Council Business Plan Measure</b>	<b>Average time between a child coming into care and being placed with an adoptive family (A1)</b> <b>Good = Low/Decreasing</b>	<b>Target 18/19</b> 578 days	<b>Tolerance</b> 550-600 days
--------------------------------------	--	---------------------------------	----------------------------------

		<b>Dec-18</b> <b>(3 Year Average)</b>
<b>Average no. of days taken to placement</b>		574

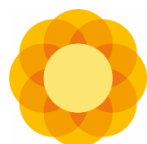
## Commentary

Improvement actions in place:

- Media company providing a 3 month targeted Facebook campaign #RoomForMe which has resulted in more social media traffic and an upturn in enquiries in October (furthermore it was National Adoption Week 17<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> Oct).
- Recruitment of a full time Marketing Officer. We anticipate that this and recruitment re-design should see an increase in adopter recruitment.
- Greater geographical reach from a 30 mile radius to a 50 mile radius.
- Increase in the number of Early Permanence Carers.
- Monthly Adoption Monitoring Meeting in each area.
- Weekly Permanence Advice Service clinics in each area of the city.
- Delivery of Child's Permanence Report writing training/workshops.
- There has been an increase in the number of information evenings on offer for prospective adopters to hear about adoption with Birmingham which has resulted in more ROIs.



National Average	520
Statistical Neighbours Average	578



## Qualitative Evaluation of Practice

The Ofsted inspection, the report of which was published 17 January, and which took place in December 2018, is the strongest and most current qualitative evaluation of the Trust's services.

Practice evaluation was not conducted in December as staff were instead deployed on Ofsted case review and preparation.







**Jenny Turnross**

Director of Practice

[Jenny.turnross@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk](mailto:Jenny.turnross@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk)



BIRMINGHAM  
**CHILDREN'S TRUST**





## Children's Social Care O&S Committee: Work Programme 2018/19

**Chair:** Cllr Mohammed Aikhlaq

**Deputy Chair:** Cllr Diane Donaldson

**Committee Members:** Cllrs: Debbie Clancy, Shabrana Hussain, Morriam Jan, Kerry Jenkins, Kath Scott and Alex Yip

**Officer Support:** Rose Kiely, Group Overview & Scrutiny Manager (303 1730)  
Amanda Simcox, Scrutiny Officer (675 8444)  
Sarah Stride, Committee Manager (303 0709)

### 1 Terms of Reference

- 1.1 To fulfil the functions of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as they relate to any policies, services and activities concerning the Children's Trust, vulnerable children, corporate parenting and other child social care and safeguarding functions of the council.

### 2 Priority Issues and Items to be Scheduled

- 2.1 The following were highlighted in June as the possible priority issues for the committee's 2017/18 municipal year:
- Children's Trust - July and December 2018 committee meetings and visits in September 2018 and April 2019.
  - Safeguarding - to include the Birmingham Safeguarding Children's Board Annual report in October 2018 and Youth Justice Strategic Plan in January 2019.
  - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) - October 2018 and further updates tbc.
  - Early Years, Health and Wellbeing contract – to be scheduled.
  - Update on the Children Missing from Home and Care Inquiry – 13 March 2019.
  - Corporate Parenting – the Corporate Parenting Board Annual report and an update on progress with the Corporate Parenting Inquiry recommendations will be discussed in March 2019. Also, the Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing is the Lead Member for Children's Services (LMCS) and the LMCS and the Director of Children's Services (DCS) have a shared responsibility with all officers and members of the local authority to act as effective and caring corporate parents for Children in Care. The Cabinet Member attended the December 2018 committee meeting to provide an update on her portfolio.



### 3 Meeting Schedule

3.1 Below is the list of potential committee dates and Members may want to use some of these dates for other things other than committee meetings, such as visits, informal briefings etc.

All at 10 am	Session / Outcome	Officers / Attendees
20 June 2018 in committee room 6	Informal meeting to discuss the Work Programme and priorities.	Andy Couldrick, Chief Executive, Children's Trust; Seamus Gaynor, Head of Executive, Children's Trust; Sarah Sinclair, Interim AD, Commissioning; Natalie Loon, Corporate Parenting Coordinator.
25 July 2018 committee room 6  Report Deadline: 16 July 2018	Cllr Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing.	Suman McCarthy.
	Children's Trust briefing and discussion.	Andy Couldrick, Chief Executive; Seamus Gaynor, Head of Executive; Sarah Sinclair, Interim AD, Commissioning; Dawn Roberts, AD, Early Help; David Bishop, Head of Service.
19 September 2018	Visit to the Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS) to observe the work of the Children's Trust.	Seamus Gaynor, Head of Executive, Children's Trust; Rachel McCartan, Head of Service, CASS.
17 October 2018 committee rooms 3 & 4  Report Deadline: 8 October 2018	Birmingham Safeguarding Children's Board (BSCB) Annual Report.	Penny Thompson, Chair of BSCB; Simon Cross, Business Manager.
	Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)  Cllrs Kath Scott and Martin Straker-Welds were in attendance from the Learning, Culture and Physical Activity O&S Committee.	Cllr Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing; Anne Ainsworth, Acting Corporate Director for Children and Young People; Rachel O'Connor, Director of Planning & Performance, Birmingham and Solihull CCG.
14 November 2018 committee rooms 3 & 4  Report Deadline: 5 November 2018	Travel Assist  Cllr Kath Scott, Cllr Mary Locke and Rabia Shami were in attendance from the Learning, Culture and Physical Activity O&S Committee.	Cllr Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing; Anne Ainsworth, Acting Corporate Director for Children and Young People; Sharon Scott, Acting AD for SEND; Jennifer Langan, Travel Assist Lead; Suman McCarthy, CSO.
12 December 2018 committee rooms 3 & 4  Report Deadline: 3	Children's Trust report (10am – 11am).	Andrew Christie, Chair; Andy Couldrick, CEX; Professor Jon Glasby, Non-Executive Director.



<b>All at 10 am</b>	<b>Session / Outcome</b>	<b>Officers / Attendees</b>
December 2018	<p>Cllr Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing Update (11am – 12).</p> <p>To provide an update on portfolio (including the budget proposals).</p>	Anne Ainsworth, Acting Corporate Director for Children and Young People; Suman McCarthy, CSO.
17 December 2018 Ellen Pinsent committee room	<p>Request for Call In: Written Statement of Action (WSOA) – Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).</p> <p>Cllr Kath Scott was in attendance from the Learning, Culture and Physical Activity O&amp;S Committee.</p> <p>Background documents including the action plan and risk assessment to be circulated to Members. The action plan was circulated on the 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2019.</p>	Cllr Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing; Anne Ainsworth, Acting Corporate Director for Children and Young People.
8 January 2019 <b>at 1pm</b> committee rooms 3 & 4	<p>Request for Call In: Travel Assist Service</p> <p>The risk register was circulated to Members on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019.</p>	Cllr Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing; Anne Ainsworth, Acting Corporate Director for Children and Young People.
16 January 2019 committee room 2  Report Deadline: 7 January 2019	<p>Youth Justice Strategic Plan (annual)</p> <p>Members from the Housing and Neighbourhoods O&amp;S Committee were invited for this item as it is linked to the work of the Community Safety Partnership.</p>	Dawn Roberts, AD, Early Help and Trevor Brown, Head Of Youth Offending Service.
13 February 2019 committee room 2	Ofsted Inspection of Children's Social Care Services	Andrew Christie, Chair, Andy Couldrick, CEX, Children's Trust and Cllr Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing.
Report Deadline: 4 February 2019	Update on the Child Poverty Action Forum	Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, Community Safety & Equality and Suwinder Bains, Cohesion and Partnerships Manager; Marcia Wynter, Cabinet Support Officer
13 March 2019 committee room 2	Updates on CSE, missing children, youth offending and FGM	Andy Couldrick, CEX and/or relevant officers tbc)
Report Deadline: 4 March 2019	Corporate Parenting Board report (annual) and a progress update on the Corporate Parenting Inquiry recommendations (R02, R03 & R04)	Andy Pepper, AD, Children in Care Provider Services; Natalie Loon, Corporate Parenting Support Officer.



All at 10 am	Session / Outcome	Officers / Attendees
17 April 2019 committee room 6  Report Deadline: 8 April 2019	Visit to observe the work of the Children's Trust.	

## 4 Other Meetings

### Call in Meetings

17 December 2018 – Written Statement of Action (WSOA)  
8 January 2019 - Travel Assist Service

### Petitions

None scheduled

### Councillor Call for Action requests

None scheduled

It is suggested that the Committee approves Wednesday at 10.00am as a suitable day and time each week for any additional meetings required to consider 'requests for call in' which may be lodged in respect of Executive decisions.

## 5 Report to City Council / Pieces of Work

5.1 Members to discuss the timings for this.

### (Update on the Children's Trust - TBC)

Date	Item

## 6 Outstanding Tracking

Inquiry	Outstanding Recommendations	Date of Tracking
Children Missing from Home and Care  12 January 2016 report to City Council	R2 – Develop an overarching strategy for missing children so responsibilities are clear and understood, <b>risk is managed well, especially for looked after children and persistent runaways, information is shared effectively and appropriate support is in place for children and families.</b>	Update received: 12 October 2016, 26 April 2017 and 18 October 2017



Corporate Parenting 4 April 2017 report to City Council	R1 – R7 Update on recommendations due on 13 March 2019	Update rec'd 18 Oct 17 & Annual Report 14 Feb 18
<p>R01 - Councillors to commit to at least one activity from the 'menu of involvement'. This will then be published on the Council's website. A follow-up survey will be undertaken by the Scrutiny Office in nine months requesting an update from Councillors on this. Responsibility - All Councillors, by April 2017 (Achieved – late).</p> <p>R02 - The menu of involvement for Councillors is developed into a corporate parenting handbook for Councillors for May 2018. This will include providing Councillors with examples of how they can undertake each task. Responsibility: Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Schools by May 2018 (this was in progress at the last update).</p> <p>R03 - Training is offered to Councillors in the first couple of weeks of becoming a Councillor. Responsibility: Deputy Leader by May 2018 (in progress at the last update).</p> <p>R04 - Every children's home in Birmingham that has a Birmingham child in care is visited by the end of July 2017 and the District Corporate Parent Champions ensure this happens. Responsibility: District Corporate Parent Champions by July 2017 (Not Achieved - Progress Made at the last update).</p> <p>R05 - Supporting documentation for completing cabinet reports includes a requirement that consideration is given as to any impact of the proposals on children in care. If there are likely impacts, the cabinet report should include this in the body of the report. Responsibility: Cabinet Member for Transparency, Openness and Equality by October 2017 (Achieved).</p> <p>R06 - The AD, Children in Care Provider Services presents an annual Corporate Parenting Board report to the Schools, Children and Families O&amp;S Committee. Responsibility: Cabinet Member for Children, Families &amp; Schools by Feb 2018 (Annual report received 14 February 2018).</p>		

## 7 Useful Acronyms

ASTI = Assessment and Short Term Intervention BEP = Birmingham Education Partnership BSCB = Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board CAFCASS = Child & Family Court Advisory Support Service CAMHS = Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services CASS = Children's Advice and Support Service CICC = Children in Care Council COBS = City of Birmingham School CSE = Child Sexual Exploitation	EHE = Elective Home Education	SEN = Special Educational Needs SENAR = SEN Assessment and Review SENDIASS = SEND Information, Advice and Support Service SENCO = Special Educational Needs Coordinator SEND = Special Educational Needs and Disability SGOs = Special Guardianship Orders UASC = Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children YOT = Youth Offending Team
	FGM = Female Genital Mutilation	
	Key Stage 1 (Ages 5-7) Years 1 and 2	
	Key Stage 2 (Ages 7-11) Years 3, 4, 5 & 6	
	Key Stage 3 (Ages 11-14) Years 7, 8 & 9	
	Key Stage 4 (Ages 14-16) Years 10 & 11	
	Key Stage 5 (ages 16 – 18)	
	MASH = Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub	
	NEET = Not in Education, Employment or Training	
	NRPF = No Recourse to Public Funds	
	Ofsted = Office for Standards in Education	

## 8 Forward Plan for Cabinet Decisions

8.1 The following decisions, extracted from the Cabinet Office Forward Plan of Decisions, are likely to be relevant to the Children's Social Care O&S Committee's remit.

ID Number	Title	Cabinet Member	Proposed Date	Date of Decision
005164/2018	T023 – Provision of Transport Services (Contract Extension)	Children's Wellbeing	26 Jun 18	26 Jun 18



ID Number	Title	Cabinet Member	Proposed Date	Date of Decision
005447/2018	Council Run Day Nurseries – Public Report	Children's Wellbeing	11 Dec 18	11 Dec 18
005639/2018	Options for Next Stage of Early Years Health & Wellbeing Contract	Children's Wellbeing	22 Jan 19	
005729/2018	Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2018-19	Children's Wellbeing	11 Dec 18	11 Dec 18
005449/2018	Travel Assist Service	Education, Skills & Culture	11 Dec 18	11 Dec 18

8.2 The following are joint decisions made by the relevant Cabinet Member and Chief Officers.

Ref No	Title	Cabinet Member & Lead Officer	Date of Decision
005968/2018 005969/2018	Written Statement of Action (WSOA) - Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) - Public Report Private Report	Cllr Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing Jointly with Sharon Scott, Interim Assistant Director - SEND	7 Dec 2018