



ADDITIONAL / TO FOLLOW AGENDA ITEMS

This is a supplement to the original agenda and includes reports that are additional to the original agenda or which were marked 'to follow'.

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL
CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD

Date: Monday, 31 March 2014

Time: 3.00 pm

Place: LB31-32 - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG

Constitutional Services Officer: Catherine Ziane-Pryor **Direct Dial:** 0115 8764298

AGENDA

Pages

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CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD – 31st March 2014

Title of paper:	Adoption Scorecard Performance Update	
Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):	Helen Blackman, Director – Safeguarding	Wards affected: ALL
Report author(s) and contact details:	Robert Fagan (Innovation and Change Manager, Fostering and Adoption), 0115 8764605, robert.fagan@nottinghamcity.gov.uk Kwesi Williams (Project Officer – Children in Care), 0115 8762684, kwesi.williams@nottinghamcity.gov.uk	
Other colleagues who have provided input:		
Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s) (if relevant)	18th March 2014	
Relevant Council Plan Strategic Priority:		
Cutting unemployment by a quarter		<input type="checkbox"/>
Cut crime and anti-social behaviour		<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure more school leavers get a job, training or further education than any other City		<input type="checkbox"/>
Your neighbourhood as clean as the City Centre		<input type="checkbox"/>
Help keep your energy bills down		<input type="checkbox"/>
Good access to public transport		<input type="checkbox"/>
Nottingham has a good mix of housing		<input type="checkbox"/>
Nottingham is a good place to do business, invest and create jobs		<input type="checkbox"/>
Nottingham offers a wide range of leisure activities, parks and sporting events		<input type="checkbox"/>
Support early intervention activities		<input type="checkbox"/>
Deliver effective, value for money services to our citizens		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):		
<p>The report summarises the performance of the local authority from April 2013 to date against internal targets and in line with the DfE scorecard. It also outlines the impact of some of the activities introduced within the context of the Government’s adoption and fostering reform agenda to minimise delay in adoption.</p>		
Recommendation(s):		
1	It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Board notes the activities that are being undertaken to tackle delays in adoption.	
2	To note the progress being made in improving our performance against the Adoption Scorecard.	

1. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 These recommendations will enable us to show compliance with government guidance and inform Corporate Parenting Board and management of activities been undertaken by Fostering and Adoption Service.

2. BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)

2.1 The scorecards were introduced as part of a new approach as set out in 'An action plan for adoption: tackling delay' (March 2012).

2.2 The scorecards allow local authorities and other adoption agencies to monitor their own performance and compare it with that of others at critical points in the child's journey towards adoption. The 3 scorecard indicators are:

- Indicator 1 - Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted.
- Indicator 2 - Average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family.
- Indicator 3 - Measures the number and percentage of children who wait less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (2013-2016)

2.3 The government are incrementally reducing the timescale by which children should be adopted year on year as illustrated in the table below. Initially Nottingham performed well against the targets but the recent reduction in timescales in year two (2010-2013) has created challenges.

Table to show scorecard thresholds for Indicator 1 & 2

Financial years	Indicator 1 threshold		Indicator 2 threshold	
	(months)	(weeks)	(months)	(weeks)
2010 to 2013	20	87	6	26
2011 to 2014	18	78	5	22
2012 to 2015	16	69	4	17
2013 to 2016	14	61	4	17

2.4 These challenges are being responded to with a series of measures that have been introduced to improve performance in adoption and reduce delay, which include:

- A new Foster Carer and Adopter Marketing and Recruitment Strategy including staff communication plan.
- Two Customer Service Officers to support adopters and prospective adopters, also managing the Adopter's Application Process (AAP) – Adopters application journey.
- A more coordinated and systematic use of the AAJ throughout the service.
- Implementation of the 2 Stage Adoption Application Procedure.
- Use of the temporary fast track Social Workers at key stages of the child's journey through the adoption process.
- From Jan 2014 increase the number of Approval and Matching Panels and the number of cases per panel.
- Introduction of robust performance management systems to incorporate key stages of the adoption journey.
- Adoption Activity Flow Chart – Extension of the AAJ and AAP to incorporate better planning and increase staff awareness of the overall process

- Review of Post Order Services to increase the confidence and ability of adopters in taking on more challenging children
- A rolling programme of information evenings, matching events and activity days.

2.4 The full impact of these measures will take some time to be embedded into the service, however there are signs that the measures are starting to have a favourable impact on adoption performance e.g.

- Currently 40 children have been adopted to date with the potential for an additional 4 by year end
- Adoption activity and permanency planning has resulted in 43 Special Guardianship Orders' this is a 60% increase on last year's performance.
- Improved on scorecard indicator 1 by 6 weeks over 2012-13
- There has been a 42% (2013-14 to date 263) increase in Adopter application activity to date when compared to 2012-13 (185)
- To date 31 Adopter applications have been approved compared to 21 in 2012-13
- There's been 43 matches to date compared to 27 in 2012-13

3. **OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 None

4. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)**

4.1 None

5. **RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES (INCLUDING LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND CRIME AND DISORDER ACT IMPLICATIONS)**

5.1 None

6. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out as this report does not include proposals for new or changing policies, services or functions

Not needed (report does not contain proposals or financial decisions)

No

Yes – Equality Impact Assessment attached

Due regard should be given to the equality implications identified in the EIA.

7. **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION**

7.1 None

8. **PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT**

8.1 An action plan for adoption: tackling delay' (March 2012).

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CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD – 31st MARCH 2014

Title of paper:	Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy 2014 – 2016	
Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):	Helen Blackman, Director – Safeguarding	Wards affected: ALL
Report author(s) and contact details:	Kwesi Williams (Project Officer – Children in Care) (0115) 8762684 kwesi.williams@nottinghamcity.gov.uk	
Other colleagues who have provided input:		
Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s) (if relevant)	18th March 2014	

Relevant Council Plan Strategic Priority:	
Cutting unemployment by a quarter	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cut crime and anti-social behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure more school leavers get a job, training or further education than any other City	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your neighbourhood as clean as the City Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help keep your energy bills down	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good access to public transport	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nottingham has a good mix of housing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nottingham is a good place to do business, invest and create jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nottingham offers a wide range of leisure activities, parks and sporting events	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support early intervention activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deliver effective, value for money services to our citizens	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):

In order to fulfil it's obligation as set out in Annex A of Ofsted's 'Framework and evaluation schedule for the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers' (2013), local authorities are required to produce a strategic plan for looked after children that includes corporate parenting objectives.

In January 2014, six proposed Strategic Priority Statements were presented to the Corporate Parenting Board ('Board'). The Board was given the opportunity to provide comments regarding the content of the strategy. Where possible, received comments (and suggestions) would be incorporated into the final draft of the strategy and returned to the Board.

The purpose of this report is to fulfil this requirement and again recommend that the Board accepts the Strategic Priority Statements as 'corporate parenting objectives'.

Recommendation(s):	
1	To agree the Strategic Priorities and corresponding Strategic Priority Statements (SPS). By doing so, the Corporate Parenting Board will accept the Strategic Priority Statements as 'corporate parenting objectives'.
2	To endorse the 2014 – 2016 Nottingham City Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy.

1. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 As Corporate Parents we are responsible for ensuring children, who come into our care, experience safe and positive parenting, are helped to achieve their full potential, and obtain the best possible outcomes.
- 1.2 It is acknowledge that in order for our children to achieve the best possible outcomes, all agencies involved in caring and supporting children in care and care leavers must work together effectively. This in-turn requires a multi-agency strategy that clearly states the areas that require improvement (i.e. strategic priorities) and the activities that must be undertaken to achieve the necessary improvements.
- 1.3 Imperative to the success of the strategy is its endorsement by the Board. The Board will play an important role in the success of the strategy by fulfilling it's function to raise the profile of children in care, and by acting as a champion for the needs and rights of children in care in the Council's various service areas, political groups and settings.

2. BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)

- 2.1 Comments and suggestions made at, and subsequent to the January Corporate Parenting Board meeting have been noted, and where possible incorporated into the strategy document. Comments and suggestions included the following;

§ **To extend Strategic Priority 11 to include 'volunteering and work experience.'**

Strategic Priority 11 has been extending accordingly – see the table included in section 2.3 of this report. An additional action has also been include to reflect the broadening of the Strategic Priority – see page 20 of appendix one.

§ **To do as much as possible to prevent young people returning to environments of domestic violence, abuse and neglect.**

It should be noted that preventing young people from returning to environments where domestic violence, abuse and neglect exists is an implicit function of the Safeguarding Directorate. Ensuring that young people are not returned to these environments is achieved through robust risk assessments. Further scrutiny is achieved in part through the Edge of Care Panel and the Placement Panel.

The action plan that supports SPS 1 now makes reference to work that will be undertaken to identify ways in which young people can be prepared for healthy relationships and consider the impact of domestic violence – see page 17 of appendix one.

§ **To consider the feasibility of 'foster grandparents' to help support SPS 2 (Permanency) and SPS 3 (Resilience and Independence).**

Support networks, which will include family members when appropriate, are identified as children prepare for transition into independence to as part of the pathway planning progress. Monitoring the completion and quality of Pathway Plans is a task currently undertaken and is referred to on page 19 of appendix one.

It should also be acknowledged that the feasibility of using family members to support permanency is frequently assessed through the Core Assessment process, and is discussed at both the Placement and Permanency panels. Both Panels are convened on regular basis as stated in appendix one – see page 18.

- § **To reconsider the wording used for SPS 4, Educational Attainment, to provide a stronger statement.**

In an attempt to make SPS 4 more comprehensive, reference is made to work experience and voluntary opportunities.

- § **Minor grammatical changes were also suggested. These amendments have been made but not highlighted.**

2.3

Strategic Priority		Strategic Priority Statement (SPS)	
1	Reduce substance misuse.	1	To reduce young pregnancy and substance misuse. In addition to ensuring the timely completion of health checks, dental checks, immunisations, and SDQs.
2	Reduce young pregnancy.		
3	To ensure the timely completion of health checks, dental checks, immunisations, and SDQs (Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires).		
4	To reduce delays in securing permanency through adoption, special guardianship, residence orders and long term fostering.	2	NCC believes that all children should grow up with their birth families. Where this is not able to happen we will secure permanency through adoption, special guardianship, residence orders or long term fostering.
5	Provide safe environments and stability in placement.		
6	Ensure children in care and care leavers are better able to deal successfully with significant changes in their lives.	3	To ensure children in care and care leavers are better able to deal successfully with significant changes in their lives. This includes improving transition into independence, and ensuring there are consultation and participation opportunities.
7	Improve transition into independence.		
8	Continue to seek the wishes and feelings of children in care and care leavers, and use this information to influence the care and support they experience.		
9	Ensure children in care know about the Advocacy, Independent Visitor, and Complaints service.		
10	Improve educational attainment.	4	To improve the educational attainment of children in care and to ensure care leavers engage in employment, education or training, including voluntary and work experience opportunities.
11	Support children in care and care leavers into employment, training, work experience and volunteering.		
12	Ensure care leavers have access to suitable accommodation and support.	5	To ensure care leavers have access to suitable accommodation and support.
13	Reduce offending behaviour.	6	To reduce offending behaviour through strong collaborative partnership work.

Table to show the 2014 – 2016 Strategic Priorities and corresponding Strategic Priority Statements (SPS)

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 As previously stated, as an Authority we are required by Ofsted to produce a document that sets out our strategic plan for looked after children. Therefore no other options have been considered when making the recommendation presented in this report.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)

4.1 None.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES (INCLUDING LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND CRIME AND DISORDER ACT IMPLICATIONS)

5.1 None.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out as this report does not include proposals for new or changing policies, services or functions.

7. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION

7.1 None.

8. PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT

8.1 None.

NOTTINGHAM CITY

Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy 2014-2016

Valuing the future of our Children in Care and Care Leavers

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**Nottingham
City Council**

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Welcome

Our Vision is that children and young people who come into our care are provided with safe and stable care, will be looked after well and prepared for adult life.

We want all children and young people in our care to grow into emotionally balanced, well educated and resilient young people who know how to cope with some of the demands of life after in care and after care.

Nottingham City Council and our partners recognise the value of **prevention and early intervention** and works to do all it can to support children in need and their families. We believe that in most cases children achieve their potential and thrive best within their families of origin.

Sometimes children cannot be cared for in their birth families and do not have appropriate networks in the community. For this group of children and young people we have a responsibility, as **corporate parents**, to provide care and to work with partner agencies to best meet their needs and prepare them for their future.

As corporate parents we are committed to ensuring that children in our care have a clear **plan for permanency** that meets their individual needs. We want all children in care to experience safe and positive parenting, which helps them to achieve their full potential and obtain the best outcomes possible. Where it is in the best interests of the child we will always seek to keep sibling groups together and we will ensure that wherever possible the child's ethnic, religious and cultural heritage are taken into account.

As corporate parents we have already launched our **Children in Care and Care Leavers Charter**, monitored by an annual 'Have Your Say' survey. We are proud that we have a strong **Children in Care Council** to ensure that the voice of children in our care informs our decisions.

This document details how we, and partner agencies, will work together to make this vision a reality for children in care and care leavers, how we will act on the views of children, young people and their carers to improve our service to them and what our key priorities are for 2014/15.

Councillor David Mellen, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services

Photos and Signatures of Corporate Director added.

Photos and Signatures of Portfolio Holder to be added.

Context

At the time of producing this strategy Nottingham had 575 children in care and 356 care leavers. In financial year 2012/13 the local authority spent approximately £27.4m to support the children in our care.

Children can come into the care of the local authority for many reasons and the plan for every child is tailored to meet their individual needs. Wherever possible we will work with birth families and the wider community to return a child to a safe home environment with their parents or extended family through the use of Special Guardianship or Residence Orders. Where this is not possible we will seek to find a permanent, safe and stable environment within our care.

Our preferred option for securing permanence for children who cannot safely return to their family is to secure an adoptive family. As of December 2013, we have 179 young people where adoption has been deemed to be the best option. New government targets mean that we'll be working hard over the next year to reduce the amount of time it takes to agree adoptive placements and match children to the right families.

For some children with very specific or complex needs an adoptive placement may not be the best way to meet their needs. For these children and young we have a range of other provision available including fostering placements or residential homes. Fostering and residential placements are delivered by both Nottingham City Council and other independent/external providers. See table one for a breakdown of children placed in fostering and residential placements.

National and local shortages of potential adoptive families and foster carers mean that the availability of placements can be an issue for the local authority. We have recently launched a refreshed Recruitment Strategy for 2014/15 to ensure we encourage those interested in adopting or fostering to come forward and to make sure the information and support they receive is fit for purpose.

Type of Placement	Number Children in Care
Internal Residential	20
External Residential	52
Internal Foster Care	194

External Foster Care	222
Other	87
Total	575

Table 1: Number of children in care by placement type as at 3rd December, 2013 (Source: 'Weekly Children in Care (CiC) and 18+ Report – 10/12/2013').

We also have a statutory responsibility to support young people leaving our care to move towards independence. We work closely with partners to ensure that care leavers in Nottingham City have access to suitable accommodation, advice and guidance to help them find employment or further training opportunities and continued support through their Personal Advisor.

In 2011, we launched our **Children in Care and Care Leavers Charter**. This is led through the Children in Care Council and the views of children and young people are gathered on an annual basis through our 'Have Your Say' Survey. You can see the full charter at appendix two.

Our Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA) also provides us with vital information about the needs of children in our care and has guided this strategy.

DRAFT

Strategic Priority Statements

When determining the Strategic Priorities Statements (SPS) described in this document, we took into consideration the assessed needs of children in care and care leavers as detailed in the Children in Care Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2013). We also listened to the views of children in care, care leavers and professionals involved in caring and supporting our young people.

Strategic Priority Statement One (SPS1)

To improve the physical and emotional health, and well being of children in care. This includes the timely completion of health checks, dental checks, Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires and immunisations. In addition, we will reduce young pregnancy and substance misuse.

Strategic Priority Statement Two (SPS2)

NCC believes that all children should grow up with their birth families. Where this is not able to happen we will secure permanency through adoption, special guardianship, residence orders or long-term fostering.

Strategic Priority Statement Three (SPS3)

To ensure children in care and care leavers are better able to deal successfully with significant changes in their lives. This includes improving transition into independence, and ensuring there are consultation and participation opportunities.

Our Six Strategic Priorities

Strategic Priority Statement Four (SPS4)

To improve the educational attainment of children in care and to ensure care leavers engage in employment, education or training, including voluntary and work experience opportunities.

Strategic Priority Statement Five (SPS5)

To ensure care leavers have access to suitable accommodation and support.

Strategic Priority Statement Six (SPS6)

To reduce offending behaviour through strong collaborative partnership work.

Children and Young Peoples' Participation in determining plans for their lives

We aim to provide every child and young person with the opportunity to have their say about the services they receive, and we promote a culture of ongoing engagement and participation across the Children's Partnership.

- We try to work in a way that empowers children and young people to participate so they can have their say in their own care plans or pathway plans. We will continue to provide opportunities for those with individual care plans to lead the processes that support their care. A creative way of achieving this has been through supporting young people to chair their own review meetings. This has proved successful and has contributed to our positive participation performance figures.
- Annually we send out the 'Have your Say' survey which has been designed to capture the views of children and young people in relation to their experience of care. The results are analysed and officers are challenged to make improvements to the care and support that children in care and care leavers receive. Nottingham City Council has undertaken this survey since 2011. As a result of feedback, we have improved the way our children and young people and care leavers access our advocacy service.
- The Children in Care Council for young people in care and care leavers form a sub-group of the Corporate Parenting Board and also attend the Board and contribute to the re-design of the annual survey. The Children in Care Council is important in reshaping the way services for children in care and care leavers are provided. Participation is often through supporting Officers in the Council to interview for vacant posts for children's Residential Registered Managers and at Director level and above.
- The Children in Care Council feeds into the Youth Cabinet, Youth Council, Primary Parliament and from 2014, the Special People Group.

Our Team

We know that a strong and stable relationship with professionals is vital to ensure that children in care, care leavers and carers feel well supported and are able to thrive.

Children, young people and carers are likely to be supported by a number of different teams as they move through the care process. Whilst we know that this can cause some disruption we think it's important that the support on offer changes as the needs of the child or young person develop.

This section seeks to outline the roles and responsibilities of the teams that work with our children in care and care leavers.

'The local authority and its partners are clear that every child does matter and that all children have the right to a safe, secure and loving environment so that they can achieve their very best.'

The Children in Care Social Work Team

The Children in Care Team work with children from 0-15 years of age with children in a variety of settings that meet their individual needs. The Team works on achieving permanence for every child through Adoption, Special Guardianship, Residence Orders and Long Term Fostering.

Nottingham city is committed to support families who have children and young people on the edge of care through providing targeted support.

'We have established a dedicated team to meet the specific needs of children in care.'

15 Plus Team and Personal Advisors Leaving Care

The 15 Plus Team ensures all young people between the ages of 15 and 25 years get the best support possible in their preparation for moving on into adulthood.

Every young person will be given the opportunity to explore their independence with an individual support package that allows them to develop, learn, or re-learn the skills that will be needed for successful independent living.

We have supported a number of young people through further and higher education, with some going on study at a post-graduate level. We are very proud of our young people who have gone on to achieve huge educational successes.

The 15+ Team also incorporates a service for unaccompanied asylum seeking young people. Many of these young people have had a difficult life and continue to need help to find suitable accommodation, education or training and may also need emotional or financial support.

'We are dedicated to ensuring young people are fully supported in the journey to adulthood so that they can become successful adults.'

Fostering and Adoption Service (Including post order support)

The Fostering and Adoption Service aims to provide high quality family based care that ensures that children in care receive a positive experience of home and family life.

To achieve this we recruit, assess, train and support foster carers and adopters to support children in achieving well in all aspects of their physical, emotional and intellectual development. A variety of foster carers and adopters are recruited and trained to meet the diverse needs of children and reflect the ethnic and cultural background of the community we serve.

All foster carer and adoption applicants are rigorously screened, thoroughly assessed and carefully trained so that they can provide safe and supportive homes for children in care, children placed for adoption.

Support is available to adopters after the adoption order is granted to enable them to learn and adapt to the changing needs of children. We offer a range of support including a designated Adoption Support Services Adviser (ASSA) who is there to help adopters access adoption support and other specialist services. (Our full range of post order support is included in our Adoption Passport which is available from our website, <http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/adopt>).

'We recognise how important it is to listen to children in care, and are dedicated to playing our part in representing the views of children and young people and encouraging them to voice views on how they are cared for.'

Children's Homes

Nottingham City Council has nine small residential homes offering care and accommodation for children and young people between the ages of 12 - 25 years. A wide range of care and support including;

Short term emergency care and long term care (17 beds)

Semi-independent accommodation for young people who are 16 years and over (12 beds)

Short breaks unit for children and young people with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and a range of associated challenging behaviours (11 beds)

All our homes are safe and welcoming and we are proud to provide high quality care with 2 of our homes judged as 'OUTSTANDING' by Ofsted.

Every effort is made to provide children and young people with the necessary support and nurture needed for them to achieve the best outcomes possible.

We quality assure all private and charitable run Residential Children's Homes and semi-independent provision in an effort to ensure all young people receive the same high quality care.

Some of our children are placed away from Nottingham city in residential children's homes and where this is the case we give our assurance to our young people and their families that we rigorously monitor the homes and extend all support and services to our children.

'We are dedicated to provide children and young people with the necessary support and nurture needed for them to achieve the best outcomes possible.'

Targeted Support Team Supporting Children on the Edge of Care

This service works with approximately 200 families in a year to maintain the family unit.

The Targeted Support Team provides a range of interventions which help achieve the following:

- The prompt return home of children in care, where appropriate.
- The stabilisation of fostering, adoption or special guardianship placements which risk breakdown.
- The successful move of a young person to a new placement.
- The reduction of children entering care.

An extended service is also offered during the evenings and weekends.

'We aim to be supportive, dynamic, relevant and beneficial to the children and families with whom we work with on a daily basis.'

The Children's Placement Service

The Children's Placement Service is the single point of access for the procurement, brokerage, management and quality assurance of care placements. The Service is responsible for providing every child and young person with the best possible placement, which meets their needs, wishes and feelings and provides them with the opportunity to thrive and achieve. This could be an internal (Nottingham City Council) placement, or an external placement, commissioned through the Regional Provider Framework, or on a spot-purchased basis.

The Placement Service undertakes activities which ensure that all children and young people are accessing high quality care placements.

'We work to ensure all children have access to the best quality care available.'

Neighbourhood Fieldwork Teams

There are twelve neighbourhood field work teams based throughout the city. Their aim is to safeguard the children and young people they work with, developing appropriate plans with children and families so that wherever possible, families can be kept together.

However there are occasions when children have to come into the care of the local authority. While in most cases the responsibility for these children will be transferred from a Neighbourhood Fieldwork team to the Children in Care Team or the 15 Plus Team, on occasion fieldwork teams will support children through adoption, Special Guardianship, Residence Orders and long term fostering or into independence.

'We aim to be child focused in their planning and will ensure that the child's views are understood and acted upon'.

Virtual School

Our children often have a poor start in schools and often need help to catch up. We have a 'Virtual School' that works with a network of Designated Teachers who are dedicated to ensuring that our children achieve the best they can in line with all other children. The Virtual School aims high for our children.

The role of the Virtual School is to monitor, support and provide interventions to ensure that children in care achieve their best possible educational outcomes. The school reports on the completion of Personal Education Plans and audits the quality. It also supports schools to fulfill their statutory duties to children in care.

'We support the educational progress of children in care so that they can achieve the best possible results for them.'

Action Plan

SPS1 – HEALTH

To improve the physical and emotional health, and well-being of children in care. This includes the timely completion of health checks, dental checks, Strength and Difficulties Questionnaires and immunisations. In addition, we will to reduce young pregnancy and substance misuse.

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What We've Done So Far	What We Plan To Do Next
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We ensure children over the age of two years are registered with a dentist. 2. We ensure children have appropriate and timely health checks. 3. We ensure children have appropriate and timely immunisation. 4. We work to ensure that a percentage reduction in children in care scoring 14 or higher in Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire year on year based on the previous year's Outturn. 5. We work to ensure that all children who have been in care for three months or more have an up-to-date Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. 6. The CAMHS team scrutinises the process for managing the completion of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire and to actively addressed issues where necessary 7. We ensure appropriate sex & relationships support & advice is available to young people. 8. Residential staff work to ensure children and young people in their care are educated in the dangers of substance misuse. 9. We have implemented a referral pathway between Compass and General Practitioners (GPs). The implantation of the programme is being supplemented by ongoing training of GPs. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ensure that children and young people have access to dedicated CAMHS support tailored to their needs by the end of June 2014. 2. By the end of June 2014 we will ensure the CAMHS team contributes to the collection and monitoring of Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire data and to ensure that they work with children and young people with the highest Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire scores. 3. To utilise the professional substance misuse advice and consultation service available from Compass by ensuring staff and primary carers are aware of the early intervention services offered to those 'at risk' of substance misuse and risk taking behaviours by the end of April 2014. 4. The content of the substance misuse screening tools will be agreed between Compass and Commissioners by the end May 2014. 5. To identify ways in which we can ensure our young people are prepared for healthy relationships considering the impact of domestic violence, loss and trauma by the end of September 2014. 6. To establish if there is a need for a parenting programme for care leavers by the end of August 2014.

SPS2 – PERMANENCY

NCC believes that all children should grow up with their birth families. Where this is not able to happen we will secure permanency through adoption, special guardianship, residence orders or long-term fostering

What We've Done So Far	What We Plan To Do Next
<p>1. Place children in a placement that best meets their needs.</p> <p>2. We monitor the progress of children in the adoption process to help ensure children are adopted in a timely manner.</p> <p>3. Adoption Placement Advisors (APAs) work closely with social workers to actively seek appropriate placements for children in the adoption process.</p> <p>4. Fast-track Social Workers target those children who are matched or placed for adoption to ensure reports are completed and submitted to court within timescales, support placements to prevent breakdowns and target hard to place children.</p> <p>5. The authority has commenced a rolling programme of Matching Evenings, as well as participated in Adoption Activity Days. Both provide an opportunity to create matches for our children with adopters.</p> <p>6. We closely monitor information on the quality and outcomes of placements.</p> <p>7. We regularly convene Placement and Permanency Panels.</p> <p>8. We closely monitor the placements of children placed outside the authority.</p> <p>9. We seek the views of young people when carrying out our statutory visits.</p> <p>10. We hold Strategy Meetings for all young people in care who go missing.</p>	<p>1. Our Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) team will ensure that information regarding training, and research is put into practice across children and families by the end of March 2014.</p> <p>2. By the end of May 2014 IROs will chair and review Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy Meetings to ensure robust plans are in place to safeguard young people.</p> <p>3. To develop a subgroup of the CSECAG (Child Sexual Exploitation Cross Authority Group) that will provide additional information by the end of May 2014.</p> <p>4. Work to procure regional framework of quality placements by April 2015.</p>

SPS3 – RESILIENCE AND INDEPENDANCE

To ensure children in care and care leavers are better able to deal successfully with significant changes in their lives. This includes improving transition into independence and ensuring there are consultation and participation opportunities.

What We've Done So Far	What We Plan To Do Next
<p>1. We encouraged young people to attend meetings that affect them.</p> <p>2. We monitor the type and level of participation in LAC reviews to ensure all children and young people have the opportunity contribute to their LAC review in a way that is meaningful to them.</p> <p>3. We encouraged and prepare young people to chair meetings that affect them.</p> <p>4. IROs meet with children and young people both before and between reviews will be embedded by the January</p> <p>5. We convene monthly Children in Care Council (CiCC) meetings who are consulted on service developments their support.</p> <p>6. We seek the views of children and young people as part of the annual 'Have your Say' survey. Results from the survey are converted into areas for development and prioritised in partnership with the CiCC.</p> <p>7. We monitor the completion & quality of Pathway Plans.</p> <p>8. The Independent Living Skills Programme has been introduced for all children placed in internal residential homes and foster carers. Packs will help primary carers to monitor the readiness of children for independence.</p> <p>9. Every care leaver has an allocated Personal Advisor who will support them until they reach 21 years (or 25 years if in education).</p> <p>10. We complete statutory visits to care leavers.</p> <p>11. We refer young people to our pre-employability programme (RISE) and also through our Economic Development Team onto apprenticeships and employment opportunities.</p> <p>12. We work closely with the Futures Service to identify opportunities for young people.</p> <p>13. We hold bi-monthly Employability Meetings with partner agencies to address and discuss what is working and what is available and what is coming up in the future with regard to employment, education and training opportunities</p>	<p>1. 'Your IRO' leaflet to be distributed to children and young people in care by the end of April 2014.</p> <p>2. By the end of March 2014 LAC reviews will be used to verify that the Independent Living Skills Programme is being used for all children aged 11 years and over.</p> <p>3. To involve children in care and care leavers in the development, implementation and review of an effective mechanism for complaint resolution for children in care by the end of March 2015.</p>

SPS4 – EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

To improve the educational attainment of children in care and ensure care leavers engage in employment, education or training, including voluntary and work experience opportunities.

What We've Done So Far	What We Plan To Do Next
<p>1. We closely monitor the completion and implementation of Personal Education Plans (PEPs).</p> <p>2. We are working to improve our PEP process to ensure that the wishes and feelings of children and young people are included in their PEP.</p> <p>3. We are working to ensure school placements are a priority in the event of a placement move, in an attempt to ensure the number of school placement moves is reduced.</p> <p>4. We are working to ensure that school admission of children happens in 20 days or less.</p> <p>5. We monitor school attendance of children on a weekly basis.</p> <p>6. We have a Designated Teacher Network which is used to offer advice and support to Designated Teachers to ensure schools are meeting their statutory duties.</p> <p>7. We monitor and challenge the use of the Pupil Premium and support schools to commission appropriate services</p> <p>8. Local authority and partners apprenticeship programme for care leavers.</p> <p>9. We have made available a range of activities that will enhance educational outcomes e.g. Duke of Edinburgh, Sports Leadership, homework support and one-to-one tuition.</p> <p>10. We have an Education Progress Grant allocation process in place that clearly identifies educational outcomes. An agreed process has been embedded.</p>	<p>1. IROs will ensure that PEPs are discussed and presented at each LAC review. This will be implemented by the end of May 2014.</p> <p>2. We are exploring if PEPs could be incorporated into our CareFirst system which will allow closer monitoring of educational plans and provision. This will be completed by the end of June 2014.</p> <p>3. To increase the capacity of the Virtual School team end of July 2014.</p> <p>4. To develop a system through which children in care and care leavers can access identified work experience and volunteering opportunities. The system through which this is achieved will be embedded by the end of December 2014.</p>

SPS5 – SUITABLE ACCOMMODATION

To ensure care leavers have access to suitable accommodation and support.

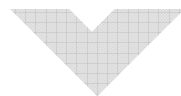
What We've Done So Far	What We Plan To Do Next
<p>Page 31</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compass Workers signpost young people to appropriate support agencies into education and employment e.g. Futures 2. We ensure young people in care aged 15 plus receive information regarding events and opportunities and are supported and encouraged to access employment, education, and training. 3. We ensure all older children in care and care leavers have the opportunity to engage with the review and development of services through consultation. 4. We ensure young people who are seeking housing within the city area are prioritised following a recommendation to Nottingham City Homes (NCH). 5. Monthly meetings are held with NCH to ensure support and housing issues are addressed. 6. A Housing Protocol agreement is in place between the 15 Plus Team and NCH. This is reviewed and amended annually, or as and when amendments are identified. 7. Support and guidance is provided through contingencies identified within the pathway plan e.g. Housing Aid. 8. Support and advice is provided to care leavers through an allocated Personal Advisor up to the age of 21 years or 25 if in education. 9. We will continue to work with NCH, Housing Aid and other housing providers to ensure our care leavers have access to suitable accommodation. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We will ensure all eligible young people move onto suitable accommodation through the development of the accommodation service and implementation of the '16 Plus Enhancing Accommodation Strategy' end of September 2014. 2. We will implement our Independent Living Skills Programme for all children, including those placed with external providers by the end of September 2014. 3. We will review and promote our Staying Put Scheme by the end of May 2014. 4. We will review the placement strategy for NCC and a new framework will in place by end of March 2015.

SPS6 – OFFENDING BEHAVIOUR

To reduce offending behaviour through strong collaborative partnership work.

What We've Done So Far	What We Plan To Do Next
<p>1. We have a dedicated Children in Care Police Officer (CiCPO) whose expertise and service we will continue to use.</p> <p>2. We have a dedicated children in care lead in the Youth Offending Team whose works closely with the CiCPO on reducing the criminal behaviour amongst our children in care and care leaver population.</p> <p>3. We hold quarterly Multi-agency Network meetings between our Youth Offending Team, Nottinghamshire Police, and private and statutory providers. Meetings are used to share good practice, information, and open up lines of communication.</p> <p>4. We use Restorative Justice (RJ) and provide training on RJ to staff and external providers.</p> <p>5. We are currently trying to establish if low level sexual offending can be dealt with by means of RJ.</p> <p>6. We offer training regarding reducing the risk of Sexual Exploitation to staff and external providers.</p> <p>7. Our Personal Advisors meet with Probation Officers and Youth Offending Team Case Managers to address offending behaviour; this is dealt within the Pathway Plan.</p> <p>8. We use an eight-point checklist that ensures all other strategies have been exhausted before a young person is 'criminalised'.</p> <p>9. We hold bi-monthly Concerns Network meetings where low level sexual exploitation concerns are shared and addressed.</p>	<p>1. We plan to hold regular Safeguarding Children in Care events. Such events provide an opportunity to discuss activity in regards to reducing offending behaviour, and to share good practice among key stakeholders and young people. A planned schedule of these events will be available by the end of October 2014</p> <p>2. Subject to availability, we plan to secure further opportunities for young people and staff to attend theatre performances that deal with sexual exploitation and associated risks by the end of July 2014.</p> <p>3. We plan to develop multi-agency group, which will include representation from Ofsted that will focus on the risk of sexual exploitation. It is anticipated that the group will be established by the end of July 2014.</p>

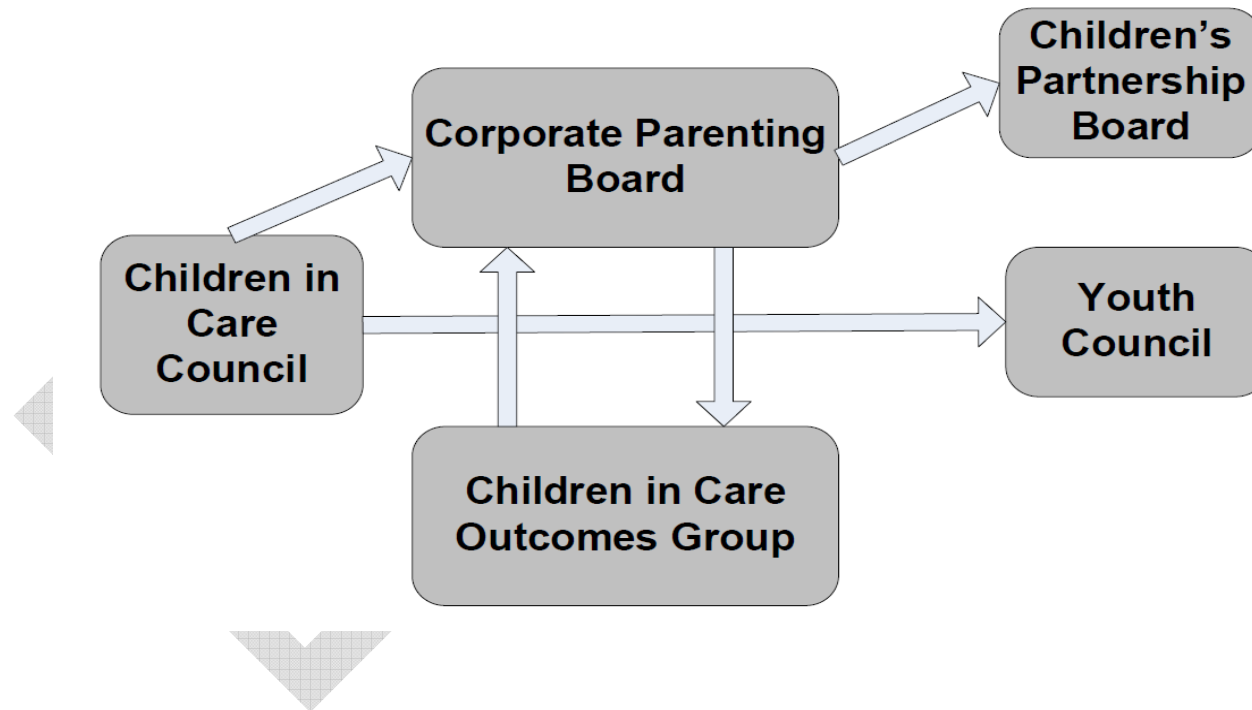
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Governance and Strategic Framework

This strategy is endorsed by the Corporate Parenting Board. Strategic Priority Statements and their corresponding actions will be reviewed in response to updates of our Children in Care JSNA, the annual children in care and care leavers 'Have Your Say' survey, and priorities set by central government. The next schedule update of this strategy will take place in December 2014.

Progress against actions outline in the action plan will be monitored by both Children in Care Outcome Group and Corporate Parenting Board members. Members of both forums will also be responsible for monitoring performance, as detailed in appendix one.



APPENDIX One – Performance Indicators and Targets

Performance Table		
Metric Details		2013/14 Target
Reference	Indicator	
CC-1a (E)	The number of children discharged as a result of a Permanent Outcome i.e. Adoption Order, Special Guardianship Order and Residence Orders	85
CC-8 (NI62)	The percentage of Children in Care that have had three or more placement moves in the previous 12 months	10%
CC-9 (NI63)	The percentage of Children in Care who have lived in the same placement for at least 2 years	70%

CC-13 (E)	The percentage of Children in Care with up to date dental checks	92%
CC-10 (R)	The percentage of Children in Care reviewed within the appropriate timescale	97%
CC-14 (E)	The percentage of Children in Care with an up-to-date Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)	92%
CC-11 (R)	The percentage of reviews where the child participated	94%
CC-12 (E) CC-18 (R)	The percentage of Children in Care with an up-to-date health assessment The number of children/young people remanded into the Authorities care	New measure introduced 2013/14. Not currently in a position to set appropriate target. National performance and that of statistical neighbours will be monitored
CC-19 (R)	The percentage of eligible young people with a Pathway Plan started within the last 6 months (Eligible : 16/17 year olds in care)	97%
CC-25 (E)	The percentage of Children in Care with a completed Personal Education Plan (PEP)	98%
CL-1 (R)	The percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation at 19 years old	95%
CL-2 (R)	The percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation at 20 years old	95%
CL-3 (R)	The percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation at 21 years old	95%
CL-4 (R)	The percentage of care leavers in employment, education or training at 19 years old	As national average
CL-5 (R)	The percentage of care leavers in employment, education or training at 20 or 21 years old	As national average

A-1 (R)	The percentage of adopted children who were placed for adoption within 639 586 days of entering care (adoption scorecard)	75%
A-2 (R)	The percentage of children placed for adoption (PFA) within 639 586of entering care	75%
A-3 (R)	The percentage of adopted children who were matched within 213 189 days of the placement order	85%
A-4 (R)	The percentage of children who are currently matched, placed for adoption or adopted in the year who were matched within 213 189 days of the placement order	85%
A-6A (R)	Home Finding caseload matched (been to/or panel due)	To be set
A-6B (R)	Home Finding caseload not matched (no Placement Order)	To be set
A-7 (R)	The number of children whose adoption plan has been formally revoked	To monitor
A-8 (R)	The average number of days between a Best Interest decision and an Agency Decision Makers approval of a plan	In line with peers
A-9 (R)	The average number of days between an Agency Decision Makers approval of plan and an approval of a match	In line with peers
A-10 (R)	The average number of days between an Agency Decision Makers approval of match and a child being placed for adoption	In line with peers

DRAFT

Appendix Two – Children in Care and Care Leavers Charter

Children in Care & Care Leavers' Charter

Nottingham City Council has a responsibility to children and young people in its care and to its care leavers. This responsibility is represented by the term "Corporate Parenting": Nottingham City Council is the "Corporate Parent" for all children and young people in its care and its care leavers. Because of this responsibility, Nottingham City Council makes the commitments below.

We will ensure that all children and young people in and leaving our care have the right home and support to keep them safe and well and to help them grow into happy, healthy, successful and fulfilled young adults who are optimistic about their future.

Commitments to children and young people in care and care leavers

- We will treat all our children and young people with respect and with regard to their age and understanding
- We will give our children and young people enough time and help to understand (and be happy) with their circumstances
- We will make sure they know about the advocacy and complaints services in case they want help to have their views heard or are unhappy with us
- We will listen to our children and young people and involve them in planning for their care
- We will keep our children and young people safe and well by:
 - o Seeing that they have the right place to live as quickly as possible
 - o Making sure that this home is stable and keeps them safe
 - o Giving them the right support to be as healthy as possible
- We will help our children and young people to enjoy themselves
- We will help them to achieve at school and elsewhere to the very best of their ability
- We know that a change of home, carer, social worker or school can easily cause problems for a child or young person so we promise to do all we can to prevent such changes unless they are absolutely necessary to keep the child or young person safe and well
- We will make sure that a child or young person stays in touch with their birth family and friends as much as possible, considering their safety and wellbeing
- We will help our children and young people to plan for and achieve a successful journey into independent adulthood
- We will ensure that all our children and young people – and the adults working for them – know about these promises

Commitments concerning children and young people in care and care leavers

- We will make sure that Nottingham City Council is the best Corporate Parent it can be and achieve improved and sustainable outcomes for children and young people in and leaving our care
- We will ensure that everyone who shares our responsibility to children and young people in care and care leavers helps us to keep these promises
- When there are changes to the law or other things that affect the lives of children and young people in and leaving our care, everyone involved – Nottingham City Council and its partners – will respond together, for the benefit of our children and young people
- We will let children, young people and everyone else concerned with these commitments know how well we are keeping them by reporting about them regularly

For more information or to see the Children & Young People's Plan please visit www.nottinghamchildrenspartnership.org.uk

Nottingham City Council, NHS Nottingham City, City of Nottingham Governors' Association, National Probation Service, Job Centre Plus, Nottinghamshire Police Authority, Djanogly City Academy, Nottingham Community and Voluntary Services, Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Board, Hadden Park High, Nottingham Nursery and Training Centre, Springfield Primary School.



NOTTINGHAM
CHILDREN'S
PARTNERSHIP

Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy Contact and Feedback

We Welcome Your Views...

Nottingham City Council is committed to providing the best possible services for citizens. We are interested to know what you think about this strategy. If you want to tell us what you think, please do so using our 'Have Your Say' comments, compliments and complaints process. See the link below.

<https://secure.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/haveyoursay/#>

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(Area of responsibility: Fostering and Adoption Service)

You can write to us at:

The Children in Care Service, Nottingham City Council
Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG

Barnardos Advocacy Contact Details

0800 6525406 or 0115 9691177

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Corporate Parenting Board
Reporting Schedule: Provisional Forward Planner
2014 - 2015

Report (Corresponding Strategic Priority Statement)	Report Lead	Corporate Parenting Board
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> § Fostering and Adoption Panel Chairs Report § Have Your Say 2013 Results Summary (3) § Performance Report (Q3 and Q4 2013/14) § Children in Care Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> § Sonia Sandiford § Jon Rea § Elise Darragh, Sharon Clarke, Kay Sutt, Sonia Sandiford § Jon Rea 	19 th May 2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> § Leaving Care Support and Pathway Planning (3) § Independent Living Skills Programme (3) § Looked After Child Review Participation (3) § Advocacy and Independent Visitors (3) § Children in Care Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> § Sharon Clarke § Sharon Clarke § Caroline Riley § NYAS Representative § Jon Rea 	21 st July 2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> § Educational Attainment of Children in Care (4) § RISE Programme (4) § Activity of the Employability, Education and Training Focus Group (4) § Children in Care Placements – Commissioning and Sufficiency Strategy § Children in Care Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> § Malcolm Wilson § Jamie Shrivastava § Sharon Clarke § Holly Macer § Jon Rea 	15 th September 2014

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Agenda Item 10

Report (Corresponding Strategic Priority Statement)	Report Lead	Corporate Parenting Board
§ Suitable Accommodation of Care Leavers (5) § Fostering and Adoption Panel Chairs Update § Adoption and Permanency (2) § Performance Report (Q1 and Q2 2014/15) § Children in Care Council	§ Sharon Clarke § Sonia Sandiford § Sonia Sandiford § Elise Darragh, Sharon Clarke, Kay Sutt, Sonia Sandiford § Jon Rea	17 th November 2014
§ Emotional Health (1) § Physical Health (1) § Child Sexual Exploitation and Grooming (1) § Children in Care Council	§ Tania McDonald § Sharon Thompson § Caroline Riley, Andrew High § Jon Rea	19 th January 2015
§ Reducing Offending Behaviour (6) § Regulation 33 Visits § Edge of Provision § Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy Progress Update § Children in Care Council	§ Sam Flint, Natalie Pink § Kay Sutt § Kay Sutt § Kwesi Williams § Jon Rea	16 th March 2015

NB: A proposed schedule for reports is available at each Board for discussion. The provisional schedule is being linked to the Strategic Priority Statements (SPS) within the 'Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy 2014 -2016'.

- § SPS 1: Health
- § SPS 2: Permanency
- § SPS 3: Resilience and Independence
- § SPS 4: Educational Attainment
- § SPS 5: Suitable Accommodation
- § SPS 6: Offending Behaviour