

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 01 SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 10:00 HOURS
IN BMI MAIN HALL, 9 MARGARET STREET, BIRMINGHAM, B3 3BS

A G E N D A

1 NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST

The Chair to advise/meeting to note that this meeting will be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's meeting You Tube site (www.youtube.com/channel/UCT2kT7ZRPFCXq6_5dnVnYlw) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there are confidential or exempt items.

2 APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies.

3 APPOINTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE CHAIR, DEPUTY CHAIR AND MEMBERS

(i) To note the resolution of the City Council appointing the Committee, Chair and Members to serve on the Committee for the period ending with the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2022

Labour Group (6): Councillors Olly Armstrong, Katherine Iroh, Kerry Jenkins, Narinder Kooner (Chair), Kath Scott, Saddak Maih.

Conservative Group (2): Councillors Charlotte Hodivala and Alex Yip.

Other voting Representatives for Education (4)

1 Church of England diocese representative – Sarah Smith

1 Roman Catholic diocese representative – Adam Hardy

2 Parent Governor Representatives – Rabia Shami and Omar Hanif

(ii) To elect a Deputy Chair for the purposes of substitution for the Chair, if absent, for the period ending with the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2022.

4 **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.

5 - 12

5 **EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE O&S - TERMS OF REFERENCE**

To note the Education and Children's Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Terms of Reference.

13 - 60

6 **ACTION NOTES AND ACTION TRACKER**

To confirm the actions notes of the 6 January 2021, 20 January 2021, 3 February 2021, and note the action notes of the informal meetings on the 19 May 2021 and 21 July 2021 and note the action tracker.

61 - 100

7 **CHILDREN'S TRUST**

Andrew Christie, Chair and Andy Couldrick, Chief Executive, Children's Trust in attendance.

8 **CABINET MEMBER FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

Cllr Sharon Thompson, Cabinet Member for Vulnerable Children and Families in attendance.

9 **SEND**

Kevin Crompton, Interim Director, Education & Skills and Pauline Maddison, Interim AD, SEND and Inclusion in attendance.

101 - 108

10 **WORK PROGRAMME**

For discussion.

11 **DATE OF MEETINGS 2021/2022**

(i) To approve that the Committee will meet on the following Wednesday's at 1000 hours in the Birmingham & Midlands Institute:

| 2021 | 2022 |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| 21 July 2021 - online informal | 12 January 2022 |
| 01 September 2021 | 16 February 2022 |
| 13 October 2021 | 30 March 2022 |
| 24 November 2021 | 06 April 2022 |

(ii) To approve Wednesday's at 1000 hours as a suitable day and time each week for any additional meetings required to consider 'requests for call in' which may be logged in respect of Executive Decisions.

12 **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).

13 **OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

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

14 **AUTHORITY TO CHAIR AND OFFICERS**

Chair to move:-

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

O&S Terms of Reference

EXTRACT FROM CONSTITUTION MAY 2021

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

1.1 Principles of Good Scrutiny

- i. Good Overview and Scrutiny adds value to Councils as it:
 - a) Amplifies public voice and concerns;
 - b) Drives improvement in public services;
 - c) Provides constructive “critical friend” challenge;
 - d) Is led by ‘independent minded people’ who take responsibility for their role.

1.2 Role

- i. Overview and Scrutiny Committees will:
 - Make reports and/or recommendations to the full Council, the Executive and / or other organisations in connection with the discharge of the functions specified in their terms of reference;
 - Consider any matter covered in their terms of reference that may affect or be likely to have an effect on the citizens of Birmingham; and
 - is relevant to the Council’s strategic objectives; and/or
 - is relevant to major issues faced by officers in managing a function of the Council; and/or
 - is likely to make a contribution to moving the Council forward and achieving key performance targets.
 - Exercise the “request for call-in” and “call-in” any Cabinet, Cabinet Committee or Cabinet Member decisions made but not yet implemented by the Executive.
 - Overview and Scrutiny Chairs should maintain regular engagement with Cabinet Members to enable flexibility to be built into the Overview and Scrutiny work programme, so as to respond to the Council’s policy priorities in a timely way.

1.3 Functions

- i. *Policy development and review:* Overview and Scrutiny Committees may:
 - Assist the Council and / or the Executive in the development of its budget and policy by appropriate analysis of policy and budget issues;

- Conduct appropriate research, community and other consultation in the analysis of policy and budget issues and possible options;
 - Consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options;
 - Question Members of the Executive and/or Chief Officers about their views on issues and proposals affecting their areas of responsibility; and
 - Liaise with other external organisations operating in the city, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working.
- ii. *Scrutiny*: Overview and Scrutiny Committees may:
- Review and scrutinise the Executive decisions made by and performance of the Executive and/or Chief Officers in relation to decisions taken by them or in relation to their areas of responsibility / department;
 - Review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and / or particular service areas – including the areas of responsibility of the Regulatory and Non-Executive Committees, but not the actual decisions of the Regulatory and Non-Executive Committees;
 - Make recommendations to the Executive, Chairmen of Committees, Chief Officers and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process;
 - Review and scrutinise the performance of other relevant public bodies in Birmingham (including Health Authorities) and to invite reports from them by requesting them to attend and engage with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee about their activities and performance;
 - Question and gather evidence from any person (with their consent); and
 - Establish sub-committees to undertake aspects of that committee’s remit, or Task and Finish Committees to carry out specific time limited enquiries as agreed with the eight Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairs and subject to available resources.
- iii. Any member of an overview and scrutiny committee (or sub-committee) may ensure that any matter relevant to the remit of the committee (or sub-committee) be placed on the agenda and discussed at a meeting of the committee (or sub-committee) (“Councillor Call for Action”).

1.4 Membership

- i. All Councillors, except Cabinet Members (and the Lord Mayor) can be members of an Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee. Members are appointed by Full Council. Chairs of these committees are appointed by the Full Council and Deputy Chairs are elected by each committee at its first meeting, for the purpose of substitution for the Chair if absent.
- ii. Membership of each of the O&S Committees will be eight; with the exception of the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which will consist of 12 members:

the chair of the committee and the seven other Overview and Scrutiny Committee chairs along with four places for opposition group members to ensure proportionality. Education and Children's Social Care O&S Committee will have an additional four co-opted places, as set out below.

- iii. Quorum for the Co-ordinating O&S Committee and Education and Children's Social Care O&S Committee shall be four; and three for the other O&S Committees.
- iv. No substitute members shall be appointed to an Overview & Scrutiny meeting.
- v. Where a member stands down from a Cabinet role, that member should not be appointed to the O&S Committee scrutinising the portfolios to which that role related for a period of six months.
- vi. A Chair of an Overview & Scrutiny Committee should not be appointed to serve as a Director on any of the City Council's wholly owned companies where the activities of that company overlap with the remit of that Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

1.5 Terms of Reference of Overview and Scrutiny Committees

- i. There shall be eight Overview and Scrutiny Committees as set out in the terms of reference below.

Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- ii. To plan and co-ordinate the work of all the Overview & Scrutiny Committees. To fulfil the functions of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as they relate to any policies, services and activities concerning governance (including transparency, regional working and partnerships): citizens (including communications and public engagement); performance; customer services; social cohesion; equalities and emergency planning.
- iii. These functions include:
 - a) giving such guidance to the Overview and Scrutiny Committees in any cases of uncertainty, as to work which they should or should not be undertaking, as may be necessary to achieve such co-ordination, including the allocation of "call-in" to the appropriate Committee;
 - b) determining, in any cases of uncertainty, the allocation of responsibility for specific tasks between the Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
 - c) ensuring (by means, for example, of issuing appropriate guidance and/or instructions) that the Overview & Scrutiny Committees pay proper attention in their work to the consideration of key cross cutting issues, in particular equalities, transparency and improvement;
 - d) publishing each year an Annual Programme of major scrutiny inquiries as suggested by individual Overview and Scrutiny Committees following consideration of the Council Plan and priorities;

- e) agreeing the establishment of any task & finish groups; and
 - f) considering overview and scrutiny development, working practices and constitutional arrangements.
- iv. Membership of the Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consist of 12 members: the chair of the committee and the seven other Overview and Scrutiny Committee chairs along with four places for opposition group members to ensure proportionality.

Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- v. To fulfil the functions of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as they relate to any policies, services and activities concerning finance (including strategic finance, budget setting and financial monitoring); revenues and benefits; treasury management; Council land use and property assets; human resources; contracting, commissioning and commercialisation.

Education & Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- vi. To fulfil the functions of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as they relate to any policies, services and activities concerning schools and education, the Children's Trust, vulnerable children, corporate parenting, children and young people's health and wellbeing and other child social care and safeguarding functions of the council.
- vii. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee dealing with education matters shall include in its membership the following voting representatives:
- a) Church of England diocese representative (one);
 - b) Roman Catholic diocese representative (one); and
 - c) Parent Governor representatives (two).

Economy and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- viii. To fulfil the functions of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as they relate to any policies, services and activities concerning strategic economy; skills and apprenticeships; inward investment; land use planning; business improvement districts and the Local Enterprise Partnership.

Health and Social Care Committee

- ix. To fulfil the functions of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as they relate to any policies, services and activities concerning adult safeguarding, social care and public health; and to discharge the relevant overview and scrutiny role set out in the National Health Service Act 2006 as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, including:
- The appointment of Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committees with neighbouring authorities; and

- The exercise of the power to make referrals of contested service reconfigurations to the Secretary of State as previously delegated to the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee by the Council.

Housing and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- x. To fulfil the functions of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as they relate to any policies, services and activities concerning housing; waste management; neighbourhood management; parks and allotments localisation; bereavement services and community safety.
- xi. This Committee shall be the Crime and Disorder Committee (Police and Justice Act 2006).

Commonwealth Games, Culture and Physical Activity Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- xii. To fulfil the functions of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as they relate to any policies, services and activities concerning Commonwealth Games; arts and culture; libraries and museums; sport; events.

Sustainability and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- xiii. To fulfil the functions of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as they relate to any policies, services and activities relating to sustainability; air pollution; transport strategy and highways.
- xiv. The Committee shall undertake the authority's statutory functions in relation to the scrutiny of flood risk management (Flood and Water Management Act 2010).

1.6 Rules of Procedure

- i. A Scrutiny meeting may be called by the Chair of the relevant Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- ii. All meetings of an Overview & Scrutiny Committee shall be open to the public in accordance with Section C2 *Access to Information*. In addition to their rights as Councillors, Members on an Overview & Scrutiny Committee have additional rights to documents as set out in Section C2 *Access to Information*.
- iii. No Overview & Scrutiny Committee may undertake a review into:
 - Any decision of the Planning Committee, the Licensing and Public Protection Committee or a Licensing sub-committee;¹
 - Any decisions which may be appealed against under the terms of reference of the Licensing Sub-Committees;

¹ In respect of a licence or permission granted to an individual or in respect of an individual premises

- Any decision taken by an officer under delegated authority which falls within the terms of reference of the Planning Committee, the Licensing and Public Protection Committee or a Licensing sub-committee;²
 - Any code of conduct matter or employment appeals;
 - Except in exceptional circumstances, any decision in respect of which there are:
 - a) Ongoing judicial proceedings, Ombudsman or audit inquiry or complaint under the Council's formal complaints procedure; or
 - b) Individual personnel issues.
- iv. An Overview & Scrutiny Committee may require any Cabinet Member, or Member in relation to a matter where the Member has exercised functions, the Chief Executive and/or any senior officer to attend before it to answer questions and provide information about any matter within its terms of reference.³

1.7 Conflicts of interest

- i. If an Overview and Scrutiny Committee is scrutinising specific decisions in relation to the business of another committee or forum of the City Council of which an Overview and Scrutiny Committee Councillor is a Member, then that Councillor must withdraw from the meeting during the consideration of such matter.
- ii. Where, however, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is reviewing policy matters, generally, as opposed to a specific decision of another committee or forum of the City Council, the Member must declare his/her interest before the relevant agenda item is reached but need not withdraw.
- iii. If a Cabinet Adviser (or former Cabinet Adviser) is a member of an Overview & Scrutiny Committee and is scrutinising matters to which their role relates, then that Councillor must withdraw from the meeting during the consideration of such matter.
- iv. If an Overview and Scrutiny Committee is scrutinising the work of a relative of a member of the Committee, then that Councillor must withdraw from the meeting during the consideration of such matter.

1.8 Overview and Scrutiny Work and Non-Executive Committees

- i. Overview and Scrutiny Committees are only permitted by law to scrutinise the Executive decisions of the Council – Cabinet, Cabinet Committees, Cabinet Members, and officers.

² In respect of a licence or permission granted to an individual or in respect of an individual premises

³ A Member or officer is not obliged to answer any question which he would be entitled to answer in or for the purposes of proceedings in a Court Section 9FA of the 2000 Act.

- ii. In terms of the Regulatory Committees, these carry out administrative functions and, as such, appropriate appeal rights and procedures apply to the same, which do not involve the Overview and Scrutiny Committees arrangements.

1.9 “Request for Call-In” and “Call-In”

- i. When an Executive decision is taken by the Cabinet, Cabinet Committees, or Cabinet Member(s), the decision shall be published on the website, and copies of it shall be available at the main offices of the Council, normally within three days of being made. All Members and Chief Officers will be sent a notification of all such decisions within the same timescale, by the Committee Services Officer responsible for publishing the decision.
- ii. The relevant notice will bear the date on which it is published and will specify that the Executive decision may be implemented, after the expiry of three working days after the publication of the decision, unless a “Request for call-in” is made of the Executive decision, by at least two Councillors (who are not members of the Cabinet). The “Request for Call In” should state the reason for call-in.
- iii. Once a “Request for Call In” has been received, the Chair of Co-ordinating O&S Committee will agree which Overview and Scrutiny Committee should hear the call-in. That Committee must meet to consider the request. The meeting should take place not later than 15 clear working days after the original publication of the decision.
- iv. It is for the Committee to decide whether to Call In a decision or not. The Council does not expect an Overview and Scrutiny Committee to Call In an Executive decision unless one or more of the following criteria applies.
- v. Where the Committee does decide to call in a decision, the “re-consideration” which is then required must take place at a meeting of the full Cabinet – irrespective of who made the original decision on behalf of the Executive.

Call-In Criteria

| | |
|---|--|
| | (a) Is the Executive decision within existing policy? |
| 1 | the decision appears to be contrary to the Budget or one of the ‘policy framework’ plans or strategies; |
| 2 | the decision appears to be inconsistent with any other form of policy approved by the full Council, the Executive or the Regulatory Committees; |
| 3 | the decision appears to be inconsistent with recommendations previously made by an Overview and Scrutiny body (and accepted by the full Council or the Executive); |
| | (b) Is the Executive Decision well-founded? |
| 4 | the Executive appears to have failed to consult relevant stakeholders or other interested persons before arriving at its decision; |
| 5 | the Executive appears to have overlooked some relevant consideration in arriving at its decision; |

| | |
|---|---|
| | (a) Is the Executive decision within existing policy? |
| 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 so to do; |
| 7 | 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. |
| | (c) Has the Executive decision been properly taken? |
| 8 | the decision appears to give rise to significant governance, legal, financial or propriety issues; |
| 9 | the notification of the decision does not appear to have been in accordance with council procedures; |

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

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

1400 hours on Wednesday 6th January 2021, Online Meeting

Action Notes

Present:

Councillor Kath Scott (Chair)

Councillors: Mohammed Aikhlaq, Barbara Dring, Charlotte Hodivala, Kerry Jenkins, and Alex Yip

Other Voting Representatives: Omar Hanif, Parent Governor Representative, Rabia Shami, Parent Governor Representative and Sarah Smith, Church of England Diocese Representative

Also Present:

Councillor Robert Alden

Councillor Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing

Councillor Ian Ward, Leader

Chris Naylor, Interim Chief Executive

Ceri Saunders, Acting Group Overview and Scrutiny Manager

Amanda Simcox, Scrutiny Officer

Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny Services

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) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor Alex Yip declared that his sister works for National Express, which is the parent company for National Express Accessible Transport (NEAT).

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillor Olly Armstrong and Adam Hardy, Roman Catholic Diocese Representative.

4. REQUEST FOR CALL IN: IMPROVING HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT

(See documents No. 1, 2, and 3).

The Chair stated that the purpose of this meeting was 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.

Cllr Yip introduced the reasons for the call-in and stated it was to consider the Cabinet report's recommendations following the report prepared by Ernst & Young (Independent Service Review of SEND Home to School Transport, Key Findings and Future Improvement Plan, November 2020). It is Cllr Yip's contention that the report and recommendations failed to deliver on the motion which mandated the investigation.

Cllrs Alden and Yip stated the following call-in criteria applied:

- 3. The decision appears to be inconsistent with recommendations previously made by an Overview and Scrutiny body (and accepted by the full Council or the Executive);*
- 4. the Executive appears to have failed to consult relevant stakeholders or other interested persons before arriving at its decision;*
- 5. the Executive appears to have overlooked some relevant consideration in arriving at its decision;*
- 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 so to do;*
- 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.*

The key reasons for the request for call-in were summarised by Cllrs Alden and Yip, and responded to by the Cabinet Members and officers, as follows:

- 3 - The motion at Full Council mandated the Chief Executive to, amongst other things, commission an external and independent inquiry into the full Travel Assist Service that fully addresses the concerns laid out by Parents, Carers, Schools and other users of the service.

The scope of the EY report and the failure to bring in other relevant reports, such as the Scrutiny Inquiry's report and the Audit report, means that the recommendations within the Cabinet report are flawed and do not go far enough.

The motion also mandated the Chief Executive to investigate the assurances that have been given to Members about the safety of the service as Audit, Scrutiny and Full Council has had multiple assurances in the past. The EY report does not address the second demand of the motion around the investigation into the assurances given to Members and therefore the EY report does not satisfy what was mandated at Full Council.

The report does not provide clear lines of accountability of how the improvement journey will be taken forward. There is a lack of clear action taken, clear recommendations and timetable of implementation. These were clearly mandated in the motion at Full Council.

The Leader confirmed the EY report was commissioned to investigate the failings that happened in September 2020. The Council meeting requested for this to be a fast piece of work and to report back on 1st November 2020. There is a separate ongoing investigation looking at the other issues and they will report in due course. EY checked the recommendations in November with the Parent Carer Forum (PCF) and they were comfortable with these. The Cabinet report therefore contains recommendations based on the EY report. The separate investigation alongside this EY report will meet in full the agreed motion.

The investigation into accountability, DBS checks and assurances that may have been given to this Committee and Audit Committee last year is ongoing, and is separate to this EY report, and does not appear in the Cabinet report.

The Leader explained that the Executive took the decision for EY to report back to the Council on such a tight timeframe because they were taking the view that this needed to be addressed at pace, sorting out the errors that occurred in September, and making sure they were improving the Home to School Transport Service as quickly as possible. The Leader referred to some of the recommendations within the Cabinet report and felt that if they had waited until the other investigation is completed then they would be delaying making those changes.

The Leader is happy to ensure the recommendations from the Scrutiny report are adopted as part of the transformation of the service going forward.

- 4 - The recommendations are not based on proper consultation and do not fully address the concerns of children and families, as they have not been properly consulted before the recommendations were made. This includes, schools, parents, carers, guides, drivers, users etc. There are c.4,000 service users and there were nine non-BCC stakeholders contacted, therefore the failure to fully consult must undermine the findings. Also, there are only seven people on the Parent Carer Forum (PCF), and they are not the voice of all parents.

Cllr Yip contended that there was a level of frustration demonstrated by the PCF, parents, carers and schools at the November launch event where the EY report was discussed. There is a widely held belief that parents and schools were not consulted and therefore decisions are based on incomplete information. Assurances that consultation comes after the recommendations have been agreed is inappropriate, Cllr Yip maintained, and does not restore trust with parents and users. The voice of the child needs to be at the centre.

The Leader explained that the EY report not being based on consultation was raised when EY made their presentation on the 24th November 2020. The Leader was keen that EY present to parents and carers before they presented

to anyone else. EY explained that given due to the tight timescales there had not been time to fully consult with parents and carers. Subsequently, on the 30th November 2020, EY met with the PCF and the Chair of the PCF confirmed they were happy with the recommendations. The Leader also met with the PCF in December 2020 and he was assured they were happy with the recommendations.

The Leader highlighted that they are not pushing ahead without consultation, as per the Cabinet report, paragraph 2.1.5 states 'agree in principle to create an IPTU, subject to the approval of an online business case and to do that by the end of the financial year'. Paragraph 2.1.6 states 'agree that the outline business case set out a new organisational structure which will be consulted upon'. Therefore, they are intending to consult upon this before taking the full business case forward. Also, the Board will sense check this, and if it is clear from parents that if it is not what they need or want, they will think again.

As to the EY report being flawed, the Leader questioned what would have been picked up in further consultation that has been omitted from the report. Also, in order again to check on the improvements and changes the Leader gave assurances that there will be a further public meeting with parents in June 2021,

The Board has a provisional date for the first meeting to be held on the 21st January 2021. The proposal is that it will be chaired by the Leader and the Cabinet Member will be in attendance. There will be some parent representatives, including a representative from the PCF, and several head teachers. The idea is that the Board can sense check and co-design the improvements by calling officers in to outline the improvements they wish to introduce.

The Board will have representatives from parents and advice has been sought from the Special Schools Forum, via Steve Hughes, as to how they might get meaningful representatives from the schools and parents onto the Board, and how the Special Schools Forum could assist with a mechanism for reporting back to the broader number of schools and parents across the city. This would be a two-way process, whereby the small number on the Board are getting information from a much larger group of both parents and schools. The Leader is also having other conversations as to how this can be undertaken in a meaningful way.

- 5 - the report lacks how this is going to be implemented, clear costs and timescales for delivery. Also there was a lack of detail provided to Cabinet and this includes: the information requested by Cllr Yip, and for which he has submitted an FOI, the departure of the Director, and the failure of the Cabinet Member to answer when there will be a date for this service being safe.

The Leader stated that the FOI information is not part of this report and people need to be held to account for the failure of the service in September and the service needs to be improved.

- 6 - press articles, concerns of parents etc., shows that Scrutiny can demonstrate this applies. Reference was made to the tweet from the Birmingham Labour Group account.

The Leader stated that the call-in was about the Cabinet report and not a tweet or other issues.

- 8 – Cllrs Yip and Alden asserted that the EY report is a flawed report and the recommendations do not add anything new but rather is a rehash of what has been said before in three previous re-iterations. There are several full page pictures and pages 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 16 and 17 are replicated. This demonstrates that over a third of the report is extraneous and highlights the superficiality of the report, and is likely to repeat the cycle, with this cycle needing to cease.

They asserted that there needs to be one definitive report and the EY report does not include the Scrutiny report into Home to School Transport that includes key areas, such as safeguarding and safety, nor the Audit report.

Cllr Yip raised his outstanding FOI request. Included within this are concerns about safeguarding and questions regarding the 19 drivers who have outstanding DBS checks, and Cabinet was not given this important information.

Cllr Alden raised that the recommendations do not contain enough detail, and this includes costs. A later item on the same Cabinet agenda procured more consultants for this service but this was not included within this report.

The Leader explained that there are clear recommendations within the Cabinet report, and they are set out in paragraph two, and the EY recommendations are listed in the table within the report. Also, he gave assurances at the Cabinet meeting to set up a Board where parents, carers and head teachers will have the opportunity to sense check improvements that have been brought forward to improve the Home to School Transport service. The Leader drew Members' attention to the recommendations, specifically paragraph 2.1.6 which makes it clear that there will be a new Integrated Passenger Transport Unit overseen, as per paragraph 2.1.8.1, by a dedicated Transport Lead, looking to transform this service.

The Leader commented that the PCF have indicated that they want the recommendations to be implemented and are pushing for the Board to be set-up.

The Chief Executive stated that 95% of the answers to Cllr Yip's letter and FOI should be available in the next couple of days.

The Leader suggested that he could invite the Chair or other Member of the Committee to attend the first meeting of the Board to speak about the Committee's report and recommendations, concerns and anything else that may have been omitted.

The remit of the Board is to hold to account those responsible for the service, and the Board will be monitoring the performance of the service provided.

The Board will sit until September 2021 as by then the improvements should have been made and the service should be fit for purpose.

During the discussion the main points included:

- In response to how the Board is going to be different to what Scrutiny has been doing over the years in holding people to account, the Leader suggested the Committee may wish to invite him to the Committee's January meeting. Others, such as the PCF, could also be invited to discuss what is needed in a wider context to improve this service, as this goes beyond the Home to School Transport Service.
- It was suggested that we need to decide how the Council engage and work with the PCF going forward as they are not representative of c.4,000 parents. Assistance could be given so they become more representative by helping to promote and encourage parents to use and join them.
- The call-in is about the decisions in the EY report and not whether the Committee agree with failings of the system. Therefore, it is not about deciding on how good or not the system is.
- It was questioned whether the Council needs to bring the service back in house like other projects that have failed.
- The Chair stated that Committee should congratulate itself on the hard work done for children and parents in the city, cross party, and the EY report was a direct result of that hard work.
- It was questioned whether we would expect to have a detailed action plan, that includes all the stages Cllrs Yip and Alden have said are missing at this point in a council decision making process, and whether Members could simply vote a straight yes or no to call-in or ask for certain things to be added, such as the Scrutiny report. The Chair clarified that the Committee could ask for things to be included.
- There is much to agree within the Executive report and the decisions, however, the process was flawed by being too limited in scope with a low level of consultation.
- Members indicated they would like to see the results of the inquiries, investigations and consultation undertaken with parents and schools to give a complete picture for the Executive to take their decision. Although it may have the same conclusion, it's about the process and how we got to that point.
- There is a need for clarity about some of the things that have been agreed in the cabinet report, such as consultants, as this may leave the Council open to decisions being taken that Members have no access to.
- There is no information on safeguarding and other issues which is a big part of the service and it was questioned how the Executive decisions were made without that being considered as part of the whole. The Chair stated that the motion was divided into different parts, so that doesn't come under this report. The Chair agreed there isn't anything in this report she wouldn't recommend, but

there may be things missing and she is happy to write to the Leader asking for these to be included or considered.

- There is a need to be clear on accountability and who is responsible when something goes wrong and action needs to be taken straight away.
- The Chair suggested that a letter might want to be sent to the Executive regardless of the outcome of the call-in vote.

RESOLVED

The Committee resolved to call-in the decision for reconsideration by Cabinet by a vote of 7 Members to 2.

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

None.

6. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

7. 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 16.14 hours.

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

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

1000 hours on Wednesday, 20th January 2021, Online Meeting

Action Notes

Present:

Councillor Kerry Jenkins (Acting Chair)

Councillors: Mohammed Aikhlaq, Barbara Dring, Charlotte Hodivala, Chauhdry Rashid and Alex Yip

Other Voting Representatives: Omar Hanif, Parent Governor Representative, Rabia Shami, Parent Governor Representative and Sarah Smith, Church of England Diocese Representative

Also Present:

Councillor Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing

Councillor Jayne Francis, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills & Culture

Lisa Fraser, AD, Education and Early Years

Dionne McAndrews, AD, Children's Trust

Alan Michell, Head of School Admissions and Fair Access

Caroline Naven, Head of Preparation for Adulthood & Vulnerable Adults

Ceri Saunders, Acting Group Overview and Scrutiny Manager

Amanda Simcox, Scrutiny Officer

John Williams, AD, Adult Social Care

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) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor Mohammed Aikhlaq declared a non-pecuniary interest as he is on the Board of Directors at Leigh Multi Academy Trust.

Councillor Alex Yip declared that he is the Deputy Chair of Governors for Wilson Stuart School and a Birmingham Magistrate.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillor Olly Armstrong, Councillor Kath Scott and Adam Hardy, Roman Catholic Diocese Representative.

Councillor Armstrong was welcomed onto the Committee and Members wished him a speedy recovery from Covid.

4. ELECTION OF A DEPUTY CHAIR

Councillor Mohammed Aikhlaq nominated Councillor Kerry Jenkins for Deputy Chair, this was seconded by Councillor Barbara Dring and the Committee Members voted in agreement.

RESOLVED

Councillor Kerry Jenkins was duly elected as Deputy Chair.

5. ACTION NOTES AND ACTION TRACKER

(See documents 1 and 2).

The Acting Chair informed Members that they had received information on some of the outstanding actions since the action tracker had been published, and the outstanding actions are being chased.

The Acting Chair requested that the action tracker be updated to reflect that she has been informed that SENDIASS will not be outsourced.

RESOLVED

The action notes of the 9th December 2020 were agreed, and the action tracker was noted and will be updated accordingly.

6. PREPARATION FOR ADULTHOOD (PFA)

(See document No. 3).

The Acting Chair welcomed Dionne McAndrews, AD, Children's Trust, John Williams, AD, Adult Social Care and Caroline Naven, Head of Preparation for Adulthood & Vulnerable Adults to the meeting.

Dionne McAndrews set out the context for the project, in that the Birmingham Children's Partnership business case was approved in March 2020 and the proposal in the Business Case was to extend funding for young people who are transitioning from children to adult services based on a two year proof of concept. There was a request to have a specific focus on supporting the transition of children through children's services to the adult world, making sure they are sufficiently prepared for that very challenging time when entering adulthood.

After two years they must evidence they are making a difference to the transition period of children moving into adulthood. If they can evidence outcomes, the funding will be extended for a further three years. In terms of the outcomes, they want to see improvement in accommodation, employment, health and connections. Connections refers to connecting and building bridges with family and friends, and this is particularly important as they do not want to create dependencies on agencies, although it is acknowledged that some people will need support from agencies.

Members were informed that this will be different by the virtue that this is proof of concept and different things can be tried. Therefore, there isn't a set model and they are testing as they go.

There are three strands and one hub that sits in the centre and this is about linking with existing provision, enhancing this where needed and filling the gaps.

John Williams informed Members that the approach is one of a life course approach and thinking about aspirations. One of the key parts is that they recognise that Adult Social Care work with people with complex needs and more can be done to work with people at an early age and build a better city offer for them. This includes safety nets and co-production so they can be true participants and engaged, and to help them have a fulfilling life.

Caroline Naven took Members through the report and the main points included:

- The Integration Transitions Team has been in operation since 1st September 2020 and works with young people aged 14 – 30 primarily with SEND.
- Their communications plan captures how they have marketed the service, for example, through presentations at meetings, e-leaflets and the publication of a monthly newsletter.
- The second element of the service is the Vulnerable Adults Team and is due to launch on the 26th January 2021. The team will work with 14 – 30 year olds who have endured trauma. There will be a key focus on homelessness, reducing criminality and mental health.
- A Mobilisation Group was established which consists of colleagues from the Children's Trust, Council and CCG, and they have worked collectively to develop pathways and to recruit staff into the Team. They will be based within the multi-agency hub in Lancaster Circus, and they will have touch down spaces in other venues, such as Pupil Referral Units (PRUs).
- The Transition Assessment and Wellbeing Hub is the final element of the programme and the Hub will support young people in crisis. The key offer is that of emergency accommodation. The Hub is being commissioned and there is a preferred bidder.
- Performance to-date is within Appendix 1: from 1st September 2020 to 5th January 2021 they received 115 connections requests, of which 76 have been allocated. 60% of young people have been supported, 7% of the cases are closed and 32 have been declined.

- The Children's Trust is the main source of connection requests, 41 to-date, with Adult Social Care and Education being the main connectors within the Council.
- They received the highest number of connection requests in September and a communications plan was put in place when they dipped in October, which resulted in an increase the following month.
- The majority of young people they work with are aged 16 – 19 years old, predominantly white British with few connection requests relating to BAME young people. 71 of the young people have been diagnosed with autism or ADHD.
- Of the four PFA outcomes: employment, housing, health and friendships, unsurprisingly, many of the young people are seeking support in relation to employment and friendships.
- Most requests were declined because services are already in place. Other reasons include where a request has been received that does not relate to a PFA outcome, for example a request for assistance with education.
- They are collating qualitative data in the form of 'stories of difference' and examples are provided in Appendix 2. These will capture the journey and outcomes.
- 91% young people with a PFA plan feel they can achieve the outcomes within their plan.
- Practical examples were provided of co-production.
- The Youth Empowerment Squad (YES) meets weekly and has developed officers to co-produce material and is a great sounding board.
- The Life Course Board agreed four workstreams.
 - The first workstream relates to youth custody. Pathways for accessing services have been mapped and they are working with criminal justice partners to provide a mechanism for young people in custody to have a voice as to how they shape services.
 - The second workstream is community circles of support. This is an initiative that was developed in the north of the country and involves a circle of trusted adults, such as teachers, sports coaches and family members, to support a young person achieve their aspirations.
 - The third workstream is day opportunities. They have worked with the Community Catalysts organisation to provide a free four week programme of virtual online activities and these are due to commence on the 8th February 2021. The programme is for young people who have disabilities, autism or extra support needs.
 - The fourth workstream is supported accommodation. This is led by the Children's Trust in conjunction with VCS. The supported accommodation workstream addresses the challenges around

supported accommodation for younger adults in care aged 16 and above.

- Autism and ADHD has now been added as a fifth workstream during the proof of concept period. They have formulated an action plan with PFA being one of the elements. The majority of young people they work with have a diagnosis of autism or ADHD.
- They are currently consulting on the draft commissioning strategy and this is due to be published in April 2021. Caroline is currently engaging partners on the refresh of the existing transition strategy which is also due to be published in April 2021.
- Practical examples were provided of integrated working and these include establishing good links with the PRU, where they will have a presence and undertake targeted work with young people etc.
- In terms of governance, they provide monthly updates to the Preparation for Adulthood Board and the Life Course Board. They also provide weekly data reports, and input into the performance meeting within the Trust, as well as reporting into the Executive meeting.

The following were among the main points raised during the discussion with Members:

- They can carry a case load of 130 – 140 within each team. Several workers, such as Family Support Workers will carry a case load c.18 young people.
- As for future demand, this is part of the proof of concept and they are monitoring the reasons for the connection requests, so they can gauge the demand as this is unknown. Also, this is being undertaken during Covid so the true projection going forward is unknown.
- Concern was expressed that the temptation with projects may be to re-invent the wheel and not build on past work. There is a substantial amount of data, for example, the youth remand and re-offending rates and a snapshot was requested, so this can be compared, tracked and monitored. Dionne McAndrews informed Members that she is now responsible for the Youth Offending Service and they recognise the links between the youth justice cohorts, and this includes the at risk category. The PFA is integrated with existing services, so they will be looking at the existing approach, what is missing and what can be done to stop more children coming into the system. They are working on how they can get those already in the youth justice system to exit it successfully so they don't re-enter.
- There is a strong focus on children in custody and on remand because they are usually in the highest cohort group to re-offend. They have fractured relationships and are very susceptible to exploitation, with their chances of gaining employment being extremely limited. Also, there are a significant number in the Youth Offending Service placed within the PRU, which is why the PFA Team will be undertaking some co-location within the provision.

- There is currently a disparate offer in relation to autism and ADHD. The Autism and ADHD Board have had sign off from partners to create a joint autism post. This post will be funded by multiple agencies and will help co-ordinate and enhance the offer, moving away from silo working.
- Connections by age: eight out of 10 connections were declined for 16 – 17 year olds, and nine out of 12 were declined for 17 year olds. Caroline responded that of the 115 connections received, 15 young people already had services in place that were supporting them with the outcome, so there would have been duplication from the service. Also, five of the young people were at crisis point with their mental health and there wasn't the expertise within the Team to support them because the Vulnerable Adults Team hasn't launched yet. However, the Vulnerable Adults Team is going to review all the cases that the Integrated Transition Team declined, and it may be that the Team can take on some of those cases. In addition, some young people have been referred inappropriately, such as for help with education, where there are services within the council that would provide support, as opposed to this service.
- They have set up a group and started a piece of work to investigate the low connections received for BAME young people.
- The workstreams were a multi-agency decision and were agreed at the Life Course Board, chaired by Graeme Betts, Director of Adult Social Care. The context being that the first team was mobilised during the first lockdown and several priorities were identified which they thought might be beneficial to the wider Council's response. Also, the Home Office announced that they were going to be releasing prisoners from the criminal justice secure estate which informed the thinking around youth justice.
- The background of the Team is diverse, and they didn't seek to recruit all social workers. In the Integration Transitions Team there is only one qualified social worker. However, they all have experience of working with young people and they provide an ongoing training program, with them being able to access training from the Trust and the Council. Within the Vulnerable Adults Team, they have specialist mental health practitioners and data analysts etc., who have a broad range of experience.
- It was apparent that at the one day recruitment not all candidates could engage with young people and build trust and rapport with them quickly. Additional training will therefore be provided and they will be taking this learning outside of the PFA.

Drawing the discussion to a close, the Acting Chair thanked officers for attending and invited them to continue to update the Committee on an ongoing basis as and when required.

RESOLVED

The committee noted the update and requested the following:

- An update to be brought back to Scrutiny in 6 – 12 months' time and this should include data that allows for comparison, tracking and monitoring.
- Clarification on the ethnicity profile in the report.

7. ATTENDANCE AND EXCLUSIONS

(See document No. 4).

The Acting Chair welcomed Councillor Jayne Francis, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills & Culture, Lisa Fraser, AD, Education and Early Years and Alan Michell, Head of School Admissions and Fair Access to the meeting for this item.

Lisa Fraser introduced the item and informed Members that they were asked to focus on the local authorities and school's statutory duties around attendance and exclusions. They received an e-mail from the Parent Carer Forum this morning and from meetings with the Forum they understand that there is considerable interest and questions around SEND exclusions. However, the presentation does not focus on this today and SEND exclusions is under the remit of Nichola Jones, AD, Inclusion and SEND. It was therefore suggested Members may wish to discuss this at a future meeting.

Alan Michell gave an overview of the presentation and the main points included:

- There are 15 reasons for a legal deletion from a school roll and they have an officer that will investigate possible illegal deletions that are reported to them.
- The key process that is applied for the operation of attendance at a case level is called Fast Track, and they use this to engage in the monitoring and escalation of issues around school attendance. Fast Track has a focus on providing help early and has the scope for schools to refer to the Local Authority if they feel there needs to be an escalation and potentially consideration of penalty notices. They have not issued any penalty notices during Covid.
- The DfE last provided absence data in the Autumn and the impact of Covid is reflected within this.
- Primary school attendance both within the city and nationally would generally be much more positive than the Secondary school attendance. On a comparison basis there is a need for improvement, both in respect of the persistent absence rate and the overall rate.
- For Secondary attendance, Birmingham is slightly above the national average for persistent absence and for the overall rate Birmingham is on a par with the national average.
- The SEND figures show that the biggest challenge is with absences being higher than in mainstream Primary and Secondary schools. There is work to be done to close the gap, especially when compared to the national picture in relation to persistent absences.

- They have a School's Portal and there is the scope to use this for both attendance and exclusions. However, work needs to be undertaken to understand the financial viability and potential funding.
- They have a small team that undertakes the exclusions work and this focuses not just on the administering process, but also on providing support and challenge. It is important to understand that it is the head teacher that makes the initial decision to exclude and the other key decision maker is the governing body, so it is very much a school decision.
- There is a framework for using reduced timetables and rather than this being a default position there must be exceptional circumstances.
- There is a disproportionate representation of Black and Mixed pupils who are permanently excluded.
- Working closely with City of Birmingham School (COBS) is key in both the provision for permanently excluded pupils, and the work they undertake to support reengagement and reintegration into mainstream education.
- Managed moves are very important in this agenda and a managed move needs to be agreed with the child, parent, departing school and the receiving school.
- Children Missing Education (CME) is related to the attendance and exclusions agenda. An impact from Covid has possibly led to an increase in referrals.
- Officers have also seen an increase in Elective Home Education (EHE) that could be attributed to Covid.
- Collaborative working is key for all the agendas and the Council needs to have good working relationships, with schools understanding their responsibilities and acting appropriately. It also depends on the good working relationships with the other 85 admissions authorities in the city etc.,
- Work is underway with the Birmingham Education Partnership (BEP) and the AD for Inclusion and SEND to look at curriculum offers for at risk and / or disengaged pupils.

The following were among the main points raised during the discussion with Members:

- Leave in term time: the response of the school depends on the circumstances. Where there is unauthorised leave in school term time that is in excess of 20 days, and a school place is withdrawn on that basis, then there are clear arrangements in place to allocate a school place when the child returns. This can include parents applying directly to schools or being allocated a place into the nearest school with an available place by the local authority. If there are particular challenges then the fair access process can be utilised. Figures pre-covid will be provided to Members.
- Parents can request a managed move, however there is no requirement on any school to agree to this. There needs to be agreement with all parties, this includes the child, the school where the child is enrolled and the school

where they want to move to. For Secondary schools this takes place via the Local Sharing Panels. For Primary schools this comes under the collaborative approach - with other schools that may be in the same Trust or are geographically linked and where they have good relationships.

- If a child is away due to medical reasons the school can make the decision to refer the child for specialist support and they have provision contracted locally. More data can be provided on exclusion comparisons including the recognised core cities as this is a mixed picture.
- They have recently had an audit and there are opportunities to have a direct impact on the process that has resulted in permanent exclusions. The intention is to work with schools to put in clear processes for when a child is flagged as being at risk of permanent exclusion. They would then look to intervene with an early help approach, such as working with health, and this is at the early stages. There are also opportunities that are being led by the Secondary Schools Forum, looking at the curriculum offer so that it is relevant and appropriate and helpful in reducing exclusion rates.
- In relation to high levels of absences at Primary school level, it is interesting if this is compared with the Secondary school data. Looking at Secondary attendance and absence data, the progress and attainment at Secondary levels compare more favourably nationally than the Primary data. One of the avenues officers therefore need to explore, particularly with the school improvement provider, is around enriching the curriculum offer in Primary Schools, to encourage pupils to stay at school, making sure that it meets children's needs, interests and aspirations. Also, there is anecdotal evidence that where the Council has focused extra resources to target particular schools they have had an impact as they can drill down to specific cases and individual children and have made a discernible difference.
- There is a need to be realistic in terms of resources, as local authorities have had funding cuts. Therefore, in terms of funding available, it is enough to cover statutory duties.
- One of the things the Council has done, particularly during Covid, is to recognise that schools look to the Council for leadership and this can be used to influence the school's behaviour. Also, they are looking at schools which have successfully tackled these issues so they can assist them to work with schools who are having difficulties.
- There is support they offer to parents and carers through the SEND services and they need to ensure that parents and carers are aware of where they can access this support. A positive from Covid is that they are working more closely with the agencies that provide support to families, especially colleagues in social care, health and the police and they work closely with the Joint Response Unit.
- Schools have been requested by the DfE to complete a daily attendance return during Covid. Although this isn't compulsory the vast majority of

Birmingham schools have completed these and they have proved invaluable in providing real time data to better target the response.

- In terms of the School's Portal, officers are looking at costs and they need to be convinced there would be buy-in from the schools.
- There are 15 reasons that a child can be removed from the school roll. If a school operates outside of this it will be investigated. If this is the case then the school will be challenged. The numbers reported were very low – single-figures in the last term before Christmas.
- It was noted that exclusions remain stubbornly high.
- It was questioned whether there are pupils that have had numerous managed moves which may indicate there are problems that are not being addressed. This information is not held centrally and officers will make enquiries to see if they can provide this.
- Officers confirmed that they work closely with SENDIASS.
- Exclusions is a complex area and to understand the patterns of exclusions there is a need to reflect on the individual child, family circumstances, peer groups, community context, national policy and how this plays out in the school in terms of the culture, and also the strategies they employ and reflected in their behaviour policies. Officers can provide a breakdown of exclusions and these can be for serious offences, such as assaults on peers and staff.
- A concern was raised regarding the consistency of what schools might be providing in relation to online learning and it was questioned what can be done to help. Officers stated they would welcome parents being directed to them if they felt the school's online provision is not meeting requirements. Also, there is a myriad of resources and officers will put these in one place so parents can access these. The Acting Chair thanked teaching staff for everything they were doing in very challenging times to ensure children could continue with learning at home where necessary.
- The DfE has clarified that attendance is only recorded for those that attend school and there are no plans to record pupils who log on remotely.
- Officers confirmed they have not issued penalty notices and that we are in the lockdown landscape so there will be no enforcement action.
- The 2020/21 figures need to be caveated with the Covid context when making comparisons with the previous two years, otherwise it is like 'comparing apples with pears'.
- In relation to 'reasonable enquiries' for Children Missing Education (CME), there have been 62 children referred since 1st September 2020, 42 have been traced and are in receipt of suitable education. The remaining 20 have been logged as CME, their information was shared with the Children's Trust for any safeguarding concerns, of which there were none. It was felt that this was not acceptable and this had been highlighted in an Ofsted 2014 report.

Officers responded that two weeks ago they initiated a review of the systems and processes in place and this will result in changes. It is anticipated that the initial work will be completed within two months and officers are happy to provide an update.

- Pupils who have been permanently excluded should be offered a place in COBS within five days. COBS will then engage with the pupil and family. However, there is currently a waiting list for places and therefore a provider offers flexible learning to those on the waiting list. Officers to provide a breakdown of the figures for this.
- Parents will give a reason for their child being in Elective Home Education and Covid or changes to the RSE curriculum may have had an impact on the number of referrals.

The Acting Chair thanked officers for their attendance and looked forward to the requested updates being provided. There will also be an invite to a future committee meeting.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing stated that she will pick-up the issues that have been raised by the Committee with officers and will get back to the Committee on these.

RESOLVED

The Committee noted the update and requested:

- Figures pre-Covid in relation to leave in term time where a school place has been withdrawn.
- Data to be provided on exclusion comparisons including the recognised core cities.
- The exclusions figures on ethnicity will be confirmed as it is thought the figure is cumulative and not a separate figure for non-white British.
- Update on the School's Portal to be provided when appropriate.
- The number of managed moves including whether pupils have had numerous managed moves if this information is available.
- A breakdown of the exclusion categories.
- Officers to look at what data they have in relation to autism and exclusions and will provide this.
- Officers to put the myriad of resources for online learning in one place so parents can access these.
- An update on the initial work that should be completed within two months in relation to Children Missing Education (CME).
- A breakdown of figures for those waiting for a placement at COBS – to include how many are waiting and the waiting times.

- Regular updates on Children Missing Education (CME) to see if linked to Covid.
- The categories and reasons for Elective Home Education (EHE).

8. WORK PROGRAMME

(See document No. 5).

Members discussed the work programme and it was questioned whether it would be more appropriate to move the Home to School Transport item from the March meeting to the April or May meeting. This was because it was felt that as schools are closed the home to school transport data cannot be collected, also this would allow the Executive time to progress the actions. It was suggested that the Leader may want to input as to when it would be appropriate for this to be programmed.

It was suggested that Councillor John Cotton, Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, Community Safety and Equalities and the Community Safety Partnership could replace the Home to School Transport item on the March agenda.

An update on Children Missing Education (CME) at the April meeting was suggested.

The Acting Chair undertook to discuss this with the Chair and the work programme will be updated accordingly.

RESOLVED

- The committee noted the work programme.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 3rd March 2021 at 1000 hours via an online meeting.

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

None.

11. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

12. 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 12.22 hours.

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

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

0930 hours on Wednesday, 3rd February 2021, Online Meeting

Action Notes

Present:

Councillor Kath Scott (Chair)

Councillors: Mohammed Aikhlaq, Barbara Dring, Kerry Jenkins and Alex Yip

Other Voting Representatives: Rabia Shami, Parent Governor Representative

Also Present:

Councillor Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing

Councillor Peter Fowler

Councillor Jayne Francis, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture

David Bridgman, Head of Service, Special Educational Needs Assessment & Review (SENAR)

Jaswinder Didially, Head of Service, Education and Skills

Lisa Fraser, AD, Education and Early Years

Nichola Jones, AD, Inclusion and SEND

Zahid Mahmood, Capital Projects Manager

Ceri Saunders, Acting Group Overview and Scrutiny Manager

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) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor Alex Yip declared that he is the Vice Chair of Governors for Wilson Stuart School.

Councillor Mohammed Aikhlaq declared a non-pecuniary interest as he is on the Board of Directors at Leigh Multi Academy Trust.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Cllr Olly Armstrong, Cllr Charlotte Hodivala, Omar Hanif, Parent Governor Representative, Adam Hardy, Roman Catholic Diocese Representative and Sarah Smith, Church of England Diocese Representative.

4. REQUEST FOR CALL-IN: PROPOSAL TO CLOSE HUNTERS HILL COLLEGE

(See documents No. 1, 2, and 3).

The Chair stated that the purpose of this meeting was 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.

Cllr Peter Fowler introduced the reasons for the call-in request and stated that the information received from the previous Headteacher and NASUWT meet the 4, 5, 6 and 8 call-in criteria.

4. the Executive appears to have failed to consult relevant stakeholders or other interested persons before arriving at its decision;

5. the Executive appears to have overlooked some relevant consideration in arriving at its decision;

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 so to do;

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.

Cllrs Peter Fowler and Alex Yip presented their reasons for the request for the call-in and the Executive and Officers responses included:

- *There have been two consultations and as per the latest consultation the majority of respondents were opposed to the closure - 48 opposed and 12 in favour of closure.*

Appendix 3 provides the breakdown of the responses to the consultation and Members' attention was drawn to the fact that 16 out of the 18 residents were opposed to closure because they wanted to know what will happen with the site, and the land use will be part of a second consultation. Other key themes for those opposed to the closure were: the loss and shortage of specialist and unique provision and concern about where the displaced pupils will go. Responses to these concerns were provided under the other call-in criteria.

- *The Council has neglected the school and failed to invest in maintenance and ensuring health and safety compliance. The report is stating that the estimated cost of bringing all buildings up to a basic, warm and dry standard is circa £5m. However, this is disputed, with others stating this is between*

£1m - £4m. It is also unclear what this circa £5m includes as this is not itemised, and it was questioned whether this includes the residential provision.

Members were informed that the buildings are of different ages and details of the condition of the buildings was provided at the meeting. This included the major failing of the heating system in Cropwood House.

As to the level of investment, Members were informed that ongoing annual investment is required for repairs and maintenance, and to keep the building compliant. Over the last five years, just under £1m has been spent on the maintenance, with the majority of the funding being provided through the Local Authority's School Condition Allocation. This means that on average £250k per annum has been spent on Hunters Hill from a total available annual grant of £10m for 190 schools the Council has a duty to maintain.

- *There is insufficient information regarding the availability and suitability of provision for the displaced pupils and concern was expressed that a lot of EHCPs are out of date.*
- *Also, there is insufficient provision in the City for children with SEND and demand is increasing every year.*
- *In addition, there is no information as to what the cost per pupil would be if they transferred to another school. Therefore, even if the cost of circa £5m was correct, investing rather than closing the school could be a saving for the Council.*

Members were informed that Appendix 6 provides the numbers of displaced pupils if the school was to close. 56 pupils are Birmingham residents and 23 pupils are from other local authorities. The Council's legal duty is for the 56 pupils and they are consulting with the other local authorities who have responsibility for the 23 pupils.

Of the 56 pupils there will be a total of 46 pupils in current years 8 – 10 who will require a place. Eight of these are already the subject of agreed change of placement requests unrelated to the closure proposal and places are being found for these pupils. As for the remaining 38 pupils, Members were provided with details together with costs per pupil of possible placements with cost effective providers.

Members were assured the Council is committed to ensuring sufficient appropriate places, as close as possible to where the displaced pupils live, are available from September 2021. All displaced pupils will be prioritised and there will be senior officer oversight. The EHCP's will be updated accordingly and there will be individual meetings with all families which SENDIASS has agreed to attend.

Also, in the maintained sector the local authority has invested in an increased provision at Skilts Special School.

In terms of transition, professional support will be made available via Educational Psychology and placement decisions will be finalised as early as possible in the Summer Term to support effective transition.

- *In and prior to 2016 the school was never rated below good with outstanding features. The Council has not intervened in relation to school improvement and as a result the school was rated as inadequate by Ofsted. This led to the school becoming subject to a Directive Academy Order and no Academy sponsor has been identified. The effort put into the Ofsted action plan and finding an academy sponsor was also questioned.*

Members were informed the school received an OFSTED rating of inadequate following an inspection in September 2019 due to complaints and serious concerns, including safeguarding risks. Since then, the Council has been working with the school to implement their post-OFSTED action plan. This includes working with Birmingham Education Partnership (BEP), who secured additional support from Forward Education Trust. Additionally, BEP provided two experienced former Headteachers.

- *There is a cumulative deficit prediction of circa £2m by the end of the 2021/22 financial year and it was queried whether the Council paused allocation of admitting pupils, thereby reducing the number of pupils and contributing to the deficit.*

Members were informed that this is demand led by parental preference and the demand has reduced and reflected in the commissioned places in recent years.

- *The distance the displaced pupils would need to travel could be longer for some children and the Council could be moving pupils away from friends.*

Members were informed that the school is located in Bromsgrove and the travelling distance will reduce unless pupils live in south of city.

- *The future of the site was questioned.*

Members were informed that the this is held in Trust by the Council and managed by the Council's Trust and Charities Committee who will consider what will happen with the site if it is agreed that Hunters Hill will close.

During the discussion with Members the main points included:

- The closure of the college is not in the spirit of the gift to the city made approximately 100 years ago.
- There is need for more and not fewer school places for pupils with SEND and Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH) needs. As per the answer to written question C15 at City Council on 3rd November 2020, there were 55 children with SEND without a school place, and 199 children with SEND in mainstream education awaiting a suitable school place. There will be a reduction of 135 places if Hunters Hill College is closed and it was questionable whether this approach is sustainable.
- Members were informed that the Executive do not take closing a special school lightly. The investment in Skilts Special School was made possible due to a one-off allocation from the corporate centre and the capital funding is to rebuild Skilts.

- Cllr Yip felt there will be higher costs as the majority of displaced pupils would need to be placed in private provision, and this may be five times the cost of what is currently be spent at Hunters Hill College.
- Members were given assurances regarding the alternative places for the displaced pupils and Members requested that the committee revisit this in a couple of months' time to ensure pupils have been placed correctly, and these places are sustainable rather than short term places.
- Skilts Special School is currently rated as inadequate and therefore cannot be classed as an improvement in education for displaced pupils. Members were informed that Skilts Special School is moving forward and in a different place to Hunters Hill.
- Members felt it would have been useful to have had the information provided at today's meeting prior to the call-in. The Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture agreed that a lot of information has been made available today, with this being shared as soon as they were able to do so. However, this has been noted for future reference.
- Members were informed that there have been strenuous efforts made by the Regional Schools Commissioner and the DfE is committed to academisation. As for no sponsor being identified, it was presumed this may be because of potential sponsors undertaking due diligence and the amount of finance required to bring the site up to basic warm and dry standard.
- Cllr Jenkins commented that Members do not want Hunters Hill College to close. However, there is a need to meet the call-in criteria when deciding whether to call-in the decision, and this is based on what Members have been told at the meeting. Therefore, if this information proves not to be accurate in the coming months then Scrutiny hold people to account.

RESOLVED

The Committee resolved to not call-in the decision for reconsideration by Cabinet by a vote of 4 Members to 2. Members requested updates on Hunters Hill College that includes the suitability of the school places for the displaced pupils at a future meeting before the Summer Term.

5. REQUEST(S) FOR CALL-IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)

None.

6. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

7. 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 11.14 hours.

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (O&S) COMMITTEE – INFORMAL MEETING

1000 hours on Wednesday, 19th May 2021, Online Meeting

Action Notes

Present:

Councillor Kath Scott (Chair)

Councillors: Mohammed Aikhlaq, Olly Armstrong, Barbara Dring, Charlotte Hodivala
Kerry Jenkins and Alex Yip

Other Voting Representatives: Sarah Smith, Church of England Diocese

Also Present:

Councillor Ian Ward, Leader

Councillor Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing

Councillor Jayne Francis, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture

David Bridgman, Head of Service, Special Educational Needs Assessment & Review (SENAR)

Deborah Brooks, Transformation Director, Commissioning

Jaswinder Didially, Head of Service, Education and Skills

Lisa Fraser, AD, Education and Early Years

Mary Jefferson, Head of Service, Home to School Transport

Nichola Jones, AD, Inclusion and SEND

Ceri Saunders, Acting Group Overview and Scrutiny Manager

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) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Omar Hanif, Parent Governor Representative for attendance, and Councillors Olly Armstrong and Charlotte Hodivala for lateness.

Councillor Alex Yip declared an interest as he is the vice chair of governors at Wilson Stuart School.

3. HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT UPDATE

(See documents No. 1 and No. 2)

Councillor Ian Ward introduced the item and referred to the report that had been circulated with the papers. The Leader highlighted that the task and finish group that he chairs was set up to drive forward improvements and to ensure that implementing the recommendations contained within the EY report was inclusive and cooperative. Attendees included representatives, such as head teachers, the Chair of the Parent Carer Forum and parents and carers. A further public meeting to discuss how the home to school transport service will operate from September 2021 will be held.

Mary Jefferson gave the presentation that complements the report and the main points included:

- Safeguarding: there is a central record for the enhanced DBS checks, and this lines up with the valid dates on the ID badge that should be displayed at all times. The new Compliance Team undertakes unannounced compliance spot checks and there is a penalty points regime. They also undertake weekly Sitreps (situation reports) that contains a lot of detail, for instance details of the DBS checks that are due to expire. In addition, there has been a safeguarding stocktake and these will continue to regularly take place.
- Complaints: they report on the timeliness of responses to parents and Mary reviews the complaint responses and amendments are made where necessary. There will be changes to the formal complaints process, and complaints or comments via other routes are not currently recorded as a complaint. This will change and they expect to see an increase in the number of complaints as a result.

The main points made during the discussion with Members included:

- Deborah Brooks informed Members that safeguarding is absolutely a priority. They have brought together colleagues within the Council and have gone through the issues and all the processes. They have a number of actions to further improve this and provide assurances, and they will be meeting six weekly going forward. They will also be developing a flowchart for parents and schools to show how they can raise a safeguarding issue.
- There are currently two safeguarding issues being investigated.
- Complaints come from a number of sources, such as schools, parents, drivers, guides or witnesses etc. They have re-written the code of guidance and have stepped up the training. In addition to the training given by the providers they are discussing with a school specific training to meet the individual pupils needs.
- The weekly situation reports are used to determine what needs to be addressed immediately and what needs a longer term strategy.

- There is a new Compliance Team that undertakes the safeguarding spot checks. These unannounced spot checks are undertaken on a daily basis where possible. These are also about encouraging the operator to improve their practice.
- Whether there is a report that includes the outcomes of the spot checks and any incidences that have been reported back which could be used when re-procuring the service etc: Officers can potentially adapt the situation report to capture the key headlines for this.
- Training and refresher training: any training that is undertaken will have a repeat date as appropriate. Officers will take this back to the stocktake group and pull together the types of training and the relevant dates. The Chair commented that this needs to be monitored via the KPIs and it should include attendance of the training provided by the employer and that which is provided by the Council etc.
- Soft complaints and the importance of reporting to gauge the patterns and key issues that are affecting parents: officers have started this piece of work and they can bring this back to the Committee.

Councillor Kate Booth apologised to the children and parents for problems with the service and thanked the Leader and the previous Interim Chief Executive for the significant investment into the service. The Cabinet Member also thanked the parents, carers and officers etc., who have invested their time and energy in supporting the improvement journey. The highlights included:

- Since March 2021 99% - 100% of the routes have been delivered.
- The Home to School Transport Team are working with the Clean Air Zone (CAZ) team to capture any initial impact on journey times.
- They have pulled together Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS) and this is due to be launched on the Local Offer website.

The main points made during the discussion with Members included:

- Contract management: they have some capacity that they will be injecting into contract management, and they will be working closely with the schools and addressing issues through informal and formal meetings.
- Length of journeys: they have plotted the routes that have gone out to tender, and operators are invited to come back with alternative routes. These will be checked to ensure compliance with statutory guidance. Also, the routes may take a couple of weeks to bed in.
- They are investing in risk assessment officers as there may be specific needs for longer waiting times to be applied when some children are being picked up for school. This will impact on journey times so they will not be applying this across the board.
- Councillor Alex Yip raised the concern that some children have not yet had their school place confirmed or some have been agreed late and this will have an effect on home to school transport.

- They have employed a mobilisation manager who has just started. Their work includes ensuring September works as smoothly as possible, considering traffic volumes increase, and the letters that go out to parents etc.
- The Leader thanked Councillor Kath Scott for chairing the Committee and commented that O&S can add value to the Council's operations.

The update was noted and:

- Officers will soon have a roll out plan for the 365 response and this will be communicated very shortly. The Chair requested an update in June 2021.
- Integrated Transport Unit (ITU): officers are currently undertaking scoping activity and it was agreed an update to the Committee could be provided in the Autumn.

4. HUNTERS HILL COLLEGE UPDATE

(See document No. 3)

Councillor Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing, Councillor Jayne Francis, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture, David Bridgman, Head of SENAR, Lisa Fraser, AD, Education and Early Years, Jaswinder Didially, Head of Service, Education and Skills, and Nichola Jones, AD, Inclusion and SEND were in attendance for this item.

David Bridgman and Jaswinder Didially gave the presentation and the main points made during the presentation included:

- The on roll figures change on a daily basis and this has reduced to 66 as of today. They have identified 63 interim placements and it is anticipated that the majority of these will become permanent.
- The intention was to look for permanent places but there were serious issues that prevented pupils returning to the school site and therefore they have been looking for temporary placements.
- The formal consultation with staff concluded on 4 May 2021.
- They have started the decommissioning of the buildings (ground floor windows and doors have been boarded up etc.) and this process will continue with the other buildings that are no longer used moving forward.
- Cropwood Trustees have been kept up to date and they are due to go back to them on the 15th June 2021. Any future use of the site will be referred to them for approval and they are working on an options appraisal.
- There will be a clear audit trail for the disposal of the equipment on site.
- 51 pupils are regularly attending their interim placements and work is ongoing to finalise start dates and secure consistent attendance in respect of the remaining pupils with identified placements.

- Attendance across all the age groups was circa 86% and given the nature of the cohort this is reasonable in the circumstances.
- The cost of the interim placements is consistent with the current funding levels at Hunters Hill.
- They have been seeking feedback from the pupils and this has been positive and reflects the care in selecting the interim placements.
- SENAR and the Home Bridging Team will continue to monitor pupil attendance and engagement for all pupils in interim placements or receiving home tuition.
- There will be a dedicated officer in SENAR to coordinate the ongoing tracking and monitoring of the pupils to ensure the placements remain sustainable and viable.

The main points made during the discussion with Members included:

- Remote learning is not the Council's preferred option unless it is unavoidable and the only option the parents will accept. This is a case for a small number of year 11 pupils because they either don't want tutors attending the home or they do not want to have another transition.
- The recent Ofsted monitoring inspection visit in March 2021 did raise concerns of the quality of the on-line offer and a lack of pupil engagement with remote learning: the leadership has taken steps to address this with each individual package being tailored to the young person, and this is an interim measure.
- The monitoring visit also raised issues that included safeguarding and the senior leadership have put in a lot of effort into the EHCPs etc., and things have moved on quite considerably since then.
- How many of the placements are nearer and how many placements are further away from the pupil's home: officers have got details of the distance although there has been some movement due to some children having moved out of the area.
- There are challenges nationally with regards to annual reviews and compliance with statutory timescales for EHCPs, and Birmingham is no exception. All the children in Hunters Hill College had their EHCP meetings before the end of March 2021 in conjunction with individual meetings with parents regarding placements. Officers haven't met all the statutory timescales in relation to finalising plans within four weeks of the annual review papers being received. This is largely because of the transition from interim to permanent placements.
- It is important that the Committee have sight of the tracking of pupils to permanent placements.
- There has been a huge amount of work undertaken to secure the appropriate interim placements focusing on what was best for the pupils, and all providers are rated as good.

The update was noted and Officers to provide and update on:

- Travelling times/distance for pupils to their interim and permanent places (including how many pupils have and have not reduced their travelling).
- How long it has taken to get pupils into interim placements and how long it has taken to convert these to permanent placements.

5. WORK PROGRAMME

(See document No. 4)

The Chair reflected on the work of the Committee and thanked Members and officers for their support and dedication.

The priorities and items of interest highlighted for future meetings:

- The health aspects of EHCPs (to include the process and commitment of health).
- Joint working with the Health and Adults Social Care O&S Committee regarding mental health during Covid.
- How mainstream schools have coped with the return to school and the pressures.
- Councillor Yip requested the Committee ask the Executive to undertake an independent inquiry into the Hunters Hill College, to include the background and the journey and it was recommended that this is discussed by the Committee at a formal meeting.

6. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

The meeting ended at 12.32 hours.

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (O&S) COMMITTEE – INFORMAL MEETING

1000 hours on Wednesday, 21 July 2021, Online Meeting - Action Notes

Present:

Councillor Narinder Kaur Kooner (Chair)

Councillors: Olly Armstrong, Charlotte Hodivala, Katherine Iroh, Kerry Jenkins and Alex Yip

Other Voting Representatives: Rabia Shami, Parent Governor, and Sarah Smith, Church of England Diocese

Also Present:

Councillor Jayne Francis, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture

David Bridgman, Head of Service, Special Educational Needs Assessment & Review (SENAR)

Deborah Brooks, Transformation Director, Commissioning, Education and Skills

Kevin Crompton, Interim Director, Education & Skills / Director of Children Services (DCS)

Jaswinder Didially, Head of Service, Education and Skills

Lisa Fraser, AD, Education and Early Years

Alan Michell, Head of School Admissions

Ilgun Yusuf, Acting AD, Skills and Employability

Ceri Saunders, Acting Group Overview and Scrutiny Manager

Amanda Simcox, Scrutiny Officer

1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST

The Chair advised that this meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's meeting You Tube site (www.youtube.com/channel/UCT2kT7ZRPFCXq6_5dnVnYlw) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there are confidential or exempt items.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillor Kath Scott, Adam Hardy, Roman Catholic diocese representative, and Omar Hanif, Parent Governor Representative.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Alex Yip declared an interest as he is the deputy chair of governors at Wilson Stuart School and his sister works for National Express.

4. CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION, SKILLS & CULTURE

(See document No. 1)

The Chair advised there would be a change in order to the agenda items to accommodate Councillor Francis having to attend another meeting.

Councillor Jayne Francis, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture, Lisa Fraser, AD, Education and Early Years, Ilgun Yusuf, Acting AD, Skills and Employability and Alan Michell, Head of School Admissions and Fair Access were in attendance for this item.

The Cabinet Member gave the presentation and a discussion with members followed. The main points included:

- Children Missing Education (CME) is a priority for Birmingham and updating and reviewing the IT is key to this.
 - The Council has been reporting data to the Birmingham Safeguarding Children's Partnership (BSCP). The Council has revised how this is reported to them, and this data can be shared with the Committee.
 - The pandemic has provided challenges for staff, for example, schools are required to undertake specific checks, however there has been an increase in workload due to a small number of schools reporting children as missing education to the Council, which following investigation the Council has found not to be the case.
 - Officers are working with partners and they have a "Joint Responses" group that meets regularly. CME has been flagged at this group.
 - There is a slightly different definition in terms of children missing in relation to social care (and what action Ofsted would expect from the Children's Trust) and CME, which is followed up by education staff.
 - The Cabinet Member attended Executive Management Team (EMT) where it was acknowledged improvements needed to be made to data sharing in relation to children's and adults' social care, and there is a substantial piece of work that is being undertaken over the next few months on this.
 - Locating children's whereabouts is a challenge, with a lot of children having left the city and the country. Officers have reviewed the accounting arrangements to ensure they are robust and this piece of work is nearing completion; they are continuing to work to put in place the intention to piggy back the schools portal, which has been

used successfully by schools for reporting attendance during the pandemic; and they have repurposed resources and have additional staff to support CME.

- Razia Butt has been developing the work for the Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and health education curriculum and going forward the Cabinet Member will ensure the O&S Committee are involved in this.
- Elective Home Education (EHE) / home schooling: there is a legal framework that the Council adheres to which makes it difficult for the Council to intervene. Families have the right to home school and the Council can only intervene if the education is deemed as 'unsuitable' and at that point a school attendance order is issued. There have been events and workshops specifically for parents who EHE, however attendance has been disappointing. An annual visit is made where possible and the screening process has been key in ensuring vulnerable children are monitored.

The Chair advised members to forward any questions they have to the Scrutiny officers so these could be answered and shared with the Committee.

Actions:

A written report on:

- The work regarding children's social care and data sharing as mentioned by the Cabinet Member.
- The capacity and take up of the Holiday Activities and Food programme.
- Whether there is a system and clear plan in place to support schools to ensure pupils and staff are safe if the pandemic continues.
- Information on Everyone's Invited programme, including the number of Birmingham schools that were flagged.
- Youth Service:
 - Half of the Youth Service budget is being funded externally and whether future resourcing of the service is being planned.
 - Whether a mapping exercise of particular issues affecting young people, such as youth violence, has been undertaken.
- School Exclusion, Off Rolling, Part Time Timetables etc.
 - Information on the number of exclusions and off rolling etc.
 - Legal action for non-attendance at school was suspended until after May half-term 2021 and it was queried whether this has continued to be suspended, or if not, when legal action recommenced.
 - What is the council doing to ensure that pupil attendance drastically improves from September? There is a very strong link between attendance and attainment.

- What happens to the pupils who are excluded? How soon are they re-schooled? What support is given to pupils who are at-risk of being excluded? What about the managed move programme?
- Does the term "children missing in education" include "school refusers"?
- How many children are there on part-time timetables?
- Does all the data given at the meeting include academies and free-schools?
- EHE:
 - Details requested on the process and job titles/descriptions for those that oversee this.
 - What is done to assess and track pupils who are EHE?
 - How is it decided that this education is not good enough?
 - Details of the support that is provided to parents, as Councillor Olly Armstrong has received anecdotal evidence about the support “not being great”.
 - The process of inviting parents to the session and follow up, including questions that are asked.

5. HUNTERS HILL COLLEGE UPDATE

(See document No. 2)

Councillor Jayne Francis, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture, Jaswinder Didiyally, Head of Service, Education and Skills and David Bridgman, Head of SENAR in attendance for this item.

David Bridgman updated members on the current position of the 84 pupils that were on-roll at Hunters Hill College when the decision to close was made:

- They are down to eight children on-roll as of this morning who are in years 8 – 10, and they have identified destinations for all of them.
- Three children have agreed September placements, but they cannot be taken off-roll until they start those new placements.
- Two children are other local authority children and those destinations have been agreed with those authorities.
- Of the remaining three children, one is in year 9 and two in year 10:
 - One is shortly to be confirmed by the provider;
 - One is subject to consultation and;
 - One is subject to custodial restrictions which are preventing officers from finalising the plan.

The main points made during the discussion with members included:

- No children have been educated on site since the decision to close was made. The length of time taken to secure placements has been mitigated by providing interim placements, home tuition, or in a small number of cases, remote provision via the school.
- Kevin Crompton had met with the Interim Executive Board (IEB) and there is a meeting between the IEB and officers next week. The specific purpose is to ascertain what can be learnt from what has happened over the last year. This meeting is taking place on the 29th July 2021 and a short note on this can be shared with the Committee. Councillor Alex Yip requested that officers ask whether an invitation could be extended to himself.
- Kevin Crompton offered his thanks to David Bridgman on the work he has done on this.
- A proposed inquiry into the circumstances leading up to the decision to close Hunters Hill College and learning lessons was raised. This would not be about revisiting the decision to close the school as this was discussed at the request for the call-in meeting. Jaswinder Didiyally highlighted there will be a number of “lessons learnt” sessions and so Kevin Crompton requested a clear TOR on what specifically the Committee was requesting from officers. The Chair suggested this item is not put onto the work programme at the moment, and a decision can be made after a TOR is put together and the Committee has received more information.

Actions:

- An analysis on how long it has taken to relocate the students.
- Information directly from the parents on the quality of the home education provided.
- A TOR to be agreed by the Committee for officers, so that members can receive more information regarding the circumstances leading up to the decision to close Hunters Hill College.

6. SEND UPDATE

(See document No. 3)

Kevin Crompton, Interim Director, Education & Skills / Director of Children Services (DCS) and Deborah Brooks, Transformation Director - Commissioning, Education and Skills were in attendance.

The Chair introduced the item and highlighted that although there is a lot to be done and insufficient progress made, the letter highlighted some improvements. The Chair felt that it was imperative that the children and families are at the centre of the improvements to be made, and thanked Councillor Kate Booth, the former Cabinet Member for Children’s Wellbeing for her work on children’s services.

The Interim Director commented that he would update on SEND and the Cabinet Member for Children's Services items together, focusing on the outcomes of the recent Ofsted inspection of SEND and the letter.

The main points included:

- The Ofsted findings were in line with our own self-evaluation.
- Officers didn't judge whether sufficient progress has been made as that is an Ofsted and CQC judgement.
- There have been some good foundations. However, there has not been enough impact on the daily lives and experiences of children and young people, their families and carers, and that is the prime thing that has to change.
- We have not been good at genuine co-production, engagement and co-design. Some work is beginning on this.
- At present the officers are in a "recovery period" and they are working hard to stabilise the SENAR team.
- They are strengthening management leadership and they hope to appoint an interim Assistant Director subject to Members' agreement.
- They are identifying senior case workers to help address the significant backlog, and they have set-up a number of panels and are prioritising those needing transition.
- There is a basic capacity issue. DfE guidance is that one caseworker can handle 150 cases per year, but officers can be managing c.500 cases in the current environment. Discussions are happening regarding getting the resources quickly to increase capacity, and the service is highly dependent on agency workers.
- Going forward, there is a broad agreement that there needs to be a base review of the service, including financial, and there must be a new improvement plan and programme with tighter governance, and it has to be one single improvement plan. The Board should be independently chaired, and genuine co-production of developing a new SEND strategy needs to be undertaken.
- There is a need to make sure we get to a system that tries to get beyond "is this inclusion, is this not inclusion", to a system that has sustainable and effective balance between children's needs being met in mainstream, resource bases, and special schools.
- The plan is going to focus on a 3 – 5 year period to turnaround this service.
- The issue at the moment is the Minister has indicated that she intends to issue a direction, and that direction is to appoint a commissioner.
- It is for the commissioner to recommend to the Minister whether the service remains with the Council.
- It is important to recognise that although the system is fundamentally broken there are some parts of the system that were showing promise.
- There seems to have been a better level of service where parents had opportunities to access the Parent Link Advisers. However, there are c.10,000 EHCPs and just four Parent Link Advisers.

- It is evident from the inspection that the Strategy is not fit for purpose, and the service is not good enough, and the initial response is to get the service right for children and families.
- If the Council receive a statutory direction, then Birmingham will be the first local authority to be issued with one and this will demonstrate the level of seriousness of what was found during the inspection.

The main points made during the discussion with members included:

- The Written Statement of Action (WSOA) was an 18 month plan and it was obligatory to have quarterly reviews. In October 2020 it was reported to Scrutiny that the plan was 90% complete. Kevin Crompton commented that the WSOA was deemed as fit for purpose and when he was preparing for the Ofsted inspection, he struggled to find the quarterly reports, without trawling through the minutes of the SEND Improvement Board. It was suggested that the turnover of staff had not helped and Scrutiny may need to keep in touch with the users of the service to gain qualitative information.
- The role of Scrutiny and how things would be different was questioned and the Chair provided assurances that SEND will be the Committee's main area of focus with Officers regularly attending Committee meetings to provide detailed updates and information.
- It may be that the percentage of actions completed may have been the wrong thing to track and so the new programme is about measuring outcomes and officers will be discussing this with parents and families. Officers can then bring this back to the Committee.
- Frustration was expressed that the Committee has done all they could to improve this service for children and families and it was questioned how Scrutiny can help with the solution. Officers welcomed that Scrutiny will question and the first question is "is this set up to succeed" and one of the terms officers are using is "back to basics".
- It was suggested that co-production is key and therefore Scrutiny may want a session with the Parent Carer Forum (PCF) and service users to ascertain what is happening.
- An example of what occurred in Solihull Council was provided whereby Scrutiny wanted to see the journey of the child and parents, and the Chair asked how parents are assisted to navigate the system, a "you said and we did" could assist and Scrutiny can deep dive into certain areas to assist with the improvements.
- The journey with parents and the PCF will be mapped and officers need to co-produce the service, with a co-production officer to be appointed. Also, officers need to have an honest debate to ascertain whether they have the resources to deliver the service, and the IT case work system needs to be improved.
- Councillor Katherine Iroh is interested in being involved with the lived experience journey that was talked about and questioned when and how can we do this. Kevin Crompton advised that most of this will need to be planned and the principal route is through the PCF, as that is what they are

established to do, and it will probably take place in the Autumn term. They are working with the PCF regarding getting more parents involved. This will be shared with Committee as soon as they can, as they are currently focusing on delivering the service.

- The WSoA is still in force until officers are told otherwise, and the data that is currently collected is being reviewed.
- Officers are looking at getting a report to Cabinet in September 2021.

The Chair advised members to forward any questions they have to the Scrutiny officers so these could be answered and shared with the Committee.

Actions:

- Can we lobby government for more funding?
- We must fix SENAR, especially the waiting times. How can this be accomplished?
- A SEND update to be added to the September 2021 Committee meeting.

7. CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S WELLBEING

(See document No. 4)

This item was included in the SEND update item.

8. WORK PROGRAMME

(See document No. 5)

The Chair advised there were gaps in the work programme to accommodate regular updates on SEND.

The following to be added to the work programme:

- Missing children to be added as an area to be covered by the Children's Trust at the 1 September 2021 Committee meeting.
- Elective Home Education (EHE) / Home schooling to be added to the work programme where appropriate.
- Update on Hunters Hill in October 2021, including lessons learnt.
- An in-depth update on SEND in November 2021.
- School attainment and attendance where appropriate.
- Mental health to be discussed before Christmas so it can be picked up again in the Spring. This can include an update from Aquarius (children and young people substance use).
- Youth service and mapping different issues affecting young people in the city.

It was agreed that members can email their thoughts on the work programme to Scrutiny officers, and Councillor Alex Yip will circulate a draft TOR for the questions about what preceded the decision to close Hunters Hill College.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

1 September 2021 at 10am in the BMI

10. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

The meeting ended at 12.17 hours.

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE O&S COMMITTEE
ACTION TRACKER 2021-22

| Date | Agenda Item | Action | Update |
|-------------|---------------------------------|--|---|
| 16 Sep 2020 | SEND Response to Covid | A report on DBS compliance to be provided. | The Chief Executive has commissioned an investigation. To this end, a report will be issued and presented to the relevant council committee to ensure complete transparency. |
| 9 Dec 2020 | Children's Trust Update | The report to the Children's Trust Board resulting from the fundamental review regarding the workforce. | This is the recruitment and retention commission work. They are planning to take a report to the Board on 22 June so could provisionally schedule for after then. |
| | | The annual summary of the KPIs. | This would be part of the year 4 business plan presentation. |
| | | The Cabinet Member agreed to provide a briefing paper on the additional funding from the Government, budget outline, priorities going forward and the long-term contractual negotiation regarding funding for the Trust. | This could be addressed via the Business Plan discussion. |
| 19 May 2021 | Home to School Transport Update | Officers will soon have a roll out plan for the 365 response and this will be communicated very shortly. The Chair requested an update in June 2021. | |
| | | Integrated Transport Unit (ITU): officers are currently undertaking scoping activity and it was agreed an update to the Committee could be provided in the Autumn. | |

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE O&S COMMITTEE
ACTION TRACKER 2021-22

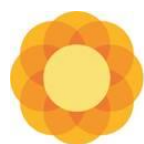
| Date | Agenda Item | Action | Update |
|--------------|--|---|--------|
| 19 May 2021 | Hunters Hill College Update | Travelling times/distance for pupils to their interim and permanent places (including how many pupils have and have not reduced their travelling). | |
| | | How long it has taken to get pupils into interim placements and how long it has taken to convert these to permanent placements. | |
| 21 July 2021 | Cabinet Member for Education, Skills & Culture | <p>A written report on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work regarding children's social care and data sharing as mentioned by the Cabinet Member. • The capacity and take up of the Holiday Activities and Food programme. • Whether there is a system and clear plan in place to support schools to ensure pupils and staff are safe if the pandemic continues. • Information on Everyone's Invited programme, including the number of Birmingham schools that were flagged. <p>Youth Service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Half of the Youth Service budget is being funded externally and whether future resourcing of the service is being planned. • Whether a mapping exercise of particular issues affecting young people, such as youth violence, has been undertaken. <p>School Exclusion, Off Rolling, Part Time Timetables etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on the number of exclusions and off rolling etc. | |

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE O&S COMMITTEE
ACTION TRACKER 2021-22

| Date | Agenda Item | Action | Update |
|------|-------------|---|--------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal action for non-attendance at school was suspended until after May half-term 2021 and it was queried whether this has continued to be suspended, or if not, when legal action re-commenced. • What is the council doing to ensure that pupil attendance drastically improves from September? There is a very strong link between attendance and attainment. • What happens to the pupils who are excluded? How soon are they re-schooled? What support is given to pupils who are at-risk of being excluded? What about the managed move programme? • Does the term "children missing in education" include "school refusers"? • How many children are there on part-time timetables? • Does all the data given at the meeting include academies and free-schools? <p>EHE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details requested on the process and job titles/descriptions for those that oversee this. • What is done to assess and track pupils who are EHE? • How is it decided that this education is not good enough? • Details of the support that is provided to parents, as Councillor Olly Armstrong has received anecdotal evidence about the support "not being great". • The process of inviting parents to the session and follow up, including questions that are asked. | |

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE O&S COMMITTEE
ACTION TRACKER 2021-22

| Date | Agenda Item | Action | Update |
|--------------|-----------------------------|--|--------|
| 21 July 2021 | Hunters Hill College Update | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An analysis on how long it has taken to relocate the students. • Information directly from the parents on the quality of the home education provided. • A TOR to be agreed by the Committee for officers, so that members can receive more information regarding the circumstances leading up to the decision to close Hunters Hill College. | |
| 21 July 2021 | SEND Update | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can we lobby government for more funding? • We must fix SENAR, especially the waiting times. How can this be accomplished? • A SEND update to be added to the September 2021 Committee meeting. | |
| | | | |



BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN'S TRUST

Update Report: Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1 September 2021

1. Introduction

This report updates the committee on progress and key issues in Birmingham Children's Trust.

The Chair requested that the following issues were addressed:

- The Youth Justice Plan
- Children in Care
- Independent Advocacy
- Missing children

2. Covid and Demand

The Children's Trust maintained services, including visits to homes, throughout the pandemic. We led significant partnership work involving NHS, Police, third sector, to ensure a collaborative approach was taken to addressing and supporting the needs of the city's most vulnerable children during periods of lockdown.

Sickness rates in the Trust peaked at around 35 social workers at one time, and arrangements were put in place to ensure our vulnerable children were supported while social workers were recuperating.

In the period April-July 2021 as schools and society reopened the Trust saw unprecedented levels of demand in terms of additional contacts, referrals and requests for support, which led to a position where we were working with 1200 cases more than the average – a rise of 15%. This created huge pressure on staff and managers. With schools breaking up, we saw demand decrease to more usual levels. Activity in September when schools return will give a clear indication of whether we were dealing with a post-lockdown 'bulge' or a more significant and consistent trajectory.

3. Performance

Performance remains strong across the indicators that sit within the Trust's contract. The only indicator where we are slightly 'off track' is in relation to agency social workers. We are slightly above the upper tolerance, at 16%. This compares very favourably with regional and national averages (some of our neighbouring authorities have an agency SW rate of above 50%). The timeliness of our work is good (assessments, initial child protection conferences, reviews for children in care). While the pandemic had a significant impact on our care leavers, performance in this area remains good (the vast majority in suitable accommodation; and an increase in the number in education, training or employment)

The Performance report for Julne 2021 is appended.

4. Early Help

The Council is investing in Early Help, and has commissioned the Trust to deploy some 80 Early Help workers across the city working in 10 localities. Their role is to build local partnership collaboration with schools, health providers, local police and the network of voluntary and community organisations to support children and families at an earlier stage in the emergence of additional needs or risks. Initial evaluation is positive, and we are engaging with BCC to try to secure funding for more than one year at a time, enabling us to build a sustainable and effective service that will divert children and families from needing a higher-tariff, higher-cost intervention.

There are some great opportunities to integrate services, from this footprint, with Health and with SEND over the next 12 months, to build a strong multi-disciplinary service promoting resilience and early help for children and families.

5. Children in Care

Birmingham Children's Trust has around 2000 children and young people in its care. Of these 62% are in foster carer (half Trust carers, half independent fostering agencies); 10% placed with relatives; 9% in residential care and the remainder in a variety of placement types (with parents, in custody, in supported living arrangements, placed with adopters).

Around 100 children are adopted each year. Increasingly they are placed with adopters recruited and prepared by the Trust rather than other adoption agencies.

Every child in care has their care plan independently reviewed at least every six months. 95% of our reviews were within timescales. 76% of children who have been in care for more than 2 ½ years have been in the same placement for 2 years, and

only 2% of children in our care experience 3 or more placements in a year. This represents strong performance. The Trust has improved its planning for permanence for children in our care.

Prior to the pandemic the Trust was growing its foster carer numbers. A number of carers decided to retire over the last year, so while we continue to recruit new carers we are losing some valued and experienced carers.

Our children in care have a strong voice through their Children in Care Council, influencing and shaping decisions in the Trust, taking over the Corporate Parenting Board, and developing new initiatives for children and for social workers. Our Care Leavers Forum is similarly influential and well-engaged.

The Trust is still in touch with most care leavers, and actively supports them into training or work, or to stay in education. Many more of the Trust's care leavers are in higher education than is the case elsewhere. Housing pathways for care leavers are improving through our work with the Council and with St Basils, the housing charity with whom we work closely. Some excellent work has been undertaken to support care leavers in their parenting, and to support young people's choices in circumstances where they have been unable to care for their children.

Overall, our offer to children in care and care leavers is stronger than it was at the Trust's inception, and continues to strengthen.

In recent weeks we have had a 'spike' in the number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people. This has been driven by a number of young people wrongly assessed, at port of entry, as adults, who are in fact young people in need of care/support/accommodation from the Trust.

In addition we are gearing up to receive significant numbers of young people following the rapid turn of events in Afghanistan.

The Trust provides an arms-length advocacy service for children and young people: both those in care and others, for example young people seeking to get their views independently represented in a child protection conference. Young people accessing the service are positive about the advocacy they receive.

The annual report of this service is appended to this report.

6. Missing Children

Performance in relation to children missing from care and home is routinely monitored and reported on.

- Four years ago there were more children missing from care, but over the last 3 years we have seen a significant change to there being more children

missing from home. This is likely to be due to exploitation – children going missing due to county lines in particular. Since the pandemic we have seen dips in the missing episodes and missing children at key lockdown points - April 2020 and January 2021. This is explained by the restrictions themselves, but also is a reflection of parents/carers being uncomfortable with reporting children as missing because of the lock down. Missing episodes have been climbing since the beginning of 2021 and are now similar to pre-pandemic missing rates.

- The missing episode rates for children at home have increased by 25% over the period July 2020 to March 2021. This reflects specific children going missing more often and we believe this is related to exploitation and changes in drug dealing. The local missing episodes are therefore more regular but young people tend to be missing for shorter periods.
- The number missing from Birmingham Trust foster carers is very low – there have been 8 children missing during the last 6 months.

The service advocates on behalf of the missing children to ensure their voices are heard and that any intelligence gained during the interviews is shared with the police (this may be about people of interest, locations, places and businesses). In addition, where children have been missing from care the service gains the children's views and at times information is fed back to commissioning services and the fostering team.

The service is piloting some work with an identified group of parents whose children are involved in county lines and are often missing from home together. This will look at increasing knowledge and awareness around county lines and actions to take when their children go missing together, with parents acting as safeguarding partners, and the importance of accepting return home interviews (RHIs) because of the information that can be gained and support that can be offered.

In comparison to the period average of July 2020 to March 2021, the RHI offered rate for Q1 of 2021 has increased from 98% to 99%. April, May and June 2021 all recorded a 99% offer rate on RHIs. Over the same period the RHI acceptance rate has decreased from 56% and Q1 of 2021 recorded 54% acceptance of RHI. The reason for refusal is overwhelmingly by the young person: in Q1 of 2021 48% of all refusals came from the young person. A further 47% of all were refused by a parent. The RHI success rate has remained fairly constant over the last 3 years and reflects the national rate.

The service does not see the RHI as a one-off piece of intervention and where needed and where appropriate safety plans and 1-1 short term intervention work to support the child to identify risk and to reduce missing episodes is put in place. Dedicated support workers have built trusting relationships with children who go missing and often the children will contact the missing support workers for support.

The service has worked hard to ensure consistency for the children to ensure that they get the same worker. The missing support workers have responded to requests for support by children outside of office hours on some occasions. They have also supported children to access medical care and interviews undertaken by trained Police and social workers seeking to capture a child's evidence of a potential crime (eg. a victim of exploitation abuse etc.).

The service currently has two missing support workers who can work flexibly out of office hours and weekends if required. In addition, St Giles have allocated a missing support worker with lived experience to enhance the offer to children missing and provide bespoke training to staff. This role is funded for nine months on a pilot.

7. Fostering

In August Ofsted inspected the Trust's fostering service. This gets inspected as an independent fostering agency because of the Trust's status. The outcome is not yet publicly available: the report will be published in the next 2-3 weeks.

8. Stronger Families

The Children's Trust has clustered services into a programme called Stronger Families. These are built around the premise that children should be supported to safely live with their families: outcomes are often better and so is value for money for the 'public pound'. Through increasing significantly the number of Family Group Conferences we offer (up from around 40 per year to over 350 per year), we are placing families at the heart of decision-making for their children. Our Families Together Plus offer (for young people at the edge of care, supporting families differently in the child protection system etc.) we are seeing real impacts and improving outcomes.

We are looking to significantly increase the number of children in our care who are living with a family member, and to ensure that families can be better supported to resume care of their children, enabling them to leave the care system. All of these services are inherently focused on children, on strengths, and on the power of relationships to safeguard children and to support families.

9. Regional Adoption Agency (RAA)

There is a national requirement for local authority and Trust adoption services to conjoin into larger RAAs. Because of Birmingham's size we were unable to find a willing local RAA partner. Therefore we set out to forge a different partnership route to a RAA: by working with a Voluntary Adoption Agency. This will be a unique

collaborative model and should bring all the benefits (and more) of the more traditional RAA model. We are in the final stages of the procurement process, and believe we have a strong partner with whom we can move forward to build an outstanding adoption offer for the city's children.

10. Exploitation

The Trust has built a strong practice model for responding to exploitation: the EmpowerU Hub. This is a multi-disciplinary service with social work, police, health, education and voluntary sector representation. The focus is on responding to concerns about individual young people at risk, disruption of gang, organised crime and county lines activity, and providing additional capacity and expertise to staff across the Trust and the city working with vulnerable young people.

We are seeing numbers of young people about whom there are concerns rise year on year, as we would expect given a legacy of under-identification, and as our collective intelligence grows. The increases are mainly in relation to criminal rather than sexual exploitation, although we know these are not mutually exclusive.

11. Youth Offending Service (YOS)

The YOS has undergone some significant staff changes in recent months and is subject to an active programme of improvement following a challenging inspection from HMIP in 2020.

The annual Youth Justice Plan is going to the September Cabinet and to Full Council. A copy can be shared with O&S, and published, immediately it is approved. The plan is an annual update. Two of the key measures of challenge and impact are as follows:

- First-time entrants into the Youth Justice system: Birmingham performs less well than statistical and national neighbours (this is a measure of how young people are supported to stay crime-free by universal services).
- Repeat offending: Birmingham performs better than statistical neighbours on this measure, which is a reflection of the efficacy of intervention when a young person offends for the first time.

12. SEND

Social Care plays a key part in the delivery of SEND services, which are well known to be performing poorly in the city. While the report of the revisit makes little reference to social care, we recognise our role in both improving our service offer for children with disabilities, and their families, and in supporting a better functioning

SEND service. It is also the case that an improved SEND service will assist many children and families with whom the Trust are working.

13. Recruitment and Retention

This has been a major area of focus for the Trust. As referenced earlier in this report, our performance, comparatively, is good. However, the risk of widening pay gaps with other authorities and the increasing 'mobility' of the children's social care workforce means we have to retain our focus on making our offer the strongest it can be.

The Trust has established a Recruitment and Retention Commission to focus on this. The primary areas of focus include:

- Attraction: marketing, social media presence, reputation etc.
- Recruitment: making the process work swiftly and efficiently, 'candidate management' etc.
- Retention: within the constraints of equal pay, making our offer 'the best it can be', development and progression, manageable workloads etc.

Progress is being made in all areas but the need to maintain this is unrelenting.

14. Risks and Challenges faced by the Trust

The key risks and challenges faced by the Children's Trust are as follows:

- If the significant rise in demand that we experienced earlier in the year recurs the Trust's resources will be exceptionally stretched.
- We are seeing much greater complexity of need and risk, and a simultaneous shrinkage in children's mental health support.
- Both of these have impact on the Trust budget and our ability to 'live within our means' in terms of the contract sum.
- As we recover and 'bounce back' from the pandemic, we will be refining our operating model, with a different balance of agile working. As the City Council plans to dispose of buildings out of which the Trust operates, we need to ensure we have the right office footprint.
- Recruitment and retention remain an ongoing challenge. Pay inequities are widening between Birmingham and other authorities, and concern about equal pay appears to continue to prevent a solution being found.
- Placement sufficiency is a national, regional and local challenge. We are developing a number of innovative approaches, but there is wide recognition that the 'market of care for children is broken'.
- Within the next 6-9 months we anticipate a full Ofsted inspection which will lead to a new graded judgement of Birmingham's children's social care

services, as delivered by the Trust. Our recovery from the disruption of the pandemic, our focus on impacts and outcomes, and the consistency of the practice offer across the Trust will be key determinants of the outcome of this inspection.

15. Conclusion

I am confident that continuous improvement remains a feature of the Trust's development. Our practice is improving and our service offer to children and families has certainly broadened and deepened since the Trust was created in 2018. We have worked hard, and successfully, to build strong collaboration with all of our partners, statutory and third sector, and we are building our profile as a provider of strong services for the city's most vulnerable children, young people and families. The Ofsted inspection, due imminently, will provide the strongest benchmark measure of the Trust's progress.

Appendices:

- Monthly Trust Contract KPI Report for June 2021
- Annual Report: Rights and Participation Service

Andy Couldrick
Chief Executive
Birmingham Children's Trust
August 2021



Report to OCG

Contract Key Performance Indicators of Birmingham Children's Trust

June 1st – 30th 2021



| No. | Indicator |
|--------|--|
| KPI 1 | % of all referrals with a decision within 24 hours |
| KPI 2 | % of re-referrals to children's social care within 12 months |
| KPI 3 | % assessments completed within 45 working days |
| KPI 4 | % Initial CP Conferences (ICPCs) held within 15 working days |
| KPI 5 | % of children who become the subject of a CP plan for a second or subsequent time within the last 2 years |
| KPI 6 | % 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 |
| KPI 7 | % children experiencing 3 or more moves in a year |
| KPI 8 | % of looked after reviews held on time |
| KPI 9 | % of care leavers who are in Education, Employment, and Training (EET) |
| KPI 10 | % YTD care leavers in suitable accommodation (19-21) |
| KPI 11 | Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted. (A2) |
| KPI 12 | No of children who have been adopted in the year or who leave care |
| KPI 13 | % of agency social workers (including team managers) |
| KPI 14 | Average caseload of qualified social workers |
| KPI 15 | % of social workers who have had supervision (in month) |

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To provide contractual performance information.

2. Background

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

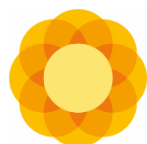
2.2 Information contained within this report will include all 15 of the Key Performance Indicators judged against target, tolerance, trend chart and narrative from operational staff.

2.3 The performance information relates to the period 1st to 30th June 2021.



Comparisons of headline rates per capita to published statistics

| Rate per 10000 | Latest published statistics | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|-----|----------|-----|
| | Birmingham | | SN | National | WM |
| | June 21 | May 21 | | | |
| Referrals | 561 (Rolling 12M) | 540 | 666 | 535 | 529 |
| Assessments completed | 456 (Rolling 12M) | 445 | 660 | 532 | 569 |
| Children subject to S47 enquiries | 145 (Rolling 12 M) | 145 | 221 | 167 | 221 |
| Children subject of an ICPC | 35 (Rolling 12 M) | 36 | 79 | 64 | 68 |
| Children in Need | 311 | 304 | 374 | 323 | 338 |
| Children with a CP Plan | 41 | 43 | 53 | 43 | 46 |
| Children in Care | 67 | 66 | 85 | 67 | 82 |

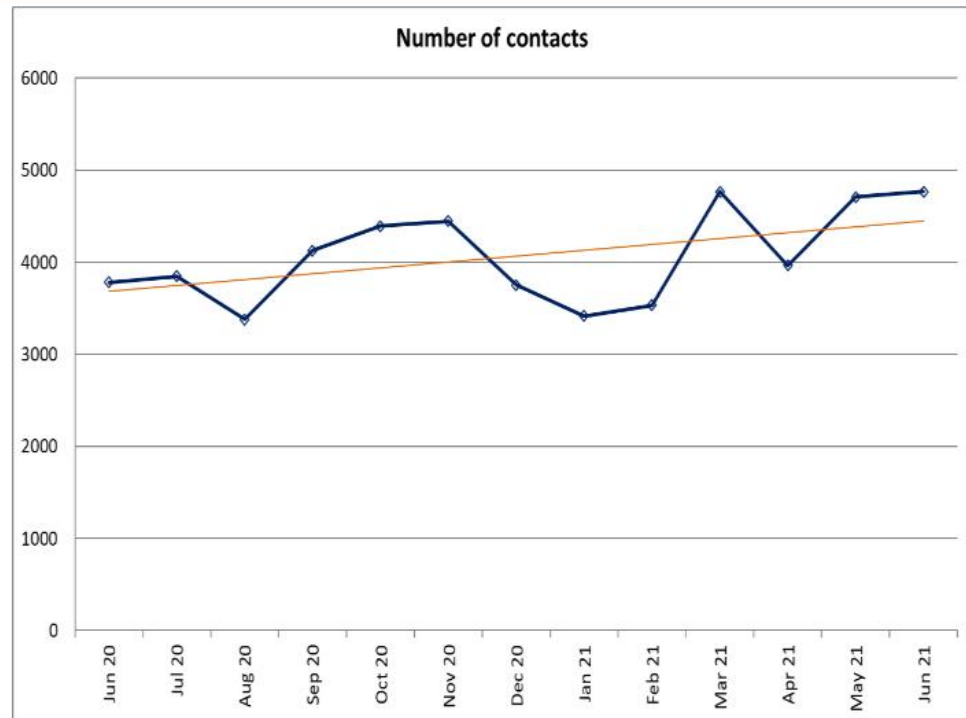


Number of contacts received: CASS

| | | Prev. 12 months | |
|-----------------|---------|-----------------|---------|
| | June-20 | average | June-21 |
| No. of contacts | 3,784 | 4,010 | 4,768 |

Commentary

Contacts to the Trust have risen by 58 this month.

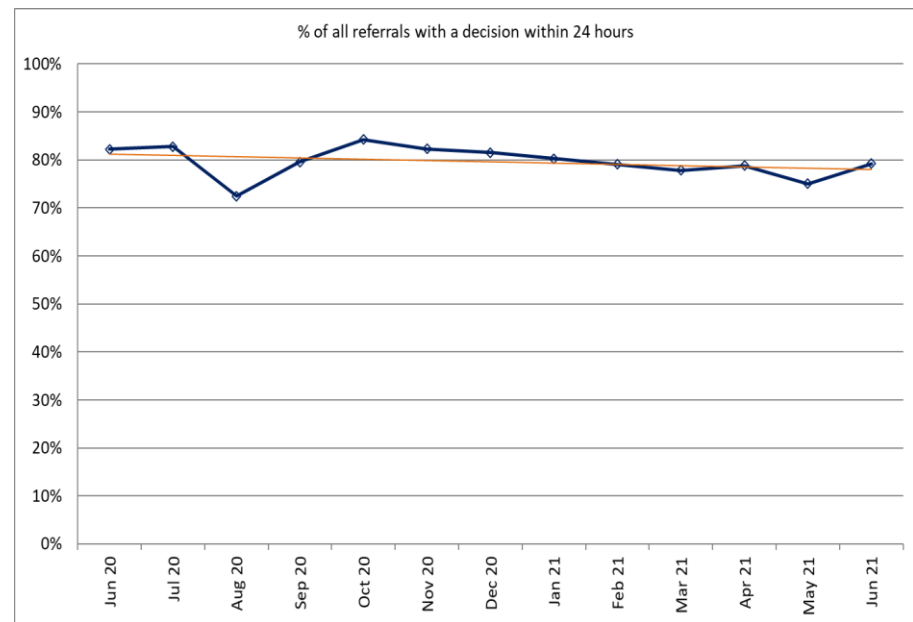


| Performance Indicator 1 | % of referrals with a decision within 24 hours Good = High/Increasing | Target 21/22 80% | Tolerance 75 - 95% |
|--|--|---------------------|--|
| | | June-20 82% | Prev. 12 months cumulative June-21 |
| Referrals with a decision within 24 hours | | | 12,150 1,324 |
| Total referrals authorised | | | 15,252 1,671 |
| % of all referrals with a decision within 24 hours | | | 80% 79% |

Commentary

Timeliness of decision-making has increased from 75% to 79% this month. This is well within tolerance.

We know that delays in receipt of vital partnership information have affected the timeliness of some decisions. We have taken a stance to make well-informed decisions for children, as opposed to poor but more timely decisions.

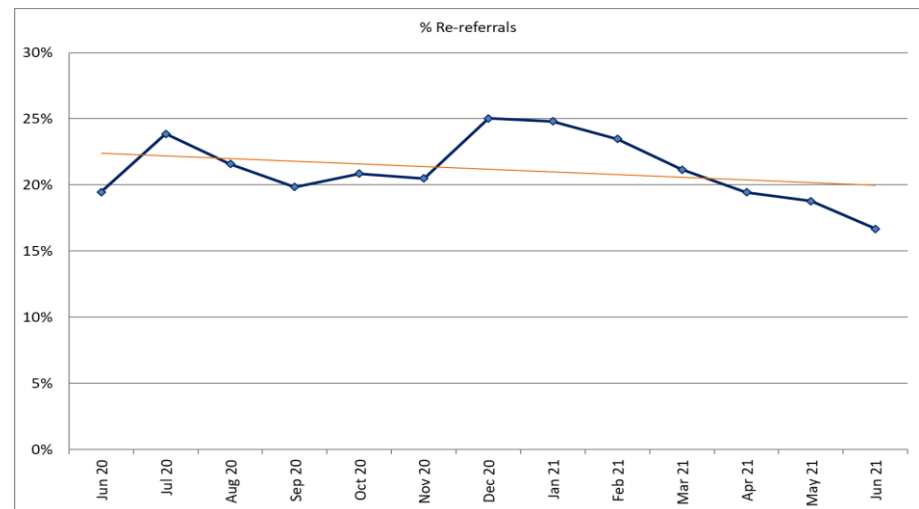


| Performance Indicator 2 | % of re-referrals to children's social care within 12 months Good = Low/Decreasing | Target 21/22 22% | Tolerance 17-28% |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | | June-20 19% | Prev. 12 months cumulative June-21 |
| No. re-referrals | | | 3,461 289 |
| Total referrals Initiated | | | 16,189 1,732 |
| Re-referrals % | | | 21% 17% |

Commentary

The rate of re-referrals has fallen from 19% to 17% this month and is now within target and tolerance.

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



| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| National average | 23% |
| Statistical neighbour average | 22% |

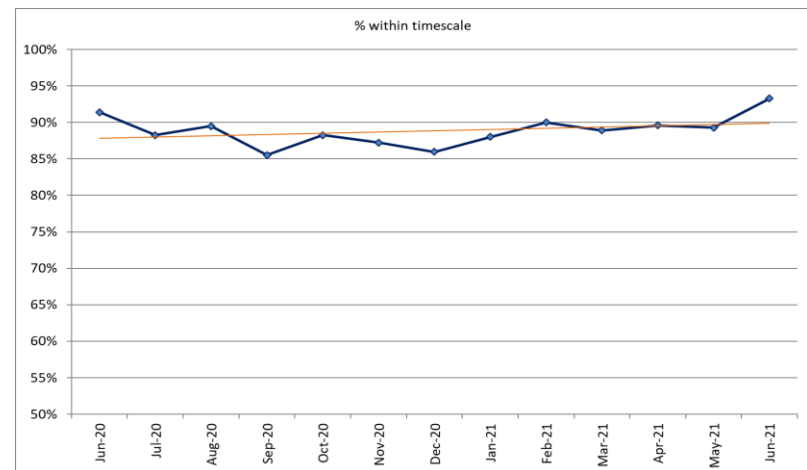


| Performance Indicator 3 | % of assessments completed within 45 working days Good = High/Increasing | Target 21/22 85% | Tolerance 80-90% |
|-------------------------|---|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| | | | |
| | | June-20 91% | Prev. 12 months average June-21 |
| No. inside | | 973 | 1,334 |
| No. outside | | 127 | 96 |
| Total | | 1,101 | 1,430 |
| % Inside | | 88% | 93% |

Commentary

The figure has risen this month from 89% to 93%. Performance in this area has remained above target and tolerance since April 2020.

We consistently perform better than the England average and our statistical neighbours.



| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| National average | 84% |
| Statistical neighbour average | 82% |



| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Performance Indicator 4 | % initial CP conferences (ICPCs) held within 15 working days Good = High/Increasing | Target 21/22 80% | Tolerance 75-85% |
|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|

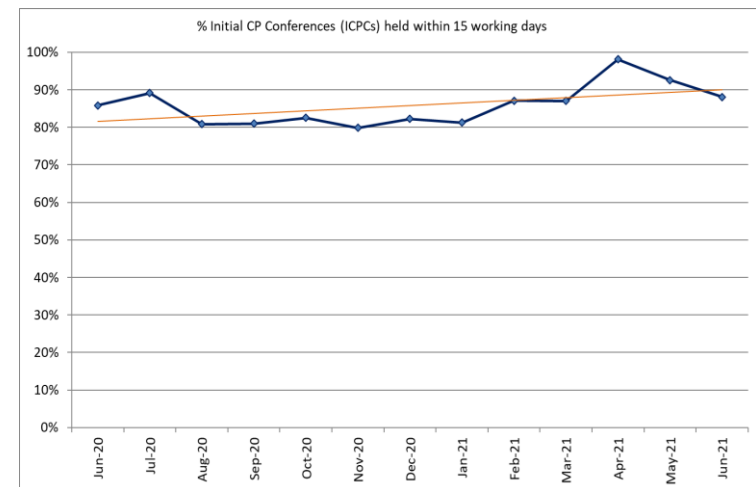
| | June-20 86% | Prev. 12 months average | June-21 |
|--|------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Number of ICPCs held within 15 working days | | 115 | 133 |
| Number of ICPCs | | 135 | 151 |
| % of ICPCs held within 15 working days | | 85% | 88% |

Commentary

This month 88% of initial child protection conferences were held within 15 working days of the strategy discussion. Although this is lower than last month, performance remains above target and tolerance.

We continue to closely monitor the reason why a small number of conferences are outside of timescales.

We perform significantly better than the national average and our statistical neighbours.



| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| National average | 78% |
| Statistical neighbour average | 78% |

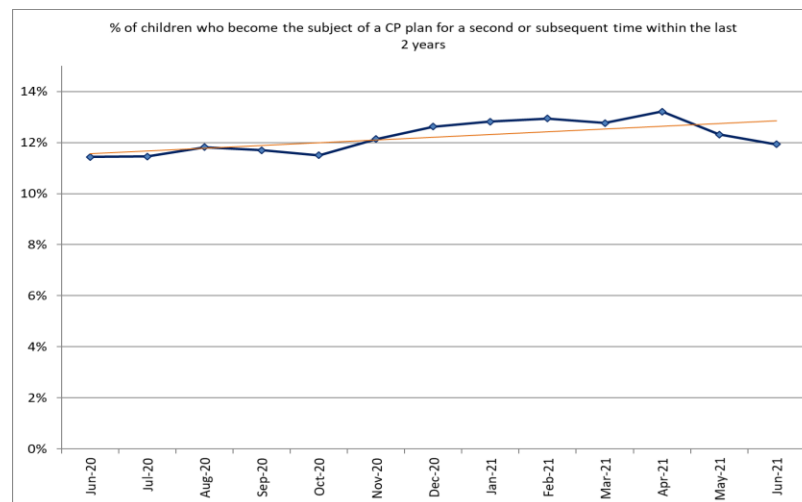


| Performance Indicator 5 | % of children who become the subject of a CP plan for a second or subsequent time within the last 2 years Good = Low/Decreasing | Target 21/22 10% | Tolerance 9-14% |
|--|--|----------------------------|--------------------|
| | June-20 11% | Prev. 12 months average | June-21 |
| Total CP Plans opened from 12 months to reporting date | | 1,611 | 1,576 |
| Number of children who become the subject of a CP plan for a second or subsequent time within the last 2 years | | 197 | 198 |
| % of children who become the subject of a CP plan for a second or subsequent time within the last 2 years | | 12% | 12% |

Commentary

We expected to see an increase in second or subsequent plans as a result of the pandemic. However, performance remains within tolerance though above target at 12%.

We have undertaken audits to provide additional insight as to the reasons why some children become subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time and have developed an action plan to address the findings.

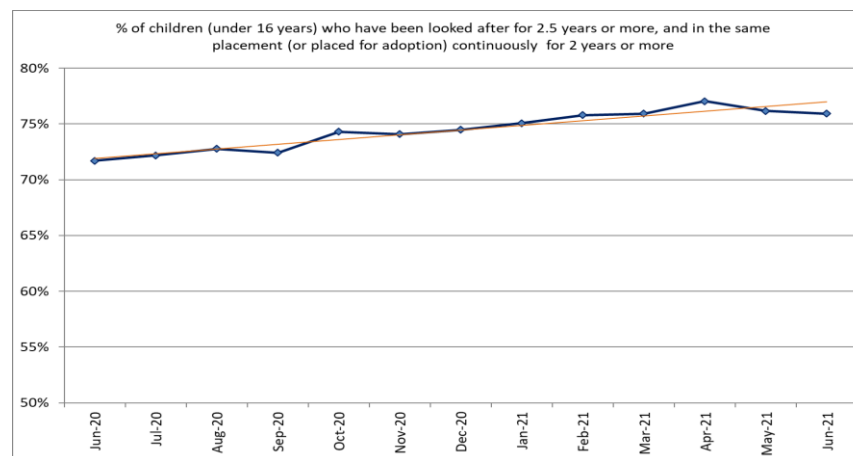


| | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Performance Indicator 6 | % of children (under 16 years) who have been looked after for 2.5 years or more, and in the same placement (or placed for adoption) continuously for 2 years or more | Target 21/22 68% | Tolerance 65-70% |
| | Good = High/Increasing | | |

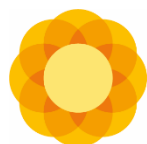
| | June-20 | Prev. 12 months average | June-21 |
|--|---------|-------------------------|---------|
| Looked after > 2.5 years, same placement > 2 yrs, or placed for adoption | 72% | 614 | 643 |
| Total children | | 826 | 847 |
| % | | 74% | 76% |

Commentary

We have exceeded our target and tolerance again this month.



| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| National average | 69% |
| Statistical neighbour average | 67% |



**Performance
Indicator 7**

% children experiencing 3 or more moves in a year
Good = Low/Decreasing

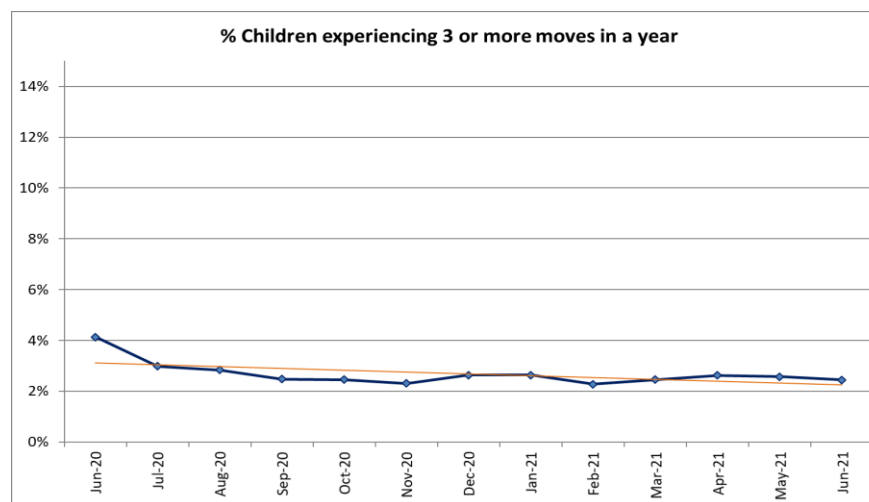
**Target 21/22
10%**

**Tolerance
5% - 13%**

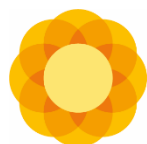
| | June-20 4% | Prev. month | June-21 |
|---|---------------|-------------|---------|
| No. of children who had 3 placements or more | | 50 | 48 |
| No. of placements in 12 months for children in care | | 1,950 | 1,964 |
| % | | 3% | 2% |

Commentary

This month we have recorded 2% of children with three or more placement moves. This is lower than last month's figure of 3%.



| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| National average | 11% |
| Statistical neighbour average | 10% |



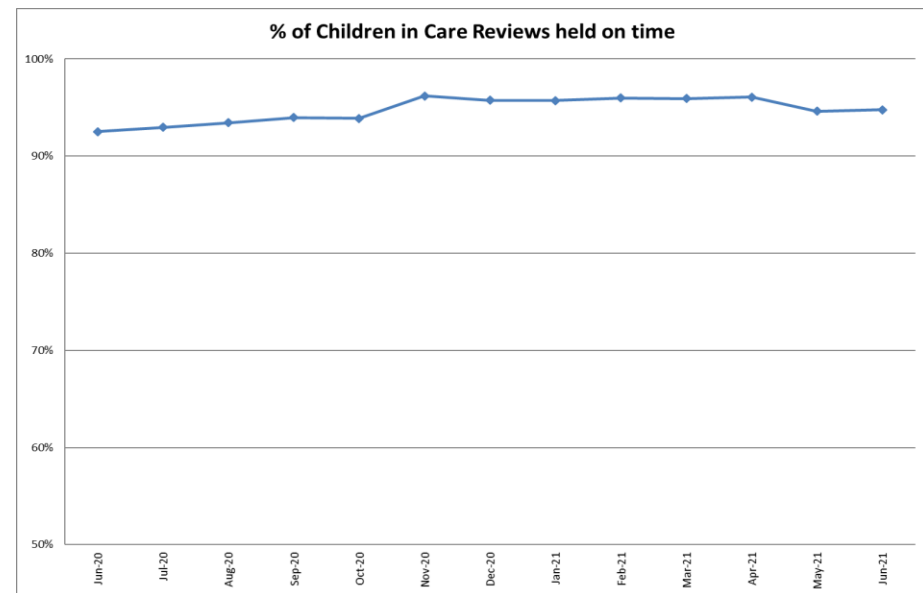
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|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Performance Indicator 8 | % of children in care reviews held on time Good = High/Increasing | Target 21/22 96% | Tolerance 90-100% |
|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|

| | June-20 93% | Prev. month YTD | June-21 |
|---|------------------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| In time (YTD) | | 774 | 1,194 |
| Total children in care reviews (YTD) | | 818 | 1,260 |
| % | | 95% | 95% |

Commentary

We continue to ensure the majority of children in care receive timely statutory reviews.

In June, 95% of reviews were held on time, which remains well within tolerance.



**Performance
Indicator 9**

**% of care leavers who are in education,
employment and training (EET) (19-21)**
Good = High/Increasing

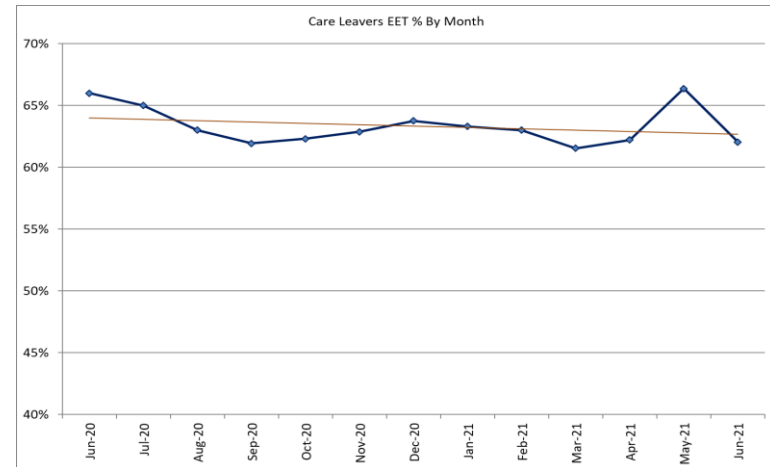
**Target 21/22
62%**

**Tolerance
50-80%**

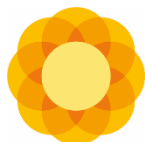
| | June-20 66% | Prev. month YTD | June-21 |
|---------------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------|
| Care leavers in EET (YTD) | | 73 | 103 |
| Total care leavers (YTD) | | 110 | 166 |
| EET % | | 66% | 62% |

Commentary

Despite the volatility of the EET figure, we continue to be on the right side of our target and are doing well compared to our statistical neighbours. We have excellent support from CGL - Change Grow Live - who are funded by ESF to deliver intensive support to around 100 NEET care leavers. We have a strong partnership with the job centre and they are gradually transferring all care leavers to specialist Youth Employment Coaches. We have an excellent relationship with the Virtual School 16+ team. This newly formed team is working with us to make stronger transition arrangements so that children in care don't fall out of EET during the transfer to Care Leavers. We work closely with the Corporate Parenting team which links us with employers, and we are now working to produce an App to better communicate all EET opportunities to our young people.



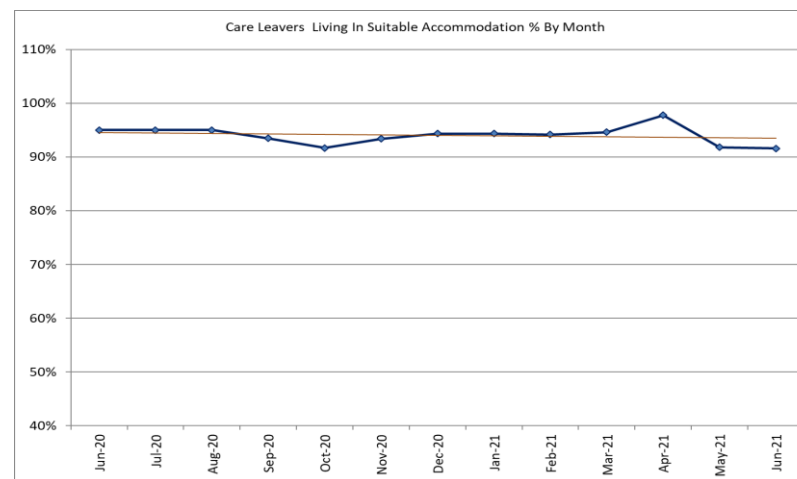
| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| National average | 53% |
| Statistical neighbour average | 52% |



| Performance Indicator 10 | % of care leavers who are living in suitable accommodation (19-21) Good = High/Increasing | Target 21/22 93% | Tolerance 85 -100% |
|---|--|---------------------|-----------------------|
| | June-20 95% | Prev. month YTD | June-21 |
| Care leavers living in suitable accommodation (YTD) | | 101 | 152 |
| Total care leavers (YTD) | | 110 | 166 |
| In suitable accommodation % | | 92% | 92% |

Commentary

Performance this month has reached 92%, which has remained consistent for many months now. The KPI remains above the national and statistical neighbour averages. This is supported by the availability of accommodation through the City Council and third sector housing providers, care leavers being a priority for City Council housing. Although there is an established Care Leavers Housing Pathway, the 'choice' as to the location and type of the accommodation remains limited and there is more to do in this area.



| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| National average | 85% |
| Statistical neighbour average | 86% |



| | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------|---|
| Performance Indicator 11 | Average time between the LA receiving court authority to place a child and deciding on a match (A2) Good = Low/Decreasing | Target 21/22 200 days | Tolerance 175-225 days |
| | | Jun-20 190 | Jun-21 (3 Year Average) 213 |
| Average time between LA receiving court authority to place a child and deciding on a match | | | |

Commentary

Performance over the last 3 years can be broken down as follows:

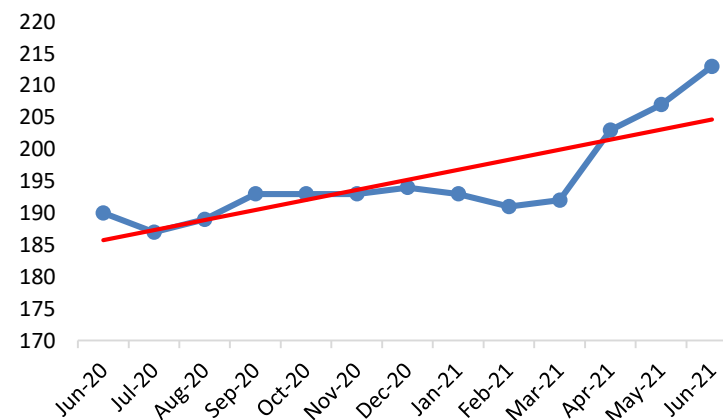
- July 2018 – June 2019: 79 children adopted with an A2 average of 177 days.
- July 2019 – June 2020: 65 children adopted with an A2 average of 226 days.
- July 2020 – June 2021: 90 children adopted with an A2 average of 237 days.

Birmingham's 3-year average performance in June 2021 is better than statistical neighbours but slower than the national average.

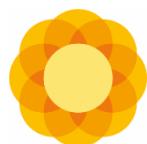
The increase since March is as a result of 3 sibling groups of two adopted since April 2021, all of whom waited between 16-28 months for a match following their placement orders.

Improvement actions in place:

- 4 out of 13 approvals YTD were of Early Permanence carers (of which 1 was a repeat adopter) compared to 2 out of 10 approvals in the same period last year. Rise in number of Early Permanence referrals and some placements taking place.
- There is a clear focus across the service to continue to improve recruitment and there are new systems in place to focus on early identification of children and matching with internally approved adopters.



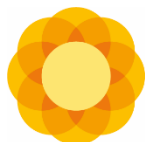
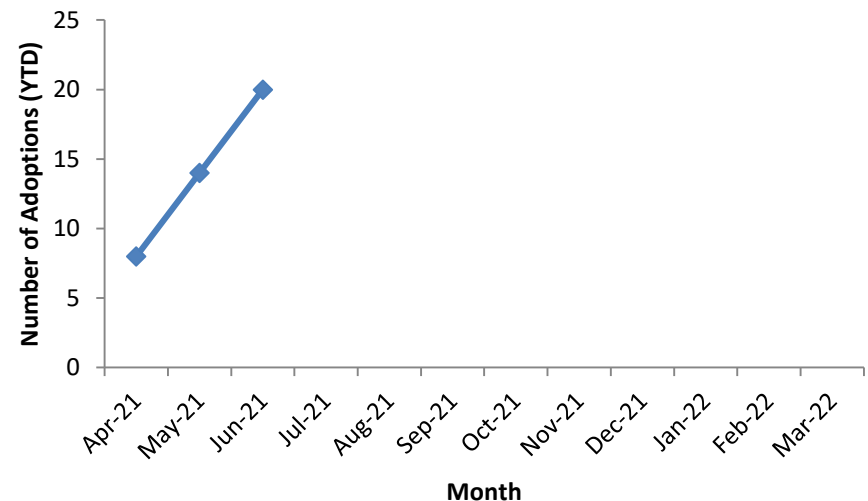
| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| National Average | 178 |
| Statistical Neighbours Average | 217 |



| Performance Indicator 12 | No. of children who have been adopted in the year Good = High/Increasing | Target 20/21 85 | Tolerance |
|---|---|--------------------|-----------------|
| | Jun-20 0 | | Jun-21 (YTD) |
| No. of children who have been adopted in the year | | | 20 |

Commentary

- 6 adoption orders were granted in June, bringing the YTD total to 20. This time last year, 0 adoption orders had been granted due to Covid-19 and the resulting court delays.
- There are currently 65 children in an adoptive placement awaiting an adoption order.
- Management tracking systems are in place to monitor and progress adoption orders.
- The provisional release of the ASGLB 2020-21 dataset indicates that Birmingham Children's Trust had the highest number of adoption orders granted in the year, evidencing the good tracking systems in place. The top 3 local authorities were:
 - Birmingham – 70
 - Lancashire – 64
 - Northamptonshire - 56
- There are links between the Local Family Justice Board and the Trust and this relationship has helped in addressing the backlog of adoption order hearings which arose during the pandemic.



| | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Performance Indicator 13 | % established social worker posts (including team managers) filled by agency/interim staff Good = Low/Decreasing | Target 21/22 12% | Tolerance 10-15% |
|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|

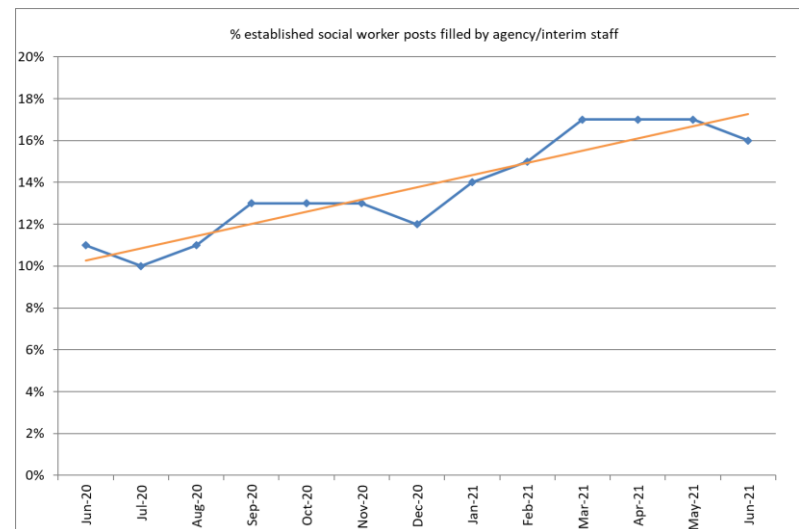
| | June-20 11% | Prev. 12 months average | June-21 |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|---------|
| % agency social workers | | 16% | 20% |
| % agency team managers | | 11% | 12% |
| % agency total (Social Workers & TMs) | | 13% | 16% |

Commentary

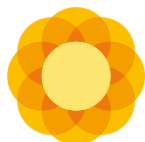
OCG has acknowledged this KPI will be out of tolerance for some time yet. Permanent recruitment during the Covid pandemic has seen a reduction in the mobility and supply of suitable permanent social workers. This has also affected the supply for agency social workers. This is not a Birmingham issue but a national one.

Recruitment and retention are a key priority for us. We have invested in an HR specialist to provide expert advice and support and a marketing specialist to improve our marketing campaigns. We are also in the midst of refining and enhancing our support offer to students, front-line practitioners and managers. Our aim is to become a centre of excellence and the best employer in the region. We are also continually reviewing an enhancing our benefits offer.

We have seen a recent increase in the numbers of permanent social workers recruited or interested in joining the Trust. As the restrictions start to ease, aligned to our social media and marketing campaigns and additions to the value proposition, we anticipate increases to the numbers of social workers we attract and retain. However, we are competing with private companies that offer significantly higher pay, which is hard to compete with.



| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| National average | 15% |
| Statistical neighbour average | 20% |



| | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|----------------------------------|
| Performance Indicator 14 | Average caseload of qualified social workers Good = Low/Decreasing | Target 21/22 15 | Tolerance 13-20 |
| | June-20 16 | Prev. 12 months average 17 | June-21 20 |
| Average caseload - city | | | |

Commentary

The caseload average for June is 20 which is one more than the previous month. This relates to the recruitment and retention matter discussed in KPI 13. This figure remains within tolerance but above our target figure for 2020/21. We know that caseloads across the Trust vary and propose to review the operating model to ensure equity of caseloads and smoother transitions for children across the social care/social work system.



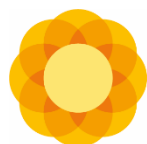
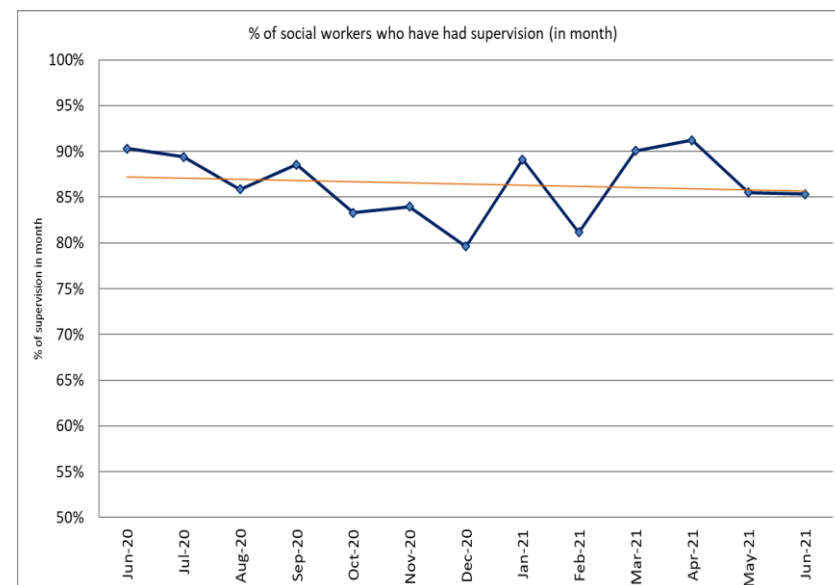
| | |
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| National average | 16 |
| Statistical neighbour average | 17 |



| Performance Indicator 15 | % of social workers who have had supervision (in month) Good = High/Increasing | Target 21/22 86% | Tolerance 80-90% |
|-----------------------------|---|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| | June-20 90% | Prev. rolling 12 months average | June-21 |
| Supervisions | | 452 | 477 |
| Total no. of social workers | | 522 | 569 |
| % supervised | | 87% | 85% |

Commentary

Supervisions have stayed at 85% this month and this is well within tolerance.



**Council
Business Plan
Measure**

**First time entrants into the youth justice
system (per 100,000 population aged 10 to
17)**
Good = Low/Decreasing

Target 21/22

Tolerance

(Oct 18 – Sept 19)

First time entrants into the youth justice system

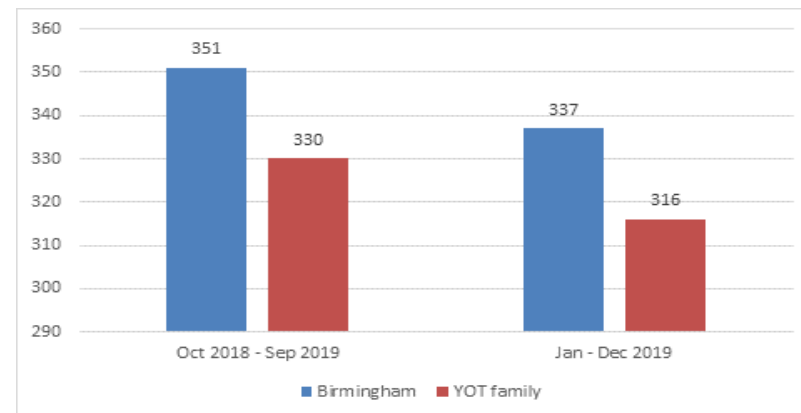
351

Commentary

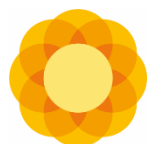
While we are not performing as well as core cities, our performance has improved on the last period by 9.5%. The figures have been going in the right direction over the last six months and we are approaching our comparators.

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.



| | Oct 18 – Sep 19 | Jan – Dec 19 |
|------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Birmingham | 351 | 337 |
| YOT Family | 330 | 316 |





Jenny Turnross

Director of Practice

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BIRMINGHAM
CHILDREN'S TRUST



Appendix 2

Rights and Participation (RAP) Advocacy

Annual report (April 2020-March 2021)

'RAP aims to OPTIMISE and EMPOWER children and young people's involvement in strategic, local and day to day decisions that affect their lives. We challenge and champion children and young people's rights to ensure that when decisions are made children and young people are involved, consulted and listened to'

The purpose of this report is to give an overview of the Rights and Participation Service (RAP) advocacy service, and the work undertaken in the last year, and to report on the impact of the difference RAP is making to both children in care and young people's opportunities to engage in decisions that may affect them.

Background to RAP Advocacy Service provision

Advocacy is the representation of children and young people's (CYP) wishes and feelings/views either in person, or by supporting the child to represent their own views. Advocacy is ALWAYS led by the child or young person. In the main advocacy is issue based so provided for a particular purpose and on a time limited basis until the complaint, issue or concern is resolved or closed. This can range from hours, weeks or several months. An advocate will explain to a child or young person that they are there to listen to their worries and help sort out any problems, help children and young people understand their rights and entitlements, explain why something is happening and help the child or young person express how they are feeling and what they would like to happen. We also help make sure other people are listening to a child or young person's views. An advocate should not make promises nor say they can make things 'better' but they should help a child or young person understand what is happening and help others understand how a child or young person is feeling.

Legislation and policy have been vital in establishing a child's right to be heard. Get it Sorted guidance, The Children's Act 1989 and the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), ratified in the UK in 1991, applies equally to all children (UNICEF. 2008). ***"Article 12 – Children have the right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account."***

The team has a head of service, 2.5 children's rights officers and the equivalent of 5 fulltime rights and participation workers (also referred to as advocates).

The aim of our service is to ensure that children in care and care leavers and children on child protection plans have access to children's rights and an advocacy service (one to one

advocacy support/ visiting advocacy to disabled children's homes), that supports children and young people's voices.. The goal is to the promotion of better outcomes for CYP in care/care leavers and those on child protection plans and the improvement of services for them.

Positive Achievements 2020-2021

We saw an increase in the number of referrals during the first lockdown in March 2020 – October 2020. This was positive in that CYP were able to access advocacy support during and soon after the first Lockdown period of the Coronavirus pandemic. This meant that despite Lockdown we were able to support CYP voices to be heard in decision making processes at a time of uncertainty. We no longer had an office base but were able to offer services working from home. Although we had to reduce the number of face-to-face visits to CYP between March 2020-June 2020, CYP were met virtually via Microsoft Teams/Zoom/Skype or WhatsApp video calls. Where it was identified that CYP did not have access to such means, we raised with social workers and asked for laptops to be provided, and advocates challenged homes where there was poor access to internet services/communication systems. Advocates ensured that CYP were seen and that their voices were heard.

Our visiting advocacy service to the Birmingham mainstream children homes was also increased from monthly to weekly visits during the first lockdown in March 2020 to ensure that CYP were being seen and provided the opportunity of voicing their views as schools had also closed.

During lockdown we continued to provide visiting advocacy to the Disabled Children's Homes but via virtual means: Microsoft teams. Visiting advocacy is now again face to face.

Advocates have resumed face to face visits since June 2020 and during further lockdowns. In some cases, virtual visits have continued due to outcomes of Covid Risk assessments and CYP requests/preferences.

Following an increase in the number of advocacy referrals for support at CIC review meetings, RAP in conjunction with the IRO service met to discuss a pilot initiative to train CYP to chair their own reviews. The IRO service has now recognised the need for an apprentice Care leaver to support the service to deliver reviews in consultation with CYP views/feedback.

RAP advocacy service also arranged for CYP who were or had previously accessed advocacy services to meet with Dfe in January 2021 regards sharing their views and feedback for the revision of the National Advocacy Standards 2002.

The CYP that took part received thank you letters from the Minister for Children and Families and a certificate for their contribution.



Vicky Ford MP Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children
and Families Sanctuary Buildings 20 Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT tel: 0370 000 2288
www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus

31 March 2021

Dear X

I would like to express my sincere thanks for finding the time to participate in an advocacy discussion group with young people. The team really appreciated having the opportunity to hear your thoughts and ideas and they have learned a lot from what you had to say. I hope you also enjoyed being involved in the event.

It is important that we listen to the views and experiences of children and young people and that you have your voice heard in matters that affect you. By taking part in this session, you have helped the team see the many ways in which high quality advocacy can make a real difference to young people. Your views will be taken forward as we work on updating the National Standards for the Provision of Children's Advocacy Services.

Yours sincerely,

Vicky Ford MP

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families



Certificate of contribution

Thank you, X, for taking part in a Zoom discussion on 20 January 2021 about the importance of independent advocacy for children and young people in England.

This was part of very important national work around future standards for advocates and making sure children and young people get the best possible help.

We are very grateful for your time, your views, and your ideas.

Thank you! Carolyne Willow, Director, Article 39

Feedback from CYP/Professionals

AK aged 23 (Care leaver) – my advocate tried her best to get housing professionals from another authority to try and listen to my needs and wishes regarding being housed. Having her on board meant that the housing officer did not try and fob me off. She did her best and she should continue to be as great as she is!

LF aged 9 (Child in Care) – my advocate helped me to understand what my meetings were about. I don't understand why I had meetings now I do. She really helped me.

L siblings aged 6-10 years (on CP plan)– my advocate Listened to me, was happy made me feel happy, Talked for me when I did not want to talk, Helped me understand, made me feel safe and I want the advocate to stay with us until we are older.

I wanted to just say thanks for all the hard work advocate R has done to work with H he has been amazing and really helped capture H wishes and feelings. Family Group Conference team

I want to say how amazing advocate T was in supporting siblings G and C to express their views for their CP Plan. The children have been on a CP plan before, but this is the first time they have shared their views. -CPO

I don't have a feedback form to complete so felt best then when people really care about the work they do and the children we care for there are times this goes unnoticed and I just want to ensure that the advocate is recognised for the good work she does in the role she has with yourselves. Could you pass on our thanks and appreciation and look forward to continuing to work with partners for the benefit of the children we care for- Children Home

How children and young people access advocacy and how it is promoted:

Advocacy referrals are made via the advocacy email inbox. They are allocated between 1-3 days of receipt. Anyone can make a referral be it the young person themselves or someone on their behalf. If made by someone other than the young person we ask for confirmation that the CYP has consented to the referral.

We meet with CYP at a venue of their choice but mainly at school to ensure they can express their views in an independent environment.

We use various engagement tools to encourage CYP to engage with their advocate for CYP of younger ages or disabilities. Interactive toys/ puppets/ dice games/ Minecraft are a few of the tool's advocates use to engage with CYP.

Birmingham has approximately 1800 children within its care in 2020-21 therefore ensuring that all children are aware of their right to access an advocate is an ongoing process. We rely on other professionals and our multi agency working to make children and young people aware. We promote advocacy at CYP events. We try to ensure that the service has a high profile within the City and that resources and literature are made easily available.

Children and Young People (CYP) within Birmingham's care (wherever they may live) are entitled to have the support of an advocate. We promote our advocacy offer by sending leaflets and updates to CYP via professionals that work with them, via children's homes, fostering agencies, IRO/CPO services, at events involving CYP, and of course by sending information direct to children and young people where possible. We continue to promote advocacy through our participation groups Children in Care Council/Care leavers forum/ young parents project/SEND group.

We have delivered advocacy presentations to teams via their team meetings such as family group conference team, CIC nurses, social work teams, IRO service to name a few.

We also update our advocacy service offer via the National advocacy database on an annual basis and promote via other national advocacy providers such as Coram Voice, and NYAS to ensure any Birmingham CYP living outside of Birmingham are aware of advocacy support that is available to them.

We held a webinar for Birmingham Children's Trust employees promoting our advocacy service to CYP in August 2020.

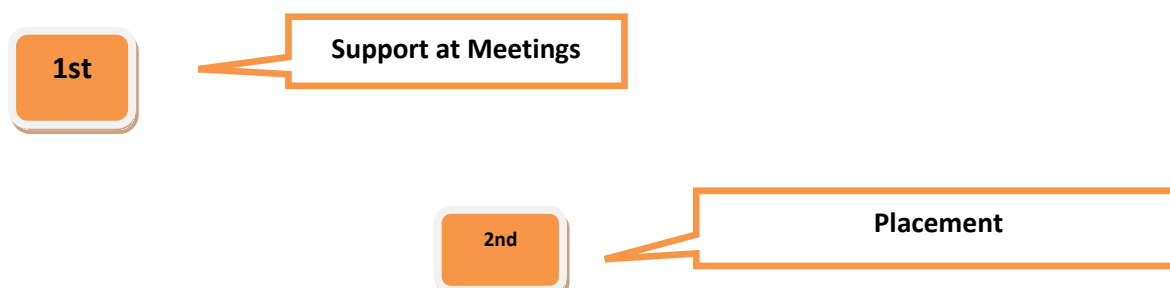
We have delivered training to newly qualified social workers regard advocacy and children's rights and hope to continue this soon. We update social work area teams regularly about advocacy and receive many referrals from social workers.

Children and young people's advocacy needs

Children and young people who contact advocacy services can have a wide range of issues, complaints and concerns. These may be single issues or inter-related. Sometimes a child or young person may just want a little support or reassurance to express their own views and they can be supported quickly and easily. Sometimes a child or a young person may feel confused by decisions and arrangements and would benefit from several one to one meeting. We are not prescriptive and although advocacy is issue based, we will remain as an advocate until the issue is closed. However, an advocate is not a befriender and it is important to stay true to an advocacy role and not drift into other areas.

The two top issues within 2020-21 were

- Support at meetings
- Placements



Support at meetings: It is a primary role of an advocate to support a child to participate in meetings. Complaints can be resolved informally, or progress through stages, one, two or three of the formal complaint's procedure. If there is still no resolution advocates support children to take their complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman. Children also want support at their Child in care or child protection review meetings, Family group conferences/ review of family plan meetings, education meetings (PEP) and placement meetings. Children and young people can be encouraged to express their views in a range ways. The Mind of My Own APP and Mind of My Own Express App are promoted widely. This enables children and young people to use a web-based resource to gather and capture their views however other children and young people may benefit from more creative engagement activities or just having someone with them (and on their side) for moral support.

Case studies - support at a meeting

- 1) *YP Age 15 -gang affiliated. YP wanted to stay at his current placement and at the same school and not go to a 52-week placement / school out of city. He was supported to express his views at his CIC review meetings. He agreed to commit to good behaviour and 'met halfway' with the professionals and they listened to him and this reflected in his Care Plan. Previously YP had a mistrust of professionals working with him and would not engage in any meetings. Following support at meetings via advocacy YP now participates and engages in his reviews.*
- 2) *YP aged 14 years is placed outside Birmingham. YP felt her social worker was not listening to her and she did not want to meet him virtually as she felt that that affected their communication further. YP had expressed her concerns to her social worker via her advocate and was then supported at her CIC review to express her concerns of poor communication between her and social worker and as a result IRO recommended that further visits should be carried out face to face. Following on from this face to face meetings were facilitated and YP now has a better relationship and better communication with her social worker.*
- 3) *YP aged 12 years (selective mute) not communicating with any professionals. Through advocacy support he communicated effectively using non-verbal communication. He was introduced to Mind of My Own App and would complete that with the support of his advocate. YP now engages well in meetings without being distressed. He feels confident to use apps and to express his views to professionals at meetings. YP now feels in control, supported and listened to. His wish was always to return home and he was able to communicate that at his review meetings with the support of his advocate. The outcome is he has returned home whilst on a care order and seems to be doing very well.*
- 4) *YP was on a child protection plan. His behaviour was very poor at school. He would not engage with teachers or his social worker. He was not involved in his CP process. Through advocacy support young person engaged with school and his social worker at meetings facilitated by advocate and was supported to express his views at his child protection review. The outcome was his plan was downgraded to CIN plan.*
- 5) *YP – a care leaver was supported to access support from a Personal adviser. YP mental health was deteriorating and she also has a learning difficulty. She had previously failed parenting assessments due to her mental health and drug misuse. Her child's case was in pre-proceedings. Advocate supported YP at meetings and forums, involved her in young parents' project/women and theatre work, involvement in interview panels, supported to attend Corporate parent board meetings to represent CYP issues. YP now working with CIC nurses on the pregnancy pathway. Her child's Guardian is now supporting an independent*

assessment in the community. YP has developed in confidence. YP was supported at her daughter family group conference meeting and a positive family plan agreed as a result. YP now feels confident and empowered to attend and represent her own voice at meetings.

Placements

Placement issues are the second highest reason for children and young people accessing RAPS advocacy service.

CYP using the service are worried about, or disagree with, the planning and decision making about where they live, or they don't feel their current placement is working and want to be moved. The advocacy service helps CYP engage with the process and decision making, ensuring their voices are heard. Often, by empowering the child or young person to engage with the professionals, they gain a better understanding of why decisions are being made and feel more comfortable with them – giving better long-term stability for the young person.

Case studies - Placements

- 1) YP has had a stable placement with her foster carers and is achieving well at school. YP is 16yrs of age soon but wanted to stay in her placement while she studied for and sat her exams in June. She had an argument with her carers and went missing. She reported the situation to her social worker, and it resulted in Social worker finding her an alternative placement. YP then patched up with her carers and wanted to remain living with them. The carers were supportive. A placement was found and YP was given a date for the move. YP made a complaint that her placement Moe should be frozen pending outcome of investigation into suitability of her current placement. The advocate met with YP who gave a clear view of what she would like and what she needed to happen with her placement so that her education and future was not compromised. The move was frozen and further meetings and discussions are taking place to keep YP in current placement until at least her exams are completed and a further review of placement will then take place.*
- 2) YP is on a care order placed with parents. YP has mental health and attempted suicide by taking an overdose. She was placed in a placement offering her therapy for a period of 3 months. It was decided that after 3 months she would return home. YP review was due in a few days and she contacted the advocacy service to support her to express that the placement was helping her recover, but she needed more time and therapy for the complete recovery and rehabilitation back home. YP was supported to make a statement in her words as to the benefits/ progress her current placement was providing and how extending this for a few months would impact on her wellbeing. The Statement was presented to the IRO/ Social worker and other professionals working with the YP. The outcome was that the YP placement was extended and this had a positive impact on her health,*
- 3) YP has mental health and is a care leaver. In her current residential placement, she felt that staff and management were not enabling her to become independent, she felt judged and bullied by them. She felt they made her lack confidence in herself. Young person was supported to make a complaint to the home and management addressed this. Her social worker was informed, and she was supported to move to a Supported /semi-independent accommodation where she seems to be much happier and settled.*

Advocacy DATA

RAP records/ collates data from the advocacy referrals received. We are currently in the process of updating our system with the support of the BCT Information management team. The aim is to be able to collate further data in a more effective manner, and to be able to produce reports in through more informative and illustrative analysis.

Data - 1st April 2020- 31st March 2021

Total number of advocacy referrals and queries -543

36% Children in care

39% Children on Child Protection Plans

14% Care leavers

11% Other (SGO/Children in need)

April 2020 – 42 referrals

Top 3 issues - 1st Support at meetings, 2nd Placements, 3rd Complaint

May 2020 – 45 referrals

Top 3 issues – 1st Support at meetings, 2nd Placements, 3rd Contact

June 2020 -50 referrals

Top 3 issues -1st Support at meetings, 2nd Placements, 3rd Contact

July 2020- 50 referrals

Top issues – 1st Support at meetings, 2nd Placements, 3rd Contact

August 2020 -26 referrals

Top 3 issues -1st Support at meetings, 2nd Placement, 3rd Contact/care status

September 2020 -48 referrals

Top 3 issues – 1st Support at meetings, 2nd Placements, 3rd Contact/Housing

October 2020 – 72 referrals

Top issues – 1st Support at meetings, 2nd Placements, 3rd Leaving care

November 2020– 52 Referrals

Top issues – 1st Support at meetings, 2nd Placements, 3rd Contact/Leaving care and social worker

December 2020– 40 referrals

Top issues – 1st Support at meetings, 2nd Placements, 3rd Social worker

January 2021– 42 referrals

Top issues -1st Support at meetings, 2nd Contact, 3rd Complaints

February 2021– 58 referrals

Top issues – 1st Support at meetings, 2nd Placements, 3rd Social worker

March 2021 - 18 referrals

Top issues – 1st Support at meetings, 2nd Placements, 3rd Contact/Care status

**Zahira Khan
Rights and Participation Service**



Education and Children's Social Care O&S Committee: Work Programme 2021–2022

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Chair: | Cllr Narinder Kaur Kooner |
| Deputy Chair: | Cllr Kerry Jenkins |
| Committee Members: | Cllrs: Olly Armstrong, Charlotte Hodiola, Katherine Iroh, Saddak Miah, Kath Scott and Alex Yip Education Representatives: Omar Hanif, Parent Governor; Adam Hardy, Roman Catholic Diocese; Rabia Shami, Parent Governor and Sarah Smith, Church of England Diocese |
| Officer Support: | Acting Group O&S Manager: Ceri Saunders (303 2786) Scrutiny Officer: Amanda Simcox: (675 8444) Committee Manager: Mandeep Marwaha (303 5950) |

1 Terms of Reference

- 1.1 As per City Council on 25th May 2021 the Committee's Terms of Reference is 'to fulfil the functions of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as they relate to any policies, services and activities concerning schools and education, the Children's Trust, vulnerable children, corporate parenting, children and young people's health and wellbeing and other child social care and safeguarding functions of the council'.
- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee dealing with education matters shall include in its membership the following voting representatives: a) Church of England diocese representative (one); b) Roman Catholic diocese representative (one); and c) Parent Governor representatives (two, who are on the Committee until April 2022).

2 Meeting Schedule

| Date & Time | Items | Officers / Attendees |
|---|---|----------------------|
| 9 June 2021 at 10am Informal Meeting | To discuss priorities for 2021/22 work programme. | |



| Date & Time | Items | Officers / Attendees |
|---|---|---|
| <p>21 July 2021 at 10am</p> <p>In the Birmingham & Midland Institute (BMI)</p> <p>Deadline for Send Out: 12 July 2021</p> | <p>Councillor Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing Update (last discussed 10 Jul 2019). To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Years (this has been included in the written report). • SEND and EHCPs including the health aspect e.g. waiting times etc (regular SEND updates programmed). • Birmingham Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2021/22 (this is now scheduled for Cabinet 7 September 2021 rather than 29 June 2021 & will be picked up by the Children's Trust update). | <p>Suman McCartney, Cabinet Support Officer</p> <p>This item was included within the SEND update at the committee meeting.</p> |
| | <p>SEND Ofsted Inspection Outcome (SEND & WSoA last discussed 28 Oct 2020).</p> <p>To include: EHCPs including the health aspect (waiting times etc).</p> | <p>Kevin Crompton, Interim Director, Education & Skills / Director of Children Services (DCS), and Deborah Brooks, Transformation Director, Commissioning, Education and Skills</p> |
| | <p>Hunters Hill College Update.</p> | <p>Councillor Jayne Francis, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture, Jaswinder Didiyal, Head of Service, Education and Skills, and David Bridgman, Head of Service, SENAR</p> |



| Date & Time | Items | Officers / Attendees |
|---|--|---|
| | <p>Councillor Jayne Francis, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture update (last discussed 11 Sep 2019). To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Engagement and Youth Service (Youth voices – to include how the different forums are supported and how they can support each other; and the resources to support these). • Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) provided in schools. • Education of Children and Young People and the difficulty with the school system being set up for young people to be job ready, however there is a lack of jobs and universities are expensive. • Schools Forum and monitoring schools on how they are spending the money they are allocated. | <p>Rose Horsfall, Cabinet Support Officer</p> <p>Lisa Fraser, AD, Education and Early Years, Ilgun Yusuf, Acting AD, Skills and Employability and Alan Michell, Head of School Admissions and Fair Access</p> |
| <p>1 September 2021 at 10am in the BMI</p> <p>Deadline for Send Out: 20 August 2021</p> | <p>Children's Trust to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Justice Strategic Plan • Children in Care • Independent Advocacy Service / Rights and Participation Service • Missing Children | <p>Andrew Christie, Chair and Andy Couldrick, Chief Executive, Children's Trust</p> |
| | <p>Cllr Sharon Thompson, Cabinet Member for Vulnerable Children and Families</p> | <p>Suman McCartney, Cabinet Support Officer</p> |
| | <p>SEND</p> | <p>Kevin Crompton, Interim Director, Education & Skills and Pauline Maddison, Interim AD, SEND and Inclusion</p> |
| <p>13 October 2021 at 10am in the BMI</p> <p>Deadline for Send Out: 4 October 2021</p> | <p>Cllr John Cotton, Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, Community Safety and Equalities to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rise in hate crime, youth crime and knife crime. • Engagement of young people and how they are supported in relation to climate, BLM and increase in racism, Palestine, Me too campaigns etc. | <p>Marcia Wynter, Cabinet Support Officer</p> |



| Date & Time | Items | Officers / Attendees |
|--|--|---|
| | Integrated Transport Unit (ITU) | Deborah Brooks, Transformation Director, Commissioning, Education and Skills, and Sonia Davidson-Grant, Programme Manager, Education & Skills |
| | Home to School Transport Update | Mary Jefferson, Head of Service, Home to School Transport, and Deborah Brooks, Transformation Director, Commissioning, Education and Skills |
| | SEND | Kevin Crompton, Interim Director, Education & Skills |
| 24 November 2021 at 10am in the BMI Deadline for Send Out: 15 November 2021 | Elective Home Education (EHE) / Home Schooling (TBC) (This was discussed as part of the Attendance and Exclusions Item on 20 Jan 2020 with Lisa Fraser and Alan Michell, also the former Schools, Children & Families O&S Committee discussed this on 24 Aug 2017 with David Bishop, Head of Service) | Lisa Fraser, AD, Education and Early Years, and Alan Michell, Head of School Admissions and Fair Access |
| | SEND | Kevin Crompton, Interim Director, Education & Skills |
| | Young People and Mental Health (to include Aquarius – children and young people substance use) - TBC | TBC Karl Beese, Commissioning Manager - Adult Public Health Services, and John Freeman, Commissioning Manager – Adult Social Care |
| 12 January 2022 at 10am in the BMI Deadline for Send Out: 30 December 2021 | Youth Service | Ilgun Yusuf, Acting AD, Skills and Employability and, Soulla Yiasouma, Joint Head of Youth Service |
| | Birmingham Safeguarding Children's Partnership Annual Update to include: FGM | Penny Thompson, Independent Chair, BSCP and Simon Cross, Business Manager |
| | SEND | Kevin Crompton, Interim Director, Education & Skills |



| Date & Time | Items | Officers / Attendees |
|---|--|--|
| | School Attainment and School Attendance TBC | Lisa Fraser, AD, Education and Early Years |
| 16 February 2021 at 10am in the BMI Deadline for Send Out: 7 February 2022 | SEND | Kevin Crompton, Interim Director, Education & Skills |
| 30 March 2022 at 10am in the BMI Deadline for Send Out: 21 March 2022 | SEND | Kevin Crompton, Interim Director, Education & Skills |
| 6 April 2022 at 10am in the BMI Deadline for Send Out: 28 March 2022 | SEND | Kevin Crompton, Interim Director, Education & Skills |

3 Items to be Programmed

- 3.1 The above bullet points are issues that were identified at the June 2021 meeting.
- 3.2 In addition to the above bullet points, Children's and Young People's health and wellbeing was identified. This is to be discussed with Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure there is no duplication. However, the following could be joint piece of work with the Health and Adults Social Care O&S Committee regarding mental health due to the pandemic.
- The impact on children's and young people's mental health and how this is being supported.
 - To include an update on the development of the footprint as a response to the pandemic to provide support to children with mental health, emotional neglect, domestic abuse (early help hubs). Early Help: Nigel Harvey-Whitten, AD, Children's Services (Commissioning) & Richard Selwyn, Birmingham Children's Partnership have now left and the contact is Garath Symonds.
 - How children and young people and mainstream schools coped with the return to school and the resulting pressures (including missed education and anxiety regarding returning to school).
 - Forward Thinking Birmingham.
 - An update on Preparation for Adulthood which should include data that allows for comparison, tracking and monitoring (attended 20 January 2021).



- Youth Justice.

3.3 Young People and Mental Health has been discussed previously by the former Learning, Culture and Physical Activity O&S Committee:

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 5 Sep 2018 | Forward Thinking Birmingham Erin Docherty Senior Nurse Lead, Forward Thinking Birmingham, Birmingham Women's and Children's NHS Foundation Trust The Birmingham School Health Advisory Service (BSHAS) Joanne Thurston, Chief Operating Officer and Karen Hansford, Head of Universal Children's Services 5-19, Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. |
| 14 Nov 2018 | Educational Psychology Service Birmingham Amanda Daniels, Principal Educational Psychologist. Visit to Pause, Digbeth Karen Woodfield, Area Manager, Pause, Forward Thinking Birmingham & Sandwell Beam and Leroy McConnell, Mental Health, Youth Work/Participation Lead, The Children's Society. |
| 6 Feb 2019 | Anna Robinson, Birmingham Education Partnership (BEP) Mental Health/Emotional Wellbeing Lead and Sarah Finch, Assistant Head, Colmers Secondary School and Sixth Form. |

3.4 Councillor Alex Yip to send a draft TOR for Hunters Hill College.

4 Other Meetings

- Call in Meetings: None scheduled
- Petitions: None scheduled
- Petitions: None scheduled
- Councillor Call for Action Requests: None scheduled

5 Report to City Council / Pieces of Work

5.1 The Committee's Home to School Transport report was debated at City Council on 15th September 2020 and the following motion was agreed:

That the Executive provide an assessment of progress against the outcomes set out above, and the key areas listed in Section 7 in this report, to the Education & Children's Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee in March 2021.



That the Chief Executive at Birmingham City Council:

- a) Take steps to ensure that immediate changes will be made to the most pressing issues within the Travel Assist service, including [but not limited to] safeguarding of children, cancelled routes, guide changes, bus lateness, and telephone lines going unanswered;
- b) Commission an external and independent inquiry into the Full Travel Assist Service that fully addresses the concerns laid out by Parents, Carers, Schools and other users of the service as listed in section 7 and listed in paragraph number a.) above, by providing clear recommendations, lines of accountability together with an open and transparent timetable for sustainable improvement;
- c) Commission an external and independent investigation into the assurances that have been given to Members about the safety of the service and the status of improvements at meetings of Overview and Scrutiny, City Council and Audit Committee since January 2020

The investigations referred to in paragraphs b) & c) will report by 1 November 2020.

6 Forward Plan for Cabinet Decisions

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

| ID Number | Title | Proposed Date | Date of Decision |
|-------------|--|---------------|------------------|
| 008943/2021 | Birmingham Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2021/22 | 7 Sep 21 | |
| 009043/2021 | Proposed In-Year Variation to Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools and the Co-Ordinated Scheme 2021/22 and 2022/23 and Approach to Fair Access Protocol | 27 Jul 21 | 27 Jul 21 |
| 009054/2021 | Skilts School conversion from Community School to Academy Status | 27 Jul 21 | 27 Jul 21 |

