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**Nottingham
City Council**

Nottingham City Council Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Date: Thursday, 26 January 2023

Time: 10.00 am (pre-meeting for all Committee members at 9:30am)

Place: Ground Floor Committee Room - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG

Councillors are requested to attend the above meeting to transact the following business

Director for Legal and Governance

Senior Governance Officer: Jane Garrard

Direct Dial: 0115 8764315

- | | | |
|----------|---|-----------|
| 1 | Apologies for absence | |
| 2 | Declarations of Interests | |
| 3 | Minutes | 3 - 10 |
| | To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2022 | |
| 4 | Children's Integrated Services Improvement | 11 - 60 |
| 5 | Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan | 61 - 112 |
| | a) Children's Integrated Services | |
| | b) Education | |
| 6 | Work Programme | 113 - 116 |

If you need any advice on declaring an interest in any item on the agenda, please contact the Governance Officer shown above, if possible before the day of the meeting.

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Nottingham City Council

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at Ground Floor Committee Room - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on 1 December 2022 from 10.00 am - 12.05 pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Maria Joannou (Vice Chair)
Councillor AJ Matsiko
Councillor Shuguftah Quddoos
Councillor Maria Watson
Councillor Georgia Power

Absent

Councillor Carole McCulloch
Councillor Phil Jackson
Councillor Cate Woodward

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Ailsa Barr - Director of Children's Integrated Services
Chad Thompson - Children's Services Transformation Delivery Lead
Catherine Underwood - Corporate Director for People
Jane Garrard - Senior Governance Officer

22 Chair

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair Councillor Maria Joannou chaired the meeting.

23 Change in Committee Membership

The Committee noted that Councillor Sam Gardiner had been appointed as a member of the Committee

24 Apologies for absence

Councillor Carole McCulloch – unwell
Councillor Cate Woodward – other Council business

25 Declarations of Interests

None

26 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2022 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

27 Children's Services Transformation Programme

Catherine Underwood, Corporate Director for People, Ailsa Barr, Director of Children's Integrated Services and Chad Thompson, Children's Services Transformation Delivery Lead, gave a presentation updating the Committee on the progress of the Children's Services Transformation Programme. They highlighted the following information:

- a) The Programme is branded as 'Changing Lives. Changing Futures' and reflects a number of influences including the Together for Nottingham Plan, the Strategic Council Plan and the regulatory framework. The aim is to bring together service development, practice improvement and transformation to ensure sustainably improved services for the City.
- b) There is a coherent programme of improvement covering ten goals: five relating to service development and practice improvement; and five relating to transformation projects.
- c) The goals relating to service development and practice improvement are:
 - i. Goal 1 – A challenge from Ofsted has been that children and families are not always getting the right support at the right time. The aim is to consistently get this right from early help through to significant social work support.
 - ii. Goal 2 – Workforce challenges are not unique to this Council but there needs to be workforce stability where staff are supported to progress as they develop, in order to achieve Goal 1. Part of this will be creating an environment that enables staff to progress.
 - iii. Goal 3 – Managers need to have the opportunity to effectively drive forward plans for improvement as part of the goal to have effective managerial oversight.
 - iv. Goal 4 – Having an effective learning and development offer will contribute to achieving Goals 2 and 3. Staff cannot stand still in their development and need the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience. The Council will also need to create an environment that enables staff to take advantage of the offer.
 - v. Goal 5 – The Service needs to understand and respond to individual need and diversity rather than treating people as a cohort. The Service has talked before about hearing the child's voice but it needs to really consider what this means.
- d) Transformation projects will support service development and practice improvement. The goals relating to transformation are:
 - i. Goal 1 - Supporting children to remain with their families where that is safe and appropriate.
 - ii. Goal 2 - Supporting children to leave care through reunification or Special Guardianship Order where appropriate.
 - iii. Goal 3 - Plans relate to complex situations and often have competing priorities so it is important that the Service ensures ideal outcomes and strong management around plans.
 - iv. Goal 4 – While the Service will prioritise supporting children to stay in the care of their own family where safe and appropriate, some children will require short or long term care. The Service needs to be confident that it is able to identify the right placement if needed. Some needs are

very complex and require residential care but most care can be provided by foster carers, ideally within the City's own resources. A mixed economy of provision is important and therefore the Council is looking to invest in foster care to keep children closer to home and help build positive relationships with those in the City.

- v. Goal 5 – The best models of early help across the country are underpinned by strong partnerships, in recognition that the Council cannot and should not deliver all early help support. Therefore, there is a goal to develop an early help strategy based on stronger partnerships and clearer service design.
- e) Confidence in whether this is delivering sustainably improved outcomes will be gained through feedback from external mechanisms, such as future Ofsted inspections.
- f) The Programme has been scoped through diagnostic work with Newton Europe to follow a child's potential journey through the system, noting that not every child will become a looked after child.
- g) It has been identified that there are four particular opportunities to improve and transform the way that the Service works: children identified as being Children in Need; children with Child Protection Plans; children entering care; and leaving care.
- h) Most children that the Council works with are Children in Need. They will have a plan developed by a social worker and it is important that all stakeholders, including the child if they are old enough, understand that plan and work together to bring it forward. The aim is to meet their needs to a point where they no longer need a plan or a social worker.
- i) Child Protection Plans can only be put in place through a multi-agency process where there is ongoing evidence of significant harm or risk of significant harm. Multi-agency meetings are chaired by an independent child protection chair and the process is governed by statutory guidance. The aim is to provide interventions and support to a point where the child is no longer at risk and the plan can be brought to an end.
- j) For some Children in Need or children with a Child Protection Plan concerns may escalate and they move further along the pathway. Some may reach the point where they can no longer be safely cared for by their own family and so become a Child in Care. The aim is to ensure that support is provided at the earliest opportunity to reduce need and achieve a possible outcome as soon as possible, but it is important that the change is sustainable.
- k) Some children can be safely cared for by their wider kinship and may need short term care before a wider family member is approved as their foster carer. The aim is to provide support to achieve this where possible and progress to a legal outcome for that child to stay with that individual through a Special Guardianship Order if they are unable to return to their parent(s).

- l) Special Guardianship Orders can be particularly relevant when adoption is not appropriate but there is a desire for legal protection and it can also help the child feel less different to their peers because they no longer have to engage with a social worker on the same basis.
- m) It is important that the Service is open-minded to reassessing opportunities for reunification with a child's family throughout their childhood.
- n) For times when things are becoming too difficult for families to manage, it is appropriate to increase the use of edge of care services for support through a particularly challenging period rather than the child coming into care.
- o) One challenge is placement sufficiency and to address this the Council is investing in growing, supporting and retaining its own foster carers to provide care for older children with challenging needs, in addition to younger children. The aim is also to provide opportunities for care leavers to stay with their foster family for longer.
- p) The Programme is being owned and led by the Service. Newton Europe is working with the Service rather than doing it for the Service. Newton Europe are contributing a different way of thinking and different methodology to how the Service is working to improve outcomes for the City's children.
- q) The diagnostic work with Newton Europe was carried out in 2021 and in March 2022 there was approval granted to go out to procurement for further work. Newton Europe was awarded this contract in July and work started on site towards the end of August. It will be at least a two year project with scope to call Newton Europe back in after that.
- r) The Programme has been discussed with staff. Staff engagement started during the diagnostic phase and staff have been involved with lots of service improvement while the transformation programme progresses.
- s) Programme governance is in place and the necessary resources have been allocated to support delivery.
- t) The Design, Prototype and Trial phase is currently underway and co-production is taking place with the workforce who are looking at quick wins and are able to test ideas in a safe place. Over the next 12-18 months this will move into the Implementation and Sustain Phase and then benefits will be tracked.
- u) Key activity over the previous eight weeks has been holding a kick off workshop with the Children's Leadership Team who will be driving cultural change and providing high level support and challenge; setting up a programme multi-disciplinary team, which includes finance representation to ensure monitoring is linked to the Medium Term Financial Plan; identifying workstream leads from within Children's Services; and finalising the contract with the delivery partner.

- v) Over the next month the focus will be on formally launching the Programme, refreshing evidence to inform the workstreams and moving to the wider design phase. The voice of the child and family will be key to this and audit work will include feedback from families and analysis of case records. Assurance on progress will be provided by RAG rating and narrative on key measures as the Programme progresses.
- w) The Service has to continue to deliver its service alongside making change, so change will be iterative and incremental.
- x) When the financial profile was originally drawn up it was anticipated that the Programme would commence in May/ June 2022. However, it did not commence until later due to the time taken for procurement and the Ofsted inspection in July. Therefore, the financials have been reprofiled. There will be a delay in realising savings but over the lifetime of the Programme the savings will be the same.

During subsequent discussion and in response to questions from Committee members the following points were made:

- y) Across the country the number of children in care has increased exponentially over the last 30 years for a range of reasons including changes in interpretation of legislation and case law (although the actual legislation has not changed). Therefore, all local authorities are working out how to respond to, and meet that challenge. Practitioners are already working to try and achieve the best outcomes and the Council needs to create an enabling environment that enables them to do this. In addition to better understanding the impact for children, the diagnostic work has identified the financial impact that justifies the investment necessary to make changes to that environment.
- z) The Service has a range of indicators and key performance measures to help managers understand how it is performing, in addition to the regulatory regime. However, Newton Europe has been able to contribute a vast wealth of capability and capacity to analyse data and work with frontline staff to carry out detailed reflections on a child's journey. The Service aims to continuously improve, but this Programme provides a real step change to support improvement.
- aa) Going forward, it will always be appropriate for the Service to be reviewed against best practice and to ensure it is still appropriate for the ever-changing context, and there may be times when it is appropriate to engage an external partner to support with this but there must also be challenge within the Service. There will be full knowledge and skills transfer into the Council as the Programme progresses to support sustainability. Staff have been upskilled through the Change Academy to develop skills in areas such as analysis and insight and problem solving. This will enable them to use their practitioner knowledge through a transformation lens.
- bb) The delivery leads are practitioners from a mix of levels including senior practitioners and child protection chairs, but they will not be case-holding whilst undertaking this role. They will be working with two teams, each

including seven frontline case-holding workers to undertake the prototyping, implementation and cascading to other practitioners. The delivery leads will make use of the skills, knowledge and experience of frontline workers.

- cc) The length of time for the Programme reflects its complexity and the need to make sustainable change.
- dd) A project management approach is being applied to ensure pace. This will also enable progress to be easily updated and reviewed.
- ee) Staff are positive about making change as they can see the benefits. They have not waited for the Programme to make changes and there are important changes taking place from the business as usual approach to continuous improvement.
- ff) One of the biggest risks to the project is that ideas sound good but don't work in practice or are counter-productive. This is why ideas are being tested out in a controlled way. Design is being led by a practitioner and then tested out by a team with a small cohort. Outcomes from testing are recorded.
- gg) Early help services are best delivered in a partnership context depending on need and do not necessarily need a physical 'thing' or place. It can be more about having a co-ordinated approach to drawing on the resources available across the City that some people might otherwise not be aware of or find difficult to access, for example through the new Family Hubs.

The Committee was supportive of the objectives and goals of the Programme and welcomed the involvement of staff from all levels in development and delivery of the Programme. The Committee encouraged continuation of this approach.

Resolved to:

(1) request that:

- a. **more information on how the voice and feedback from children, young people, families, carers and former service users is heard, understood and reflected in the Programme is provided to the Committee;**
- b. **a copy of the Programme's risk register is provided to the Committee; and**
- c. **in future updates on progress to the Committee specific examples of changes are provided**

(2) recommend that the Programme joins up with other strategies and services to take full account of the whole context affecting children's lives, for example homelessness services.

28 Work Programme

The Committee considered its work programme for the remainder of municipal year 2022/23. Committee members commented on the importance of not losing sight of child exploitation as an issue on its work programme and it was agreed to schedule it

for the meeting in March. In order to accommodate this, the items on Changes to Children's Centres and Play and Youth Services and Special Education Needs and Disabilities would be moved to a later meeting.

Resolved to:

(1) consider the following items at the Committee's meeting in January 2023:

- **Children's Integrated Services Improvement Plan**
- **Medium Term Financial Plan – Children's Integrated Services and Education**
- **Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2021/22**

(2) consider the following items at the Committee's meeting in March 2023:

- **Education Investment Area**
- **Child Exploitation**

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**Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
26 January 2023**

Children's Integrated Services Improvement

Report of the Statutory Scrutiny Officer

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To review the Council's response to the Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services, including the refreshed Children's Integrated Services Improvement Plan.

2 Action required

- 2.1 The Committee is asked:
- a) if it wishes to make any comments or recommendations regarding the approach to, or progress in improvement of Children's Integrated Services; and
 - b) how it wishes to approach future scrutiny of improvement, including focus and timescales.

3 Background information

- 3.1 In November 2022 the Committee considered the findings of the Ofsted inspection of children's services and the action being taken and proposed to be taken to address the arising issues. The Council had been judged to be 'Requires improvement to be good' in the domains of the impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families and the experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers, and 'Inadequate' in the domain of experiences and progress of children who need help and protection. As a result, the overall outcome of the inspection judgement was 'Inadequate' and Ofsted identified eight specific areas for improvement. The Committee was informed that the Service was reviewing its pre-existing Improvement Plan, which had to be submitted to Ofsted in mid-December, and that the Plan would reflect the wider development of the Service in addition to the specific areas identified for improvement by Ofsted. The Committee was assured that while the Improvement Plan was going through the period of revision, work had already started on addressing the issues raised by Ofsted.
- 3.2 The Committee requested sight of the refreshed Improvement Plan and agreed to review improvement in January and, at that point, agree an approach to ongoing scrutiny.
- 3.3 A paper updating on the Council's response to the Ofsted inspection has been submitted by the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and

Schools, Corporate Director for People and Director for Children's Integrated Services. They will be attending the meeting to answer questions about the approach to improvement, and progress being made; and to discuss with the Committee its approach to future scrutiny on this matter.

4 List of attached information

- 4.1 'Nottingham City Council's response to the Ofsted ILAC's inspection' paper submitted by the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Schools, Corporate Director for People and Director for Children's Integrated Services

5 Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information

- 5.1 None

6 Published documents referred to in compiling this report

- 6.1 Report to, and minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee held on 3 November 2022
- 6.2 Ofsted Inspection of Nottingham City local authority children's services July 2022

7 Wards affected

- 7.1 All

8 Contact information

- 8.1 Jane Garrard, Senior Governance Officer
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0115 8764315

Meeting Title	Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee
Report Title	Nottingham City Council’s response to the Ofsted ILACs inspection
Meeting Date	26 th January 2023

Corporate Director(s)/Director(s):	Catherine Underwood, Corporate Director for People Ailsa Barr, Director for Children’s Integrated Services
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Cheryl Barnard
Report author and contact details:	Ailsa Barr – Director Children’s Integrated Services Sam Morris – Head of CIS Strategy and Improvement.

Summary of issues:

This report provides an update to Scrutiny Committee of the Action Plan submitted to Ofsted in response to the ILACS inspection that took place in July 2022 and the activity that is underway to address the areas of concern.

Immediately following the inspection, the Leadership Team identified and implemented immediate actions that were required to be taken to ensure that children were safeguarded and were able to receive the right response at the right time. These immediate actions, as well as longer term improvement actions, were pulled into the formal Ofsted action plan which was submitted in December 2022. This sits alongside a wider and more far reaching updated development plan to drive improvements across Children’s Integrated Services, which the leadership team were working to and which has identified areas for improvement outside of the inspection process.

Delivery of children’s services is a significant statutory duty for the council and a priority for the whole Council. The inspection by the regulator, Ofsted, provides an important assessment of the impact of services in terms of outcomes for children. There are formal regulatory consequences of the inspection outcome which need to be addressed. It is essential that the council takes the actions necessary to achieve the sustainable improvements required for children.

Recommendation(s):

1. Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee note the improvement plan that has formally been accepted by Ofsted
2. Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee note the actions taken since the last inspection.

1. Background

- 1.1 Committee will be aware that Nottingham City Children’s Services received an Ofsted ILACS inspection in July 2022 with the report being published in September 2022. The outcome of the inspection was:

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Requires improvement to be good
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Inadequate
The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers	Requires improvement to be good
Overall effectiveness	Inadequate (limited by the grading within the domain of children in need of help and protection).

1.2 The inspection identified 8 specific areas for improvement:

- Effectiveness and timeliness of responses to children’s needs when first presented to the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH).
- Management oversight and direction of front-line work and the local authority designated officer (LADO).
- Social work capacity so that social workers and first-line managers can respond effectively to children in need of help and protection, and that children in care have greater consistency of social worker.
- Placement sufficiency for children in care and those with complex needs.
- The service response to care leavers aged 21 and over.
- The service response to young people who are aged 16/17 years who present as homeless.
- The quality and timeliness of return home interviews.
- Oversight of children missing from education and those who are electively home educated.

1.3 Following inspection, the local authority is required to submit to Ofsted an action plan which addresses the inspection findings within 70 working days of the publication of the inspection report. As required, on 12th December 2022 the Local Authority submitted an action plan to Ofsted in response to the 8 areas for improvement. Ofsted formally responded on 19th December 2022 confirming that the action plan accurately reflects the findings of the inspection.

1.4 The Ofsted Action plan is monitored through the Children’s Improvement Board, which is chaired by an independent Department for Education Improvement Advisor. The Improvement Board has been restructured to form a monthly Executive Improvement Board and quarterly Partnership Improvement Board. The Executive Board focusses largely on improving the performance of the Council’s Children’s Services following the Ofsted inspection, whilst the partnership board has oversight of the progress being made by internal services as well as in the broader children’s partnership. The Executive of the Children’s Improvement Board supports the work of the Board in

delivering children's services in Nottingham that result in consistently good outcomes for children, young people and their families. The Executive Improvement Board membership includes the Portfolio Lead Member with responsibility for Children, Young People and Education, the Chief Executive as well as senior leaders, ensuring robust monthly senior leadership oversight of progress improvements. The Partnership Board is made up of senior partnership leaders in addition to the Executive Improvement Board members.

- 1.5 In addition to the monthly monitoring of the Ofsted improvement plan through the Improvement Board, the division has an internal process to ensure robust delivery and accountability. Programme management support and resources are being provided to each Head of Service to support delivery of the plan and ensure deadlines are met and evidence of impact is being gathered. Delivery is monitored through a monthly internal challenge panel, made up of the Children's Integrated Services leadership team, chaired by the Service Director for Children's Integrated Services, which undertakes deep dive challenge against specific areas within the improvement plan. Internal monitoring of progress of the Ofsted action plan and wider transformation plan is delivered through a monthly programme board, which is also chaired by the Service Director for Children's Integrated Services. Both Boards report to the Corporate Director through a monthly Oversight and Assurance Meeting which she chairs.

2. Progress against the Ofsted ILACS inspection

- 2.1 Although the action plan was required to be submitted on 12th December the leadership team had already commenced the actions within the plan, meaning that some actions had been completed or were well in progress at the point of submission. The information below sets out the key, high level actions that have taken place to improve the response to children and young people, along with activity that is planned over the next 3 months. As noted above the impact of the improvement on outcomes for children and young people has been and will continue to be monitored through the Children's Improvement Board.

1. Effectiveness and timeliness of responses to children's needs when first presented to the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH)

What actions have we taken?	What impact will this have?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created and recruited to an additional 8 social worker posts and a MASH service manager post to increase capacity within the MASH to ensure a timely response to contacts and referrals and a greater oversight of data and timeliness of response, as well as improving relationships with partners. • Implemented a RAY (red, amber, yellow) system which enables the service to prioritise the response time based upon levels of risk to ensure children at greatest risk are prioritised with all children receiving a timely response appropriate to their needs and risks. • Implemented monthly dip samples undertaken by senior managers to ensure that decision making and application of thresholds in the MASH is appropriate and consistent. To ensure findings are robust, a sample of the monthly dip sample is being externally audited and verified by an independent auditor. • Working with partners through workshops and task and finish groups to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ improve obtaining of consent by care givers to ensure that consent is being consistently obtained to reduce delays to decision making. ○ ensure that there is a consistent approach to partners applying statutory thresholds and children are being supported by an appropriate service at the right time ○ improve early help assessments so that accurate and appropriate information is being captured which aids the correct decision being made at the right time. 	<p>This will ensure that there is a timely response to children, which is appropriate to their needs and levels of risk they are experiencing. This will be evidenced through the number of open contacts and consistent application of thresholds. As an example, the number of open contacts has reduced from 603 in June 2022 to 196 in October 2022. There has been a corresponding improvement in timeliness - from 158 out of 603 contacts being open for longer than 6 days in June to 26 out of 196 contacts in November being open for 6 days (none exceeded 5 working days).</p> <p>Confidence that decision making, and application of thresholds is being consistently applied. For example, in October 120 dip samples were undertaken of which only 4 required further information to be sought</p> <p>Ensuring that consent is being sought and partners are gathering robust information and applying thresholds consistently, will enable children to receive an appropriate response from an appropriate service that meets their needs without delay. Where it is appropriate for child to be referred to the MASH, decision making will be swift the appropriate information to inform decision making and consent has been received.</p>
What actions are planned?	What impact will this have?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with partners at a strategic level: 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ to secure wider representation of agencies at the MASH and in multi-agency domestic abuse decision making. This will ensure all partners with relevant information or perspectives are part of multi-agency decision making to enable more robust and confident decisions to be made. ○ To review and strengthen the current arrangements for strategy discussions to ensure that all required agencies are present, that discussions are timely and there is a consistency of approach to convening discussions, information sharing and decision making. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Finalise practice guidance for MASH colleagues which will provide clear expectations and ways of working for colleagues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review processes that staff have to undertake within the case management system to ensure that these are focussed upon outcomes for children, reduce bureaucracy and support timely information sharing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure data reports capture helpful measures and enable staff working in the MASH, as well as senior leaders to understand the impact the work is having for children and young people. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase staff and partner understanding of the importance of obtaining consent through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Workshops with staff delivered by our sector led improvement partner, Essex, at the staff conference on 1st February 	<p>Wider, consistent representation at strategy meetings will enable improved decision-making by ensuring that appropriate partner information is shared and considered, and a collective decision is made through collaborative partnership working. This will mean that children receive a timely response appropriate to their needs.</p> <p>This will support staff by providing a clear framework of expectations and ensure consistency of practice as well as expectations around management footprint on a child's file. This will ensure that children receive a timely and consistent response when they present to the MASH.</p> <p>This will ensure that systems are simple to use and focussed upon outcomes for children and that staff are supported through systems and data that enable them to make decisions and progress good outcomes for children.</p> <p>By ensuring that consent is being sought and partners are gathering robust information and applying thresholds consistently, will enable children to receive an appropriate response from an appropriate service that meets their needs without delay. Where it is appropriate for child to be referred to the MASH, decision making will be swift the appropriate</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Series of action learning sets being delivered to MASH staff with the first session being on consent. ○ Developing Thinking Tools for staff around the issue of consent 	<p>information to inform decision making and consent has been received</p>
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2. Management oversight and direction of front-line work and the local authority designated officer (LADO)

What actions have we taken?	What impact will this have?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Secured Frontline training for Social Work Team Managers through a DFE funded and approved management programme. ● Created a process which sees service managers reviewing a child's plan where they have been a long term Child in Need or subject to a long term Child Protection Plan (9 months) with team managers to ensure intervention is purposeful and appropriate action is being taken to reduce any drift or delay ensure clear management oversight. ● Created 2 additional missing children advocate posts and a team manager post to create additional capacity within the team to enable a timely response to children who go missing. Recruitment to these posts is underway. ● Reviewed the policies and procedures for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer and published these to ensure that these are in line with national guidance and that partners understand who the Local Designated Officer is and how to refer allegations against professionals in a timely manner. 	<p>This will support team managers to develop their confidence in applying their knowledge and skills to provide high quality oversight of practice and guidance to front line workers in a fast-paced environment. This will enable robust management oversight of a child's journey through improved child centred plans, timely actions being taken and reduced drift in timescales.</p> <p>This will ensure that children are not kept on plans for longer than necessary and that intervention is purposeful and securing good outcomes for children and young people</p> <p>This will create additional capacity to ensure that children who go missing receive a timely return home interview in line with statutory timeframes. The additional frontline capacity and management oversight will also enable a better-quality analysis of the factors that led the child to go missing which will then feed into a robust safety plan for the child.</p> <p>This will ensure that partners know who the Local Authority Designated Officer is and how to refer. This will ensure a timely referral and response to allegations against professionals that is in line with national guidance.</p> <p>Increasing the number, quality and consistency of case file audits that take</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed and refreshed the quality assurance and moderation panel processes with a view to increasing the number and quality of audits undertaken as well as ensuring consistency in auditing to better understand the quality of practice within the service. DFE funding has been obtained to build temporary capacity to enable increased auditing activity to take place. 	<p>place, will provide managers with a clearer picture of the consistency of quality of practice across the service. This will allow managers to highlight strengths upon which to build or identify areas for further improvement which can be addressed through learning and development activity, the development of practice tools and further improvement work. This will ensure leaders understand the service well to ensure that more children receive good quality intervention and improved outcomes</p>
What actions are planned?	What impact will this have?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of practice guidance to support staff in their work with children and young people by providing a clear framework of expectations for staff Recruit 2 temporary agency workers to undertake 40 case file audits a month. 	<p>Clear practice guidance will provide staff and managers with a clear framework of expectations in their work with children and families. This will mean that children receive a consistent quality response to their needs and there will be clear management oversight and guidance to front line staff to ensure children receive the right support at the right time.</p> <p>This will generate additional capacity to undertake audits to assure managers of the consistency of quality of practice across the service to inform learning and development and the development practice tools to ensure that more children receive good quality intervention and improved outcomes.</p>

3. Social work capacity so that social workers and first-line managers can respond effectively to children in need of help and protection, and that children in care have greater consistency of social worker.

What actions have we taken?	What impact will this have?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worked with Human Resources to develop wider and varied recruitment streams to increase the opportunities to recruit into social work posts and increase social work capacity (through Step up to social work, apprenticeships scheme etc) Worked with Human Resources to improve advertisement to showcase Nottingham as a good place to work 	<p>This will increase the opportunities for people to obtain a qualification in social work rather than relying on a nationally depleted pool of qualified social workers. Increasing recruitment opportunities to a wider pool of talented workers, will enable the service to build capacity and support the retention of 'home grown' social workers, reducing caseloads and increasing stability for children and families.</p> <p>This will seek to improve interest in applicants wishing to work in Nottingham and once successful will mean that social</p>

and speed up recruitment processes to shorten the time between successful interview and starting in post.	workers can be in post without any undue delay. This will seek to increase the number of social workers, reducing caseloads improving stability in the workforce and improving outcomes and stability for children and families.
What actions are planned?	What impact will this have?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project management support to develop a learning academy which will provide an improved learning offer and career development for staff. Work with Heads of Service, Human Resources and the Children's Integrated Services Workforce to refresh the workforce strategy. This will set out the offer for recruitment and retention of the workforce. 	<p>Improved development pathways and learning offer for staff will provide staff with the skills they need to deliver improved outcomes for children. Staff will feel supported.</p> <p>This will provide a clear offer to the Children's Integrated Services workforce with aim of increasing recruitment and retention rates.</p>

4. Placement sufficiency for children in care and those with complex needs.

What actions have we taken?	What impact will this have?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worked regionally and locally to increase inhouse and external provision for homes for children who need to come into the care of the local authority. Started work with our transformation partner – Newton Europe – to progress the modernisation of fostering strand of the programme 	<p>This will increase the range and number of homes that can provide a child with stability and security appropriate to their needs without a delay. Joint commissioning with the D2N2 authorities has resulted in block contracts being established for 4 children homes, 10 supported accommodation placements and 20 supported lodging placements.</p> <p>This will seek to increase the number of in-house foster carers to provide children with a home within a family environment where this is more appropriate for the child's needs.</p>
What actions are planned?	What impact will this have?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with our transformation partner – Newton Europe – to progress the modernisation of fostering strand of the programme to increase foster carer capacity. Update the Sufficiency Strategy to develop a clear strategy to support long term sustainable homes for children who need to come into the care of the local authority. 	<p>This will increase the number of foster carers that will enable children to live in a home that suits their needs and provides them with a safe and secure family environment.</p> <p>A robust sufficiency strategy will set out how the authority will ensure sufficient long term sustainable homes for children who need to come into the care of the local authority, to allow them to live in a home</p>

	that suits their needs, providing them with stability and security as soon as possible after coming into care.
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5. The Service response to care leavers aged 21 and over

What actions have we taken?	What impact will this have?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created an additional 4 personal advisor posts to increase the service capacity to support children leaving care into adulthood. Working with partners to update and improve the local offer for care leavers to support them into adulthood and remove barriers and disadvantage. Obtained funding from the Department for Education to develop a website / application for the local offer. This will create a more user-friendly way for care leavers to access the information they need around their rights and entitlements. 	<p>Care leavers will be able to easily access the local offer and understand what support they are entitled to. They will be able to access support through a personal advisor as needed, enabling supported transition into adulthood, reducing the disadvantages they face from having been a child in care and increasing their future opportunities and outcomes.</p>
What actions are planned?	What impact will this have?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment to 4 Personal Advisor posts to increase the service capacity to support children leaving care into adulthood. Finalise and publish the local offer for Care Leavers, to clearly set out the rights and entitlements that they can access to support them to transition into adulthood successfully. Website / application to be finalised which enables care leavers to access the local offer and support they are entitled to in a user-friendly manner. 	<p>Care leavers will be able to easily access the local offer and understand what support they are entitled to. They will be able to access support through a personal advisor as needed, enabling supported transition into adulthood.</p>

6. The service response to young people age 16- and 17-year olds who present as homeless

What actions have we taken?	What impact will this have?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refreshed the protocol and designed a leaflet for young people who present as homeless to set out 	<p>Children presenting as homeless will be clear about the options that are available and will be supported to access appropriate</p>

<p>clearly the options that they will be supported to access.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with Housing Aid to explore the placement and social housing options to ensure that there are sufficient safe and appropriate accommodation options when children present as homeless. 	<p>options in a timely way to ensure they are placed in a safe environment without any delays. There will be a sufficient number of accommodation options to meet children's needs when they present as homeless.</p>
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7. The quality and timeliness of return home interviews for children

What actions have we taken?	What impact will this have?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created 2 additional missing children advocate posts and a team manager post to create additional capacity within the team to enable a timely response to children who go missing. Reviewed and updated policy, procedures and standards in line with national guidance and best practice to ensure that the response to children who go missing is timely, and in line with national expectations. 	<p>This will create additional capacity to ensure that children who go missing receive a timely return home interview in line with statutory timeframes. The additional frontline capacity and management oversight will also enable a better-quality analysis of the factors that led the child to go missing which will then feed into a robust safety plan for the child.</p>
What actions are planned?	What impact will this have?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit to missing children and team manager posts. Share updated policy and procedures with partners so that partners have a shared clear understanding of expectations when children are reported missing. 	<p>This will create additional capacity to ensure that children who go missing receive a timely return home interview in line with statutory timeframes. The additional frontline capacity and management oversight will also enable a better-quality analysis of the factors that led the child to go missing which will then feed into a robust safety plan for the child. Partners will be clear about expectations for children who go missing which will further strengthen the arrangements.</p>

8. Oversight of children missing from education and those who are electively home educated

What actions have we taken?	What impact will this have?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed and strengthened arrangements and processes for children missing from education to ensure a timely and consistent response to children who are missing education. 	<p>Improved consistency of practice and ability to identify families quickly and ensure the best possible outcomes for children by reducing the length of time they are out of education.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed best practice across other local authorities for recording, addressing and reporting on identified safeguarding risks to identify good practice and strengthen existing ways of working. 	<p>Learning from best practice will enable the service to improve its processes for recording, reporting on and responding to any safeguarding risks to children.</p>
What actions are planned?	What impact will this have?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a process to enable city schools to report vulnerable children on part time timetables to the Local Authority. Develop a local system based on best practice from other Local authorities to record, address and report on safeguarding risks. 	<p>The Local Authority will have an up to date list of vulnerable children on part time timetables to support regular review of their readiness to access full time timetables.</p> <p>Learning from best practice will enable the service to create a more robust system to ensure safeguarding risks to children who are electively home educated are identified and children receive the right support at the right time.</p>

3. Next steps

- 3.1 The Authority has now entered into a period of monitoring visits - short inspection activity focused on a specific area – between now and the next full inspection, which is likely to be in approximately 3 years' time. We can expect 3 or 4 monitoring visits each year – the first one is anticipated early in 2023 and is expected to focus on the response of our MASH and duty service when receiving new information and referrals regarding children and young people.
- 3.2 Two inspectors will usually carry out each monitoring visit, which will last for 2 days. The outcome of the first monitoring visit is not published, the second and subsequent monitoring visits are published by Ofsted. The on-site activity will usually focus upon the experience of children and young people within the area being inspected but Inspectors will also check that performance in other areas has not deteriorated. It is for this reason that activity is focused upon the wider improvement plan and securing improvements across all service areas to ensure that focus on one area does not see a deterioration in another. Rather a holistic systemic improvement across Children's Integrated Services is planned.

4. Detailed information regarding 'Front Door' service progress

- 4.1 The Authority is anticipating our first Ofsted monitoring visit in the first 3 months of 2023; it is expected that this visit will focus on the effectiveness of response to children when their needs are first presented to the MASH. Work to improve our work in this area of the service had commenced prior to the full inspection in July 2022 but the scale of improvement needed meant that we had not been able to effect sufficient progress by the time of the inspection, this meant that the majority of contacts were delayed in MASH and management oversight was not consistently effective when applying thresholds to safeguard children.
- 4.2 Since July 2022 we have taken various steps to improve the service and assure ourselves of improved impact for children. We have increased management oversight through creating an additional service manager post, this means that our MASH

service and our Duty assessment service now each have their own dedicated service manager who takes the lead on developing good practice, reviewing performance information and addressing areas of drift or delay, By having 2 service managers in post we are assured of the management capacity to effectively oversee and improve practice in these two busy parts of our service. In addition to this we have progressed recruitment for 8 additional permanent social workers to work in our MASH, this will mean that social workers will be more involved in triaging information when it is first received by the service, this reduces delays when receiving information.

4.3 To support the service in measuring impact we have taken several actions:

- Developed a daily method of reviewing, prioritising and responding to information received by the MASH. This means every contact is prioritised as it is received and then performance reporting enables us to measure our response to the information in relation to the presenting need. Managers now have access to a daily performance report to support their overview of the work, this reduces delays and means that any slippage in timeliness is spotted early and mitigations are put in place to resolve.
- Since July 2022 we have continued a process to review decisions of no further action following receipt of information in the MASH. This means that the service manager and head of service between them review 30 decisions a week. We have also had an external auditor review this audit work. The internal audit work and the work of the external auditor have not identified any children at risk of harm where decisions needed to be changed, this provides assurance that where the presenting issues are of immediate hard the right decisions are being taken to respond to the concerns. The audit work has identified a small number 5 of children where the decision to progress to no further action was considered premature and further information was needed to make a full decision. On these occasions as well as the additional work being completed to achieve the right outcome for the child work was completed with the worker and their team manager to support learning in the service.
- We have embedded a process of 'mystery shopper' activity, whereby an external social work qualified manager contacts the MASH to 'make a referral'. Information is provided to staff to assess their response and provide feedback to them to improve practice. Staff do not know when this activity will happen and there were occasions during the Autumn where the response from staff was inconsistent and not at a level that provided assurance regarding consistency of practice. This information was used to provide feedback to staff and more recently our 'mystery shopper' feedback has been much improved.
- In December we had a 2 day visit from Essex County Council staff who are providing some support to the service under the Department for Education partners in practice scheme. 5 staff from Essex spent 2 days with the MASH reviewing progress, this involved reviewing children's records, speaking with staff, and observing practice. The feedback from our Essex colleagues was useful to help us understand progress and to confirm areas for further development. In summary the feedback was:
 - Areas of strengths identified:
 - Staff morale is high, colleagues are keen to support the improvement journey. Colleagues described feeling valued and supported.
 - The changes in the leadership team have supported swift and purposeful change.
 - The new staffing structure is line with demand.

- In the main the response is in real time which is not only positive for families but increasing confidence in the service across the partnership.
- The relationship with the Duty Assessment service is positive and this evidenced.
- Colleagues spoke about the MASH becoming a learning environment where they have more time to stop, pause, reflect, and make informed decisions for children and families.
- Colleagues were heard using respectful and engaging language whilst speak to families.
- Areas for further development:
 - Consent to share information is not widely understood by colleagues working within the MASH. There is lack of understanding around how its gained and how it should be used. This lack of understanding internally means that we don't consistently support meaningful partnership understanding of consent, which means at times information is shared with MASH that cannot be quickly progressed by MASH staff as we do not have parental consent to do so.
 - Some conversations with callers into the MASH around advice are not always recorded on the case management system.
 - Written process guidance and process maps supporting workflows within the MASH is not yet available to staff. This means that colleagues do not consistently know what the expectations are. When temporary changes are made to processes these are not communicated effectively.
 - There isn't formal induction process for staff who join the MASH. This means that colleagues seek support from peers who may not be following the correct processes.
 - The strengths-based practice model is not yet evident in the written work in the MASH and contacts often do not support strengths-based language.
 - Some contacts are adult focused with there being a lack of identifying the direct impact on children of adult behaviours.

4.4 The feedback from Essex broadly corresponded with our own assessment of progress to date and the areas for further development are areas that we have actioned planned to progress.

4.5 We are more confident now that information received into the MASH is reviewed as it is received and decisions about prioritisation of response are made at the first opportunity, this together with improved performance manager systems means that we know that our timeliness of decision making has improved and there are further actions planned throughout January and February to further improve, meaning that we can be assured that most children will receive a response in the right timeframe to the presenting need.

4.5 The audit work that we have built into the service provides assurance about the appropriateness of decisions being taken, however, this is an area for us to remain vigilant in as we want to be sure that as a partnership we are responding with the right service at the earliest opportunity as opposed to relying on the right social work service being provided as the need escalates. This work will link with our work with partners to develop a city-wide early help strategy to ensure joined up approaches and responses across the partnership to the provision of early support.

Nottingham City Council's response to the Ofsted ILACS inspection

Introduction

Nottingham City Children’s Services were inspected by Ofsted in July 2022 under the Inspection of Local Authority Children’s Services (ILACS) framework.

The inspection report was published on 5th September and is available on the Ofsted website: [Ofsted | Nottingham City Council](#)

The outcome of the inspection was

Judgement	Grade
The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families	Requires improvement to be good
The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection	Inadequate
The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers	Requires improvement to be good
Overall effectiveness	Inadequate (limited by the grading within the domain of children in need of help and protection).

The Ofsted Action plan will be monitored through the Children’s at the Heart Improvement Board, which is chaired by an independent Department for Education Improvement Advisor. The Improvement Board was recently restructured to enable it to secure sustainable improvements in children’s services through robust strategic leadership across the partnership, alongside a focus on the detail of processes and systems within the local authority’s children’s services. As a result, there will be an Executive Board comprised of senior local authority leaders, the portfolio holder and Chair of the Safeguarding Children’s Partnership which will meet monthly to provide support and challenge to Children’s Services. The Partnership Board, made up of senior partnership leaders, will take place quarterly.

Nottingham City Council's response to the Ofsted ILACS inspection

1. Effectiveness and timeliness of responses to children’s needs when first presented to the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH).

Outcomes for Children and Families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Impact	RAG
<p>Children, young people, and families are offered help when needs and/or concerns are first identified</p> <p>There is a timely and</p>	Increase Social Work capacity by 8 additional social work posts		16/09/22	<p>Agency cover has been secured whilst the posts are recruited to through the permanent establishment.</p> <p>Resource for 8 additional permanent posts has been identified.</p> <p>Permanent social work posts are now being advertised as part of rolling recruitment.</p>	<p>Increased capacity has had a positive impact upon the timeliness of response to children:</p> <p>Numbers of open contacts has reduced from over 1000 in January 2022 to 196 in October 2022. Improvement from 603 contacts with 158 open longer than 6 days in June to 196 contacts open in November with 26 being open for 6 days (none exceeded 5 working days). This will continue to be monitored through MASH performance data by the MASH management team.</p>	<p style="background-color: green; color: white; text-align: center;">RAG</p>
	Create an additional Service Manager post to create additional capacity in the MASH	Sam Danyluk Head of Service –	16/09/22	An interim Service Manager has been recruited and has been in post since 5 th	The creation of this post provides greater oversight on data, timeliness, and relationships with partners. The impact of this additional	



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Outcomes for Children and Families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Impact	RAG
effective response to referrals, including out of normal office hours		First Response		September, pending recruitment to permanent establishment.	capacity will be improved application of threshold both within the service and with wider partners leading to more timely outcomes for children and families. This impact is measured above and below.	Green
	Undertake weekly audits around decision making and the application of threshold within the MASH	David Goldsworthy Service Manager - MASH	31/03/23	Dip samples have commenced and will take as part of business as usual. End date of 31 st March to monitor continued impact and action to remain amber until satisfied this is a sustained improvement. Updates will be provided to the Children's Executive Improvement Board on a monthly basis.	Improved consistency is being achieved in the decision making and application of thresholds within the MASH – In October 120 dip samples undertaken of which 4 were sent back for further information to be sought. A selection of these were sent to the independent auditor for further scrutiny w/c 21st November. Monthly audit information will be reviewed to ensure consistency.	Yellow
	Implement RAY rating system to aid prioritisation of contacts			30/11/22	This has been implemented	This provides a consistent framework for threshold decisions and ensures



Nottingham City Council's response to the Ofsted ILACS inspection

Outcomes for Children and Families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Impact	RAG
					children at greatest risk are prioritised.	
	<p>Devise MASH practice guidance which outlines the expectations around consistency for the Team Managers and MASH colleagues.</p> <p>Review current Analysis and Insight reports to ensure that they accurately capture the impact measures within the MASH</p>	Sam Danyluk Head of Service – First Response	31/01/23	<p>First draft to be presented at children’s leadership by mid-January 23.</p> <p>Once RAY rating is implemented further review work will be undertaken on the suite of data reports available.</p>	There will be clear effective management footprint on children's case files, which will mean children receive the right support in a timely way.	
	Undertake a multi-agency review to look at current workflows in place and how these can be improved to support timely information sharing		31/01/23	First meeting to took place W/C 5.12.22	There will be clear pathways for information sharing that supports timely decision making for children	
	Review MASH partners to include education, Youth Justice Service and Juno Women's Aid.		31/03/23	Juno Women’s Aid have now returned to the MASH.	Partners will be present and responsive in the MASH room enabling more timely screening and decision making. This will also promote collaborative partnership working.	



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Outcomes for Children and Families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Impact	RAG
	Implement a policy that 3 contacts in a 6-month period will escalate to a referral.			New policy implemented: 3 contacts in a 6-month period review is now standard practice.	Cumulative harm to children is considered, and reviewed following 3 contacts	Yellow
	Seek to secure representation from education and midwifery to strengthen Multi Agency Domestic Abuse decision making		31/03/23	In progress	Multi-agency decision making where there are domestic abuse concerns will be strengthened	Yellow
Professionals understand thresholds and identify children and young people in need of help and protection. They make appropriate referrals to children's social care and can access social work expertise	Hold workshops with Designated Safeguarding Leads re informed consent for all contacts that are not relating to immediate harm to children		31/03/23	First sessions held at the DSL network in October 22 attended by 100 DSL's Further sessions are being delivered with the safeguarding partnership to school Safeguarding leads week commencing 28th November.	The partnership will have a sound understanding of consent and this will inform contacts into the MASH. All partners will be aware of the "threshold of need" document and actively using this as a shared document. Therefore, children and families will be supported at the right part of the system?	Yellow
	Refresh of Multi Agency Referral Form		31/03/23	Re-refresh has taken place, word document went live on the website end of November.		Green
	Refresh the Threshold Descriptors and launch via the Partnership.		31/03/23	First draft to be developed by 03.01.2022		Yellow
	Undertake a review of the consultation line to improve		31/03/23	Consultation in respect of the consultation line has been completed.		Yellow



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Outcomes for Children and Families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Impact	RAG
<p>and advice. This leads to families receiving timely and proportionate intervention that improves outcomes.</p> <p>Early help improves the child's situation and supports sustainable progress.</p>	<p>the sharing of information without consent and how information shared is recorded.</p>			<p>A time focussed tracking system has been implemented to mitigate the risk of advice not being actioned when this is given to professionals.</p> <p>This tracking system will remain in place until 19th December when the line will cease to operate.</p> <p>Communication will be sent out via the education newsletter to confirm this.</p>	<p>ensure that appropriate consultations and advice is sought from schools' designated leads and the city's network of advanced safeguarding leads. This will ensure advice is sought from appropriate professionals and appropriate referrals are made to children's social care.</p>	
	<p>Develop an engagement programme of multi-agency workshops exploring best practice in securing improved outcomes for children and young people to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial engagement with families who may have additional needs. • Early help strategy and early help assessments. • Consistent approach to statutory thresholds. 	<p>Rosa Waddington</p> <p>Chair of the Safeguarding Partnership Strategic Leadership Group</p>	30/04/23	<p>We are working on this area with the safeguarding partnership, first meeting took place Monday 28th November 2022.</p>	<p>Children and families will be able to access wider early help services when they need this to achieve positive outcomes and avoid unnecessary escalation to statutory services.</p>	



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Outcomes for Children and Families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Impact	RAG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent approach to seeking informed consent 					
<p>Help given to families is proportionate to the level of need. Information-sharing between agencies and professionals is timely, specific, effective, and lawful. Action is taken to avoid drift and delay.</p>	<p>Undertake weekly dip samples to verify the threshold for "No Further Action" decisions is being consistently applied</p>	<p>Sam Danyluk Head of Service – First Response</p>	30/03/23	<p>These are taking place. There has also been some additional quality assurance of these by an external auditor. In October 120 dip samples were completed. 4 were sent back for further information to be sought. A selection of these are with the independent auditor for further scrutiny.</p>	<p>There will be confidence and evidence that threshold decisions are being applied consistently, meaning that children and families get the timely support which is proportionate to their need. This will be supported and evidenced by QA work and analysis and insight data information.</p>	
	<p>Undertake monthly dip samples focussed on the quality of the information shared and recorded and outcomes of decision making</p>		28/02/23	<p>These have been running and are on-going and are now business as usual around NFA decisions. We are now shifting our focus to decisions around threshold for assessment.</p>	<p>There will be confidence that appropriate information is being shared resulting in a timely appropriate decision. This will ensure that children are receiving a timely response that is appropriate to their circumstances and level of need.</p>	



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Outcomes for Children and Families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress	Impact	RAG
Children and families experience child protection enquiries that are thorough and lead to timely action, which reduces the risk of harm to children	Task and finish group to be set up with partners to review current arrangements for strategy discussions.	Sam Danyluk Head of Service – First Response	28/02/23	Two groups have taken place to date, with internal colleagues and partners.	Strategy discussions will be attended by health and police colleagues, held in a timely way with a consistent application around the threshold for initiating S47 enquiries.	
	Review Liquid Logic LCS strategy discussion form and ensure it supports good practice and is based on outcomes for children.			Meetings to review the discussion form are in progress. Second meeting scheduled w/c 12 th December		



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2. Management oversight and direction of front-line work and the local authority designated officer (LADO)

Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
Systematic and high-quality management oversight of frontline practice drive child-centred plans and actions within the timescales appropriate for the child.	All Team Managers within the service to benefit from undertaking the Frontline training programme	Nicole Harris Head of Service – Fieldwork/ Sarah Wright Interim Principal Social Worker	31/01/24	Team Managers for the first cohort have been identified and submitted their applications. All spaces reserved for the upcoming 3 cohorts. DFE funding for Essex (Sector Led Improvement Partner) has been approved. This will provide manager peer support for a period of 3 months to those Team Managers in cohorts 2 and 3 pending their frontline programme starting to support sharing of best practice	All social work qualified Team Managers will have completed the course. This will support them develop their confidence in applying their knowledge and skills to provide high quality oversight of practice, which will be evident on a child's file through child centred plans and reduced drift in timescales.	
Managers and front-line workers have clear expectations to enable them to deliver so that children and families	Devise MASH practice guidance which outlines the expectations around consistency for the Team Managers and MASH colleagues.	Sam Danyluk Head of Service – First Response	31/01/23	First draft to be presented at leadership by mid-January 2023.	There will be clear, effective management oversight evident in the footprint on children's case files.	



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Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
receive consistent and timely services.	Unallocated guidance to be developed for Targeted Family Support Teams	Nicole Harris Head of Service – Fieldwork	31/10/22	This has been approved and was shared with the workforce w/c 3rd October 2022. It is available on the intranet for the workforce to access.	There will be good management oversight of unallocated work in TFST which is consistent across all TFS teams.	Green
	Devise bottom line expectations for Team Managers in Duty which will include expectations around review and management oversight.	Sam Danyluk Head of Service – First Response	31/03/23	An expectations document has been drafted and is under review by the Head of Service. This will launch with the team in January 2023. Management oversight will be reviewed through dip samples between January and March.	There will be clear, effective management footprint on children's case files.	Yellow
Children who require long term intervention or who have experienced repeated referrals will have clear management oversight to ensure intervention is purposeful and reduce drift and delay.	Implement process of Service Managers reviewing long term Child in Need (CIN) plans (9 months+) with Team Managers	Nicole Harris Head of Service – Fieldwork	31/01/23	This process is now in place, but work is needed to confirm that this is taking place consistently and there is evidence of this oversight on case files. Dip sampling activity is taking place in December 2022 to capture the consistency and impact of management oversight on progression towards good outcomes for children.	Children who require long term intervention through a CIN plan will have clear management oversight to ensure intervention is purposeful and reduce drift and delay	Yellow
	Develop process for review of repeat CiN plans by Managers.		28/02/23	Work on the process will commence in January 2023	Children who require long term intervention through a CIN plan will have clear	



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Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
There will be a clearer understanding of the reasons for repeat/long term child protection plans which can help the development of training and tools to support practitioners.					management oversight to ensure intervention is purposeful and reduce drift and delay	
	All children subject to repeat/long term (over 15 months) child protection plans are to be reviewed at panel		Start Oct 22 and review every 6 weeks	Dates for the panel have been organised. The first started on 17th October 2022. These are planned to take place every 4-6 weeks. Panels have now taken place with 79 children having been reviewed and actions identified. A learning briefing has been completed which will be shared with the Social Work Teams in January 2023 as part of a practice development session. Panels have been booked to take place every 6 weeks.	There will be a clearer understanding of the reasons for repeat/long term child protection plans will inform the development of training and tools to support practitioners. The panels will provide management oversight which will see Care plans for children progress at pace	
For children who have been missing or often missing, there is a clear plan of urgent action in place to protect them and to reduce	Recruitment of Team manager for missing and exploitation to ensure that return home interviews are timely and include analysis of the child's circumstances that feeds into care and other plans.	John Matravers Head of Service – Safeguarding, Partnerships	05/12/22	Permanent recruitment is underway, and an interim candidate has been identified to undertake the role from December 2022 to drive improved performance. The interim post holder will remain in post until recruitment to permanent establishment has been completed and is in post.	There will be clear management oversight to ensure that return home interviews are timely, provide a clear analysis and this contributes to a safety plan for the child.	



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Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
the risk of harm or further harm.		and Quality Assurance				
Allegations of abuse, mistreatment or poor practice by professionals and carers are taken seriously. Steps are taken to protect children and young people and the management of allegations against staff is robust and effective	All processes, policies, and procedures for the Local Authority Designated Officer service will be reviewed and amended (this will include Local Authority Designated Officer decisions made by the Designated Officer).	John Matravers Head of Service – Safeguarding, Partnerships and Quality Assurance	07/11/22	Procedures have been reviewed and updated so that they are clear and simple.	Process and decision making will be clear and consistent.	
	Provide clarity to all on who the Local Authority Designated Officer is – published via safeguarding partnership			The Local Authority Designated Officer has been updated on the website for the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children’s Partnership and has been introduced to the partnership including all school and Early Years Designated Safeguarding Leads.	Partners will know how to contact the LADO.	
There will be effective management oversight and tracking of referrals to reduce drift and	Minimum standards for recording (including management footprint and decision making) to be agreed following consultation and review of regional and national Local	John Matravers Head of Service – Safeguarding,	10/10/22	The Allegations Management Service Team managed by the LADO has agreed on all standards required and these are in place. Service meetings have taken place where procedures and policies were discussed and agreed, including footprint, management oversight and clarity re Local Authority Designated	There will be clear effective management oversight in all referral records. Decision	



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Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
ensure appropriate decisions are made.	Authority Designated Officer services.	Partnerships and Quality Assurance		Officer making decisions where required	making will be timely, appropriate, and clear.	
	Local Authority Designated Officer spreadsheet to be monitored on a weekly basis via the Local Authority Designated Officer service meeting pending reporting capability being established on Liquid logic		10/01/23	The LADO, Service Manager and Head of Service meet on a weekly basis to manage performance		
	Develop a performance framework with standards for timely resolution on Liquid Logic to enable performance to be monitored.		27/01/23	Referral made to Analysis and Insight for this performance framework to be reportable through Liquid Logic		
Leaders will have a clear understanding of the quality and consistency of practice and outcomes for children to inform service improvements,	Undertake a comprehensive review and refresh of our Quality Assurance (QA) processes.	John Matravers Head of Service – Safeguarding, Partnerships	27/01/23	A review of quality assurance activity and proposals were presented to and agreed at Leadership on 25/10/2022. The service is struggling to achieve a satisfactory volume of audits so to address this a 12-month plan has been developed to increase capacity. DFE funding has been secured for 2 temporary agency social workers to	Managers will have a greater understanding of the consistency of quality of practice across the service to inform learning and development and the development practice tools	



Nottingham City Council's response to the Ofsted ILACS inspection

Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
learning and development. This will ensure children and families receive consistent intervention and improved outcomes		and Quality Assurance		deliver at least 40 audits a month. Managers will be upskilled to undertake audits and resume as business as usual.	to ensure that more children receive good quality intervention and improved outcomes.	
	Complete a review of the moderation panel and its purpose		31/12/22	A review of quality assurance moderation panel and proposals were presented to and agreed at Leadership on 25/10/2022. A clear moderation panel process will be in place by end December 2022.		
	Set up monthly dip sampling led by Heads of Service		16/12/22	Dip sampling is now undertaken by the Heads of Service and the frequency of this will be agreed and then performance monitored and addressed where required.		
	Develop and implement thematic audits.		16/12/23	A thematic audit schedule will be developed to commence in July 2023		



Nottingham City Council's response to the Ofsted ILACS inspection

3. Social work capacity so that social workers and first-line managers can respond effectively to children in need of help and protection, and that children in care have greater consistency of social worker.

Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
<p>Nottingham will be an attractive Local Authority to work for with a variety of recruitment streams to enable vacant posts to be filled by permanent staff. This will increase service capacity, meaning children and families experience consistency of worker and their needs are responded to</p>	Social Work apprenticeship scheme to be implemented in Children's Services	Nicole Harris / Aadil Bhatti Head of Service – Fieldwork / HR consultant	31/01/26	8 internal applicants shortlisted to go through to university interview panel on 28 th November. Modelling being undertaken for the future cohorts, including career pathways across and into children's as part of Learning Academy development, and development of entry-pathways into social work (e.g. family support workers)	This will offer a new recruitment stream for workers to become qualified and offer additional capacity in the service once qualified. This will enable NCC to fill existing vacancies, reducing caseloads enabling swift allocation and enabling social workers to build relationships with children and families.	
	Work with HR reps to improve the accessibility and content of the recruitment site to highlight the benefits of coming to work at Nottingham City	Ailsa Barr/ Rachael Morris/ Aadil Bhatti Director CIS / Head of	31/03/23	Web pages went live w/c 14 November with new branding 'Changing Lives, Changing Futures' A marketing design brief has been sent w/c 14 November to marketing/design agencies for quotes to look at the children's online and social media	This will make Nottingham a more attractive option and support more applicants to apply for positions. This will enable NCC to fill existing vacancies, reducing	



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Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
effectively and timely.		Service – Fieldwork / HR business lead / HR consultant		platform and hep produce a campaign for attracting social workers New recruitment system expected to be implemented in August 2022, delayed due to issues outside NCC’s control. Go live expected March 2023. Social Care section on candidate site is being prepared. including uploading the marketing campaign materials (videos etc) on go live	caseloads enabling swift allocation and enabling social workers to build relationships with children and families.	
	Work with HR to produce a more effective recruitment campaign and process to fill vacant Children in Care and residential posts	Mary-Anne Cosgrove Head of Service – Children in Care, Care Leavers and Regulated Services	31/12/22	Social Media campaign live from 1/12/22. NQSW advert is going on seven local Universities from 1/12/22 Adverts have been drafted and an Indeed campaign launched for Residential Children’s workers w/c 14/11/22. Links to this advert will be shared through social media channels.	Filling vacancies will increase capacity in CiC teams reducing caseloads to no more than 16 children so that children have time with their social worker to build trusting relationships	
	Recruitment to vacant Targeted Family Support Team posts	Nicole Harris Head of Service – Fieldwork	31/01/23	The recruitment process is underway. There were over 20 applicants to the post. Interviews due to take place w/c 05.12.22	Filling vacancies will increase capacity in the TFST teams to ensure work can be allocated in a timely way reducing the	



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Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
					wait time for families in need of support	
	Provision of placements for a further cohort of Step Up to Social Work students	Alison Rawlins Practice Education Specialist	30/09/24	Confirmation to D2N2 that we will accept 7 Step UP Social Work students has been approved	This generates additional support for existing staff as Step Up Students taken on placements and work with families/supporting qualified workers, providing another recruitment stream for vacant posts.	
	Rolling recruitment of qualified social workers (Assessed and Supported Year in practice (ASYE) and experienced)	Sam Danyluk / Nicole Harris / HR Heads of Service First Response / Fieldwork and HR consultants	Review 30/09/23	Rolling recruitment is continuing for experienced and ASYE social workers. Interview panels are booked every month. At this stage applications remain at a low level. Social Media campaign for experienced social workers is live from 1/12/22. NQSW advert is on seven local Universities from 1/12/22 Ad-hoc panels arranged where experienced Social worker applications are received to minimise any drift and delay	By offering rolling recruitment and being responsive to offers, we increase the chances of successfully recruiting to vacant posts.	



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Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
				<p>HR implemented a more proactive approach to vacancy management, ensuring permanent recruitment is captured as part of rolling recruitment (including advertised) or agency cover is attempted</p> <p>Candidate care: process put in place and pre-employment checks are commenced within 24 hours of offer. Options around paid campaigns have been explored including jobs boards and sector specific sites.</p>		
<p>Nottingham will be a Local Authority that people want to remain with. This will decrease staff</p>	<p>Development sessions to be established for cohorts of qualified social workers</p>	<p>Nicole Harris/Sam Danyluk/Mary-Anne Cosgrove/John Matravers</p> <p>Heads of Service – Fieldwork/First Response/</p>	<p>review 30/09/23</p>	<p>Level 3 sessions have taken place and are scheduled for every 6 weeks. These are planned to include presentations from partner agencies including CAFCASS.</p> <p>ASYE's already have a programme of learning and developments events. All ASYE's are booked to have feedback sessions in Feb.</p>	<p>This will support the development of practice knowledge and skills for social workers and provide mentoring and support sessions which will see increased retention of social workers. This will reduce the likelihood of children and families experiencing a change of social worker, which will</p>	



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Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
turnover, meaning that children and families experience consistency of worker and are able to build strong relationships, improving their outcomes.		CiC, Care leavers and Regulated Services/ Safeguarding, Partnerships and Quality Assurance			support the development of trusting relationships.	
	Develop a Children's Integrated Service's Learning Academy page Develop training pathway to support development pathways for Children's Integrated Service staff	Sam Morris Head of Service - Strategy and Improvement	31/12/23	Project working group established. Options paper to presented to Children's Integrated Service leadership team on 8th November 2022 and scope agreed with People's Leadership Team on 7th December	Launch of the CIS Learning Academy that offers a range of learning mediums accessible to all staff within CIS. There will be clear development pathways for staff which will provide staff with job satisfaction, increasing retention rates. This will reduce the likelihood of children and families experiencing a change of social worker, which will support the development of trusting relationships.	



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Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
	Review workforce strategy plans from good or outstanding Local Authorities	Sam Morris / Rachael Morris	30/11/22	Workforce strategies for Local Authorities identified as 'good' and 'outstanding' secured. Met to review and plan HoS December workshop on 10 th November.	There is a refreshed workforce strategy that sets out CIS workforce strategy which will provide a clear offer to the workforce with the aim of increasing recruitment and retention rates. This will reduce the likelihood of children and families experiencing a change of social worker, which will support the development of trusting relationships.	Green
	Workshop with Heads of Service to agree workforce vision and key essentials of a strategy	Head of Service – Strategy and Improvement / HR Business Lead	28/02/23	1 st workshop scheduled for 16 th December		Yellow
	Refresh and launch the workforce strategy		30/06/23	The Workforce Delivery Plan is in place in the absence of the developing strategy, this is delivering key scoping work and operational work to support the stability of the workforce in the interim.		Yellow



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4. Placement sufficiency for children in care and those with complex needs.

Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence	Impact	RAG
Children will be in the right home in the right place at the right time for their needs. Children with complex needs who need to be in care will have a safe placement as soon as it is needed	Work regionally and locally to ensure increased capacity in in-house and external provision, including transformation work.	Mary-Anne Cosgrove	01/04/23	D2N2 joint commissioning on-going. D2N2 Fostering Group on-going. Meetings between Heads of Service and Newton Europe have taken place, revisiting the diagnostic findings, workstreams and agreeing principles and initial start-up milestones. Block contract in place for 4 children's homes (3 now open) and Supported Accommodation x 10 (now up and running); Supported Lodging x 20	Children will be able to be live in a home that suits their needs without delay, providing them with stability and security.	
	Continue to work regionally to increase local provision for children with complex needs. Commissioning redesign includes increased capacity for Children in Care.	Head of Service – Children in Care, Care Leavers and Regulated Services	01/04/23	Interim Children’s Commissioners recruited November 2022. They will lead on strategy update. They are now beginning to engage with D2N2, providers and the service to look at sufficiency needs and opportunities.	There will be a clear strategy to support long term sustainable homes for children so that children are able to live in a home that suits their needs and provides them with stability and security.	
	Update Sufficiency Strategy for 2023					



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Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence	Impact	RAG
	Work with Newton Europe to progress the Modernisation of Fostering strand of the transformation programme		01/04/23	Meeting between Heads of Service and Newton Europe revisiting the diagnostic findings, workstreams and agreeing principles and initial start-up milestones have taken place. Newton have begun scoping work. Further Residential Block being explored	There will be a pool of foster carers that will enable children to live in a home that suits their needs and provides them with a safe and secure family environment.	



Nottingham City Council's response to the Ofsted ILACS inspection

5. The service response to care leavers aged 21 and over.

Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
Care leavers aged over 21 will be able to easily find and navigate the local offer to know what is available to them. They will be able to access support needed through a Personal Advisor.	Local Offer to be updated through collaborative Task and Finish group.	Mary-Anne Cosgrove Head of Service – Children in Care, Care Leavers and Regulated Services	31/03/23	Task and Finish Group have met on 4 occasions and have developed 3 areas of focus 1) The offer on the website 2) Developing the offer further 3) Young people are consulted about the offer as it develops. Meetings are also taking place with other departments and partners to confirm and improve the local offer.	Care leavers will be able to easily access the local offer and understand what support they are entitled to. They will be able to access support through a personal advisor as needed, enabling supported transition into adulthood.	
	Submit funding request to increase capacity by an additional 4 PAs to meet needs care leavers aged 21			Business case submitted Approved w/c December 5th		
	Resource to develop and support website/app to be identified.			A resource has been identified. A funding bid to support development and purchase of the resource has been approved by the Department for Education w/c/ 5 th December to enable a digital local offer to be built this year.		



Nottingham City Council's response to the Ofsted ILACS inspection

6. The service response to young people age 16- and 17-year olds who present as homeless.

Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
Children who present with homelessness issues will have a timely response and understand the options available to them. Regular quality assurance activity will evidence a change in practice.	Refresh of protocol for young people who present as homeless and draft practice guidance to support practitioners in all areas of the service.	Sam Danyluk Head of Service – First Response	31/12/22	The protocol was re-drafted in March 2022, a refresh will be ready for December.	Children presenting as homeless will receive information on the options that are available to them in a timely way and will be supported to access appropriate options.	
	Design information leaflet that can be shared with all young people who present as homeless.			Leaflet has been designed; this was presented at YP's cabinet for feedback. The feedback has led to changes, it is now ready to go to print.		
	Launch Event to include attending whole service management meeting, Practice Forum, and team meetings.			This was discussed at the whole service management meeting on 16 th November 2022.		
	Ensure that children have access to independent advocacy to allow informed decision making.			Advocacy contract currently being explored.		
	Monthly audit activity to take place which will			A live tracker is in place to consider all new referrals and track their		



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Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
	include seeking feedback from children to ensure that their individual needs and vulnerabilities are understood in conjunction with decisions that are made in respect of their housing needs.			outcomes. The service will seek feedback from young people on a quarterly basis. The next set of feedback is due by end December 2022. The service will meet with the quality assurance team to see if further support can be offered in obtaining feedback.		
There will be sufficient suitable accommodation capacity for children who present as homeless.	Explore placement and social housing options currently available and review sufficiency to ensure that all children have access to safe and appropriate accommodation when needed.	Sam Danyluk Head of Service – First Response	31/12/22	Meeting held with Housing Aid on 18 th November. Plan to discuss the current commissioned service with housing strategy.	Children presenting as homeless will be able to access suitable accommodation in a timely manner.	



Nottingham City Council's response to the Ofsted ILACS inspection

7. The quality and timeliness of return home interviews for children.

Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
There will be sufficient team capacity so that children who have been missing receive a timely return home interview with an adult that they can relate to.	Increase the capacity of the team from 2 workers to 4	John Matravers Head of Service –	28/02/23	Recruitment is underway for two additional workers to undertake return home interviews.	This will increase worker capacity which ensure children who are missing will receive a return home interview.	
	Recruit to a Team Manager post	Safeguarding, Partnerships and Quality Assurance		Permanent recruitment is underway, and an interim candidate has been identified to undertake the role to drive performance about timely return home interviews, that analysis is clear and contributes to the safety plan for the child	Recruitment to the Team Manager post will enable management oversight of children who are missing to ensure that they receive a quality timely return home interview which will feed into a safety plan.	
	When the child/young person declines the interview, will still progress with family and professionals to bring analysis	John Matravers Head of Service –		The Interim Team Manager is progressing performance management with the existing team and is clear that this is an expected practice standard. This will be monitored through, supervision, dip sampling and audit.	When a child declines a return home interview there will still be an understanding of the factors involved which can then be addressed in the safety plan.	



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Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
Return home interviews will provide an analysis of the child's circumstances, which will contribute to a robust safety plan for that child.	Review and update the existing flowchart and policy and procedures	Safeguarding, Partnerships and Quality Assurance	10/01/23	Existing protocol has been updated and is now consistent with national statutory guidance.	This will ensure that the response to children who go missing is in line with national guidance	
	Share the final documents with all partners so that there is clarity on expectations.			These are with the Head of Service for review prior to sharing with partners.		
	Service Manager and Head of Service to undertake dip samples of contact with the child.			A programme of dip sampling commenced in November.	Children's lived experience will be understood by managers to inform future service developments.	
	Development of Missing Team to ensure standards are met. Timeliness and recording of RHI to be in line with statutory guidance – 72 hours' national standard			Supervision and team meetings are held in line with service standards to ensure the embedding of improvement is required. IRO's will also involve missing officers in planning and reviewing for all children	This will ensure that the response to children who go missing is in line with national guidance to ensure that children receive a timely return home interview and robust safety plan	
Undertake dip sampling to ensure the quality of return home interviews in terms of better analysis of push and pull factors and that				A programme of dip sampling commenced in November	There will be a consistency in the quality and timeliness of return home interviews and safety plans. Lessons will inform future learning	



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Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
	the return home interview is reflected in the safety planning and assessment for all children				and development and the creation of tools to inform practice to influence positive outcomes for children.	
	<p>Independent Reviewing Officers to involve missing officers in planning and reviewing for all children</p> <p>Independent Reviewing Officers to involve the missing team in planning for the children at reviews and when missing episodes have occurred for children identified as Children in Need.</p>			<p>Clear direction has been given to IROs that they are to ensure oversight of all missing episodes.</p> <p>Work is underway with analysis and insight to ensure that all allocated reviewing officers are notified via Liquid Logic when there is a missing episode to enable this.</p> <p>Auditing and dip sampling of this will take place by the Team Manager and services manager on a weekly basis.</p>	<p>There will be a full understanding of the child's circumstances, which will ensure all factors are considered in safety planning and appropriate plans are put in place.</p>	



Nottingham City Council's response to the Ofsted ILACS inspection

8. Oversight of children missing from education and those who are electively home educated.

Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
The Local Authority will have a greater oversight of children missing from education or attending part time timetables, enabling appropriate support to be targeted to those that need it	Review arrangements for locating children missing from education	Jasmin Howell and Karen McAndrew Head of Service – Virtual Schools / Service Manager Education Welfare Service	25/11/22	New process map and officer functions in place	To improve consistency of practice. EWO'S will have consistent response across the service. Enabling us to trace more families more efficiently and quicker. Expectations and timelines will be clearer.	Green
	Strengthen process for monitoring by developing a dashboard that holds key information.		31/01/23	Draft dashboard in place via Power BI which reads from Capita/Liquid Logic/Officer spreadsheet. Currently in further development.	This will enable a fast and efficient service. Further links to other data systems will ensure everything is covered.	Yellow
	Strengthen process of monitoring by updating the case note template (on Capita One) to include further information.		25/11/22	Case recording log now indicates the following: LIQUID LOGIC CHECK = Date checked REVENUES AND BENEFITS SYSTEM= Date checked	All checks will enable the service to provide a more detailed case recording log and evidence of impact. This will ensure the best possible outcomes for families; ensuring children	Green



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Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
				<p>HOME VISITS= Date checked</p> <p>SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS/RISKS (PLEASE SPECIFY) = Date checked</p> <p>CHECK AGENICES KNOWN TO BE WORKING WITH OR HAVE WORKED IN THE PAST= Date checked</p> <p>Manager oversight – Termly case audits for all Officers</p> <p>6- weekly case supervision of all RED cases</p>	<p>and young people are not out of education for longer than is necessary.</p> <p>The log will effectively trace the family, wherever they have landed.</p>	
	Develop a system to enable City Schools to report vulnerable children (permanently excluded and children with an Education and Health Care Plan) on part-timetables to the Local Authority		17/02/23	<p>Process being developed by the 3 HoS (Education Directorate) to review the arrangements, SLA and KPIs of Raleigh Learning Trust who are commissioned to provide 6th day provision of children PEX.</p> <p>SEND team meeting with other people in the region to consider a process for monitoring and tracking children with an EHCP on part-time TT.</p>	<p>The Local authority will have an ongoing and updated list of vulnerable children on a part-time timetable and will be able to support regular review of these children's readiness to accessing education full-time.</p>	



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Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
	Develop a process for monitoring and reporting on the data collected to identify and address issues/gaps as they arise.		31/03/23	Completion of the review and new arrangements, as above, will inform the development of this process	Regular identification and updates of the number of vulnerable children on part-time timetables and the demographics and status of these children will support greater oversight of this cohort and that plans are in place to support them accordingly.	Yellow
The Local Authority will have a greater understanding of any safeguarding risks for children who are electively home educated, which will allow the right support to be offered at the right time	Liaise with other LAs to consider their systems for assessing and reducing safeguarding risks.	Karen McAndrew Service Manager Education Welfare Service	27/01/23	Met with Notts responsible officer for EHE and information gathered from Derbyshire. Both have a team of advisors (QTS) who undertake home visits to children EHE- that NCC do not have.	Now have a greater understanding of other Local Authority practice, structure, and the systems they use.	Green
	Develop and implement local system, based on good practice, for recording, addressing, and reporting on identified safeguarding risks		10/02/23	A RAG rating system on the EHE tracker is in development 3-way meetings between families and school to be included within RAG rating	This will create a more robust system to ensure that safeguarding risks to children EHE are identified, enabling the right support at the right time	Yellow



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Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
				<p>Quarterly mapping will be refined to include identified safeguarding risks.</p> <p>Monthly KPI report in development listing CiC/CP/CiN/EHCP learners</p> <p>Exploring development of a quarterly dip test of EHE learners to ensure safeguarding processes are being adhered to.</p> <p>Reinstated annual review for learners accessing Nottingham College New system for EHE enquiries in place.</p> <p>New system in place for new EHE enquiries.</p> <p>Weekly panel in place to discuss 8 EHE families to consider holistic needs.</p> <p>All new/closed cases shared with City Care – 0-19 service half termly.</p>		



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Outcomes for children and families	Action needed	Responsible	Due Date	Progress including evidence (include reference to data reports on KPIs, findings from audit)	Impact (anticipated impact - to be updated with evidence of actual impact once objectives achieved)	RAG
	Review system for assessing and reviewing safeguarding risks periodically for effectiveness and efficiency.		10/03/23	Once above NCC system finalised, arrangements will be put in place to assess and ensure effectiveness periodically.	This will enable a more informed oversight of the quality of educational provision and safeguarding practices. To have a quarterly DIP audit in place. To hold a monthly panel, to ensure the reviews are quality assured and consistent.	

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RAG Key:

Completed	
In progress & on schedule	
Delayed/Not on schedule	
Planning: not yet commenced	



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For any Red actions identified above use the table below to identify mitigating actions, accountable person/s and revised due date:

Outstanding Action	Reason for delay	Mitigating actions in progress	Responsible Officer	Revised due date
Copy any RAG items here	Brief summary of cause for delay	Brief summary of mitigations in place and/or planned	Name	Date

**Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
26 January 2023**

Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan

Report of the Statutory Scrutiny Officer

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To review the progress in implementation of agreed savings for 2022/23 and budget proposals for 2023/24 for the two main service areas within the Committee's remit: Children's Integrated Services and Education.

2 Action required

- 2.1 The Committee is asked:

- a) whether it wishes to make any comments or recommendations regarding implementation of savings agreed for 2022/23;
- b) to agree any comments that it wishes to make in response to consultation on the Council's budget 2023/24 and Medium Term Financial Plan; and
- c) to identify any further scrutiny required, and if so the focus and timescales.

3 Background information

3.1 Implementation of agreed savings for 2022/23

In March 2022, Council approved the Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 to 2025/26, incorporating the revenue budget for 2022/23. As part of the consultation process, the Committee had previously reviewed and commented on the proposals relating to Children's Integrated Services. In June, the Committee reviewed progress in implementation of budget savings relating to Children's Integrated Services including the development of children's centres and play and youth services. This meeting is an opportunity for the Committee to review the latest position in implementation of agreed savings for 2022/23 relating to Children's Integrated Services and Education. Papers updating the Committee have been submitted by the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Schools, Corporate Director for People and Directors for Children's Integrated Services and Education respectively and they will be attending the meeting to answer questions.

3.2 Budget proposals for 2023/24

On 20 December 2022, Executive Board noted progress in developing a budget for 2023/24 and a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2024/25 to 2025/26 and endorsed draft public consultation proposals. On 4 January, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee looked at the

overall proposals for the budget and MTFP, and this meeting aims to give members of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee opportunity to focus on aspects relating to services within its remit. Papers updating the Committee on the position have been submitted by the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Schools, Corporate Director for People and Directors for Children's Integrated Services and Education respectively and they will be attending the meeting to answer questions. The Committee may wish to identify a response to consultation on the draft budget proposals. The Committee will also need to identify how it wishes to take forward further scrutiny of agreed savings.

4 List of attached information

- 4.1 'Children's Integrated Services: Budget' submitted by the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Schools, Corporate Director for People and Director for Children's Integrated Services
- 4.2 'Education Division Budget Update' paper submitted by the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Schools, Corporate Director for People and Director of Education

5 Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information

- 5.1 None

6 Published documents referred to in compiling this report

- 6.1 'Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24 to 2026/27' report to Executive Board on 20 December 2022
- 6.2 'The Council's Budget Proposals 2023/24' report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 January 2023
- 6.3 'Implementation of agreed budget savings relating to Children's Integrated Services' report to, and minutes of the meeting of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee held on 9 June 2022.

7 Wards affected

- 7.1 All

8 Contact information

- 8.1 Jane Garrard, Senior Governance Officer
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Meeting Title	Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee
Report Title	Children's Integrated Services: Implementation of agreed Budget Savings
Meeting Date	26 th January 2023

Corporate Director(s)/Director(s):	Catherine Underwood, Corporate Director for People Ailsa Barr, Director for Children's Integrated Services
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Cheryl Barnard
Report author and contact details:	Sam Morris, Head of Children's Strategy and Improvement Paul Stevenson, Strategic Finance Business Partner Wilf Fearon, Head of Early Help Services

Summary of issues:

Providing services for Children and Families is a key statutory responsibility for the local authority and a priority for Nottingham City Council.

The Council has set its medium-term financial plan and this was signed off at Full Council on 7th March 2022. Included within this are savings commitments within Children's Services. Appendix A sets out the final savings committed.

Consultation is currently in train to inform the Council's budget for 2023/24 and medium-term financial plan. This report notes the proposals relating to Children's Services.

A major programme of transformation in Children's Services was agreed at Executive Board on 22 February 2022 (attached as Appendix B). The funding for this programme forms part of the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) allocating up to £2.4m for specialist resourcing and £6.5m funding for delivery partner support. This report provides an update on developments to date.

This report provides information on the implementation of the agreed budget savings and summary of progress on each budget savings heading.

Recommendation(s):

1. Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee notes the summary of progress on the budget savings relating to Children's Integrated Services.
2. Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee notes the 2023/24 budget proposals

Providing services for Children and Families is a key statutory responsibility for the local authority. The Strategic Council Plan sets this out as a priority reflected in outcome 5: Child Friendly City. The plan sets out the vision that:

“Every child in Nottingham will get the best start in life, regardless of their circumstances. We will support local children to thrive academically, emotionally and physically, ensuring equality of opportunity for all.”

The plan notes that the Council will “continue to provide the vital statutory services that support and protect vulnerable children, including safeguarding, children in care, those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and other vulnerable groups” and that the Council will “Work hard to improve our children’s services, to ensure we provide the quality of service local children and families deserve.”

On 25th November 2021 a paper was presented to Children’s and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee which set out Children’s Integrated Services current financial position and budget savings proposals which at the time were part of a public consultation (attached as Appendix C).

On 31st March 2022 a paper was presented to Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee (attached as Appendix D) providing an introduction to the Children’s Transformation programme.

On 9th June 2022 a paper was presented to Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee providing an update against the budget saving proposals (attached as appendix E). This report provides a further progress update.

On 1st December 2022 a paper was presented to Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee (attached as appendix F) providing a detailed update as to the progress of the transformation programme.

This report provides the committee with an update on progress of the savings made to date and some commentary on the anticipated delivery by the end of the 2022/23 financial year.

2. Current savings commitments relating to Children’s Integrated Services)

The Council has set its MTFP and this was signed off at Full Council on 7th March 2022. Included within this are savings commitments within Children’s Services. Appendix A sets out the final savings committed.

Consultation on these proposals ran from 16th November 2021 to 10th January 2022.

3. Current position of Children’s Integrated Services Budget Savings

- **NGY Grant Funding**

NGY Services	Ending the grant funding of the youth services and NGY base provided by Base 51	(0.200)	(0.180)	(0.180)	(0.180)
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The grant funding of the youth services and NGY base was ended. As a result, the budget saving is on track to deliver.

The impact of this saving proposal is that Base 51 will need to explore other avenues of funding to support their work.

- **Play and Youth**

Play & Youth Services - Excluding buildings	Reduction of the service to provide targeted youth provision only. All play services would cease and there will be a reduction in staffing.	(0.537)	(0.733)	(0.733)	(0.733)
Play & Youth Services - Buildings only	Reduction of the Play and Youth buildings in line with a reduced service as above	0.000	(0.165)	(0.165)	(0.165)

A public consultation closed on 10 January 2022. The events were well attended by children, young people and their families. Following feedback from the initial consultation additional funding was agreed for 3 workers.

All 42.5 FTE Play and Youth worker posts were deleted, and 16 FTE Youth Worker Posts established. All but 5 of the workers took redundancy. The remaining 5 were recruited to the new posts - One operational manager, 1 specialist and three detached workers – one of whom has since left. Recruitment has been ongoing to recruit to the remaining Youth Worker posts in conjunction with partner organisations to support with the shaping of the future. Recruitment remains ongoing due to a difficulty in recruiting to qualified youth worker posts, *which is a national pressure. The service has been working with a recruitment agency (Indeed) to fill the posts. The service has been out to recruitment three times. Eight posts remain to be filled. The operational manager, 2 practice supervisors, 3 of the 4 youth development workers and 2 of the 9 youth detached worker posts have been filled. The service will be undertaking a further round of recruitment and will be working with consultants at Indeed to widen the advertising of the roles. Shortlisting is in progress for the remaining youth development post and a fourth round of recruitment underway for the youth detached worker posts. Interviews are anticipated to take place in early February.*

The service is continuing with a reduced citywide service from Bulwell Riverside. We are prioritising work in partnership to deliver a range of services such as Pythian, Mental Health Support Teams (MHST), Helping Kids Achieve (HKA), Support through Sport and other partners as planned. The new design focusses on delivery of direct targeted work, linking this to the future development of Family Hubs (i.e sexual health sessions & mental health support), re-instating & supporting partnership delivery to ensure Children and Young people access safe quality sessions and they are able to have a voice.

The five Play and Youth Centres proposed for closure have been offered to lease to voluntary organisations via a robust Expression of Interest process. In seeking sustainable arrangements, it has been a priority to ensure that organisations are financially sustainable. We are currently working on lease agreements for two of the Play and Youth Centres and are still seeking partners to take on the remaining 3 buildings.

The savings from the reduction in staffing Youth Services will mean that the savings are on track to deliver. Further staffing underspend is anticipated due to the difficulty recruiting to qualified youth worker posts.

The savings for the buildings are on track to be met for the next financial year.

The impact of the savings proposals has been a reduction in the centres and play and youth services for children and young people. Given the difficulty recruiting staff, which as noted above is a regional and national issue, it has not been possible to launch a full targeted youth provision. Although limited in staffing, the service has continued to hold sessions at Bulwell Riverside in conjunction with partners. The service has maintained some youth detached work provision.

Future development will focus upon the Youth Service actively working with partners to look at how to continue to deliver a citywide service. A bid has been submitted to the Youth Investment Fund to renovate some of the youth buildings (Meadows, Phoenix and Oliver Hinds). The Youth Service is working with a consultant to develop the bid submission.

- **Children’s Centres**

Children’s Centres - Excluding buildings	The Early Help service will operate from only three Children’s Centres across the City, with a reduction in staffing and early help offer to families	(0.282)	(0.376)	(0.376)	(0.376)
Children’s Centres - Building Only	Children’s Centres operate from three centres. 6 Centres would close	0.000	(0.259)	(0.259)	(0.259)

A public consultation closed in November 2021. Further to that consultation, the Council undertook a further consultation process to determine which Children’s Centres would remain open and which would close.

Following feedback from the initial consultation, additional funding was agreed to increase the number of Children’s Centres retained (4 Children’s Centres to be retained) and increase the Early Help Business Support retained to ensure reception cover at the additional centre.

Phase 2 of the Children’s Centre consultation took place between 24 February 2022 and 22 April 2022. This included:

- Public consultation, via face-face consultation events and the online consultation.
- Colleague consultation, including Voluntary Redundancy applications
- Partner consultation regarding future use of Children’s Centre buildings proposed for closure.

There were no further alternative viable proposals submitted to change the original proposal.

15 Children Centre staff were accepted for Voluntary Redundancy and have now left the Council. The savings from the reduction in Early Help staffing will mean that the savings are on track to deliver.

The five Children’s Centres proposed for closure were offered to lease to organisations via a robust Expression of Interest. In seeking sustainable arrangements, it has been a priority to ensure that organisations are financially sustainable and able to meet the requirements of being responsible for the building. Property and Legal Services are currently working on agreements for the interested parties for four of the five centres. There has been a delay in

the process for the fifth centre due to the organisation who had expressed an interest advising they need to meet with their auditors and accountants prior to agreeing to take on a lease.

The savings from the reduction in the Children’s Centres is on track to deliver. However we have been advised that there is a risk in the capacity of corporate support services to finalise the lease agreements by the end of the financial year and we will be working closely with them to understand whether there are any additional holding costs associated with this given those taking on the buildings are currently operating from the centres.

The Children’s Centres are focussed upon targeted delivery and will deliver their work through group work sessions operating out of 4 centres.

Future development will focus upon working with partners to move to family hubs. These should come online in the next 3 months. Alongside this development work, there is currently a review of the Early Help services by our practice improvement partner, Essex County Council. This will will inform the development of an early help strategy, pulling together the early help service offer into one coherent strategy.

- **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services**

CAMHS City Wide Service	Working with the Clinical Commissioning Group and Public Health to transform Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)	(0.215)	(0.215)	(0.215)	(0.215)
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The budget savings are on track to be achieved.

NCC has worked with the Integrated Care Board and Public Health to transform Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and additional funding for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services to mitigate the removal of NCC funding has been agreed with Public Health in line with the Section 75 agreement. As a result of alternative funding being identified there has been no impact on service delivery.

There is currently ongoing work with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and the Integrated Commissioning Board commissioning managers to develop a service delivery plan for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and also ensure future contract work covers Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and Mental Health Support Teams.

- **Business Support**

Business Support	Savings linked to reductions in Play & Youth and Children’s Centre provision	(0.200)	(0.200)	(0.200)	(0.200)
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Staffing reductions of 8.6 business support posts were achieved through removing vacancies and voluntary redundancy applications. A revised Business Support structure has been agreed across Early Help and Youth Services.

As a result of staffing reductions, the Early Help Business Support budget reductions are on track to be achieved.

There has been no impact as a result of this saving because this was linked to the reduction in the number of play and youth workers and centres that Business Support serviced.

- **Targeted Support to Children and Families**

Targeted support to children and families	Review and reconfiguration of Targeted Family Support and Edge of Care Services to consolidate and target the offer.	(0.309)	(0.309)	(0.309)	(0.309)
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This saving scope now forms part of the Childrens Transformation programme and was removed as a separate budget item to avoid any budgetary double counts and prevent the destabilisation of the MTFP.

- **Strategy and Improvement**

Management reductions in Strategy and Improvement	Reduction in management capacity within Strategy and Improvement section	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)
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The restructure of the service has been completed. A management post was deleted following a staff member leaving the Authority.

As a result, the budget saving of is on track to be delivered.

The deleted post sat within the Integrated Workforce Development Team. This has resulted in two staff members having their posts regraded to a higher grade to cover some of the management duties, which has led to a slight reduction in the capacity of the team. However, the team continues to provide learning and development opportunities to the workforce.

- **Agency Decision Maker (ADM) for Adoption and Fostering**

Agency Decision Maker (ADM) for Adoption and Fostering	Currently delivered by an external consultant this would be delivered in house within the senior management team	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)
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The Agency Decision Making work has been brought back into the service as opposed to paying for the work to be completed by an external person. The adoption Agency Decision Maker is now the Director of Children’s Integrated Services and the fostering Agency Decision Maker is the Head of Service for Children in Care.

The new arrangements commenced on 1st April 2022 meaning that the saving is on track to deliver.

As well as the saving being achieved the impact of the change is positive as it means that the opportunity to influence and review practice in the service sits within the senior leadership service. Learning opportunities for managers and workers have been developed including the adoption Agency Decision Maker leading some workshop learning with managers in the service with a focus on improving quality of adoption reports.

4. Children’s Transformation Programme

A diagnostic assessment of the Children’s Social Care service was conducted from October to November 2021. This process was informed by detailed workshops with practitioners where the journeys of individual children were anonymised and reviewed to consider where the opportunities lay for improving outcomes. Alongside that, there was significant analysis of activity data and benchmarking with appropriate comparator authorities. Key headlines for identifying improvement opportunity were:

- a number Children in Need (CIN) and Child Protection (CP) plans could have been prevented through an earlier intervention
- a number of CIN and CP plans ran on for longer than necessary

- a revised focus on early intervention would avoid children being taken into care
- there is scope to increase the number of children in foster care with a corresponding reduction in residential care
- there is potential to enable more children in care to leave care earlier than is currently enabled.

Moreover, this assessment demonstrated that the implementation of a service redesign programme, centred on improving outcomes for children supported by NCC, would also result in a significant reduction in forecasted expenditure growth currently assumed within the MTFP.

The diagnostic workshops reviewed cases to establish if the right outcomes were achieved and if not what were the barriers. This output formulated the proposals contained within the outline business case (OBC) and that through improved children's outcomes recurrent annualised gross financial benefits of £11.2m - £16.1m from the target and stretch programme respectively, can be achieved after an 8 year period when all work streams are at maximum delivery benefit.

Due to the size, scale and pace of the transformation programme needed, NCC identified it would need to procure an external delivery partner to provide the experience, expertise, and capacity to deliver on the values set out in this document. A competitive tender process took place between March-April 2022, which resulted in the Newton Europe being appointed as Transformation Delivery Partner.

The objectives of the transformation programme business case are summarised in the table below and are based on full financial benefit by year 8 of the programme after 12-18 months of implementation. For each objective there is a target operational volume with associated financial opportunities in brackets). These are net of the resources identified in October/November 2021 and the project is expected to deliver within the range.

Description	Target (Financial Equivalent)
Avoidance of children coming into the care of Nottingham through better use of targeted, timely and effective interventions and familial placements as appropriate.	35 additional children supported per year (£4.770m)
Safely support the children in friends and family placements to transition to SGO.	20 additional children supported per year (£0.580m)
Successfully support more children per year to safely reunify.	4 more children reunifying per year (£0.540m)
Reducing the delays experienced by children leaving care to reunification, adoption or SGO	5-week reduction in average duration (£0.730m)
Effectively close plans first time to avoid future plans. Bringing repeat CIN / CP plans down with targeted, effective and understandable interventions	141 fewer (CIN) 89 fewer (CP) ...children needing our support each year (£0.900m)
Increasing the visibility and control that we have around our plans, reducing durations to those of the most effective teams.	6-week reduction (CiN) 2-week reduction (CP) ...on the length of time children have to spend on a plan (£0.940m)

Increasing the net number of foster carers (leavers and joiners)	11 additional foster carers per year (£1.800m)
Increasing our block residential provision	10 additional block beds (£0.350m)
NET BENEFIT BY YEAR 8	10.610
Add back Implementation costs	0.631
GROSS BENEFIT BY YEAR 8	11.241

It was initially anticipated that the Transformation Delivery Partner would start delivery onsite in May 2022. However, contracting delays and the full Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children’s Services in July led to delay. Work began during August 2022 and a re-profiled programme of delivery has been agreed.

The children’s transformation programme will comprise of two phases; the ‘Design, Prototype, and Trial’ phase, and the ‘Implementation and Sustain’ phase. The design, prototype and trial phase began in November 2022 and will run through to Spring 2023 at which point the second phase of implementation will commence.

The delay to the start of the programme delivery from May 2022 to November 2022 has resulted in the overall benefits timeline being delayed by the same period. Therefore, the cumulative benefit delivered over the MTFP will be £10.61m however this is being finalised as part of Phase 1 of the programme.

5. 2023/24 Budget Saving Proposals

The savings detailed above will continue to deliver savings as part of the medium-term financial plan signed off at full council on 7th March 2022.

Executive Board received the details of new proposals for the Council’s MTFP in December 2022.

The report and appendix detailing these proposals is at:

https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/documents/s141273/MTFP_report.pdf

https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/documents/s141274/MTFP_appendix.pdf

Further proposals for 2023/24 are included in the [current budget consultation](#).

- **Investment into internal fostering development**

Investment into foster carer support service to prevent foster carer breakdown of £323,931 and investment into foster carer allowances, skills payments and complex care to retain and expand the internal fostering provision of £578,042 – total investment of £901,973. This investment into the service would be as part of an invest to save model to reduce costs and levels of use of residential provision by £901,973 giving a net nil position in 2023/24 and a

further saving £1,142,846 in 2024/25, giving total cumulative savings of £2,044,819. This would complement the existing transformation savings programme detailed above.

- **Supporting families grant to be used to fund Early Help offer to drive improved payment by results income**

This will involve the redesign of Nottingham's early help offer to support children and families more effectively, working alongside partners. This is anticipated to bring a saving of £500,000 during 2023/24.

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	Department	Service Area	Title of Proposal	Narrative	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
1	People	Early Help	NGY Services	Ending the grant funding of the youth services and NGY base provided by Base 51	(0.200)	(0.180)	(0.180)	(0.180)
2	People	Early Help	Play & Youth Services - Excluding buildings	Reduction of the service to provide targeted youth provision only. All play services would cease and there will be a reduction in staffing.	(0.537)	(0.733)	(0.733)	(0.733)
3	People	Early Help	Play & Youth Services - Buildings only	Reduction of the Play and Youth buildings in line with a reduced service as above	0.000	(0.165)	(0.165)	(0.165)
4	People	Early Help	Children's Centres - Excluding buildings	The Early Help service will operate from only three Children's Centres across the City, with a reduction in staffing and early help offer to families	(0.282)	(0.376)	(0.376)	(0.376)
5	People	Early Help	Children's Centres - Building Only	Children's Centres operate from three centres. 6 Centres would close	0.000	(0.259)	(0.259)	(0.259)
6	People	Early Help	CAMHS City Wide Service	Working with the Clinical Commissioning Group and Public Health to transform Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)	(0.215)	(0.215)	(0.215)	(0.215)
7	People	Children In Care	Agency Decision Maker (ADM) for Adoption and Fostering	Currently delivered by an external consultant this would be delivered in house within the senior management team	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)
8	People	Strategy & Improvement	Management reductions in Strategy and Improvement	Reduction in management capacity within Strategy and Improvement section	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)
9	People	Strategy & Improvement	Business Support	Savings linked to reductions in Play & Youth and Children's Centre provision	(0.200)	(0.200)	(0.200)	(0.200)
10	People	Targeted Family Support	Targeted support to children and families	Review and reconfiguration of Targeted Family Support and Edge of Care Services to consolidate and target the offer.	(0.309)	(0.309)	(0.309)	(0.309)

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**Executive Board
22 February 2022**

Subject:	Children's Social Care Service Redesign
Corporate Director(s)/Director(s):	Catherine Underwood, Corporate Director for People
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Cheryl Barnard, Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People
Report author and contact details:	Catherine Underwood, Corporate Director for People catherine.underwood@nottinghamcity.gov.uk
Other colleagues who have provided input:	Ceri Walters, Head of Commercial Finance Richard Grice, Interim Director of Transformation
Subject to call-in: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Key Decision: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Criteria for Key Decision:	
(a) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditure <input type="checkbox"/> Income <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Savings of £750,000 or more taking account of the overall impact of the decision	
and/or	
(b) Significant impact on communities living or working in two or more wards in the City	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
Type of expenditure: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revenue <input type="checkbox"/> Capital	
Total value of the decision: Up to £6,500,000 for a delivery partner over a 2-year period, and Up to £2,400,000 for internal specialist resources over a 4-year period	
Wards affected: All	
Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s): Throughout the budget process	
Relevant Council Plan Key Outcome:	
Clean and Connected Communities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keeping Nottingham Working	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carbon Neutral by 2028	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safer Nottingham	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child-Friendly Nottingham	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Healthy and Inclusive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Keeping Nottingham Moving	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improve the City Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Better Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial Stability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Serving People Well	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Summary of issues

This report presents a case for a multi-year investment and transformation programme to redesign Nottingham City Council's (NCC) provision of social care services for children and young people, as part of the council's overall improvement journey. The redesign would:

- improve the outcomes, safety and experience of the children supported by NCC while significantly reducing the cost of the service for Nottingham residents and
- Support the opportunities to improve service quality and OFSTED performance.

Due to the size, scale and pace of the transformation programme required, the council would need to procure an external delivery partner to provide the experience, expertise and capacity for a 2 year period and additional internal service capacity for a 4 year period.

Full implementation will take 8 years with 83% of the programme being delivered in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) time frame.

The value of savings delivered as a result of the investment over an:

- **8 year period** is:
 - £63.376m gross and £50.776m net.
 - The **Return on Investment (RoI)**, over the life of the programme, is **7.1 : 1**.
- **4 year** MTFP time frame is:
 - £20.759m gross and £16.549m net.
 - The **RoI** is **2.3 : 1**

The **3 : 1 ratio is achieved between year 4 and 5** due to the significant upfront investment required.

The savings anticipated through this investment and transformation programme have been accounted for in the MTFP and Budget Report at agenda item 6 at this Executive Board meeting; **if this investment is not approved this will destabilise the proposed budget.**

The savings in the MTFP do not reflect the 'stretch' target associated with this programme which could deliver up to a further £13m over the life of the programme. The rationale for exclusion at this stage is set out in section 5.1. Delivery of this would increase the RoI.

This report requests approval for the investment required to deliver this critical redesign of children's social care services and funding recommendations.

Does this report contain any information that is exempt from publication?

An appendix to the report is exempt from publication under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 because it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and, having regard to all the circumstances, the

public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. It is not in the public interest to disclose this information because the required procurement process could be jeopardised in delivering value for money if the size of the programme and its associated implementation requirements are published at this stage.

Recommendation(s):

1. To note the proposed investment and transformation programme set out in the report, and that the savings to be derived from the programme have been incorporated into the Medium Term Financial Plan and Budget Report.

2. To approve the investment of **up to £6,500,000** to procure a delivery partner to support the delivery of this programme pending a procurement process, as set out in **section 2.3**.

3. To approve the investment of **up to £2,400,000** for additional internal specialist resources to support delivery of this programme, as set out in **section 2.3**.

4. To delegate authority to the Corporate Director for People to complete the procurement of a delivery partner and to allocate the budget set out above to deliver the service redesign programme.

1. Reasons for recommendations

- 1.1 To support the implementation of a substantial programme of transformation, service redesign and improvement, within a critical area of statutory service, with outcomes that are defined in section 2.3 below. The recommendations are to procure a delivery partner and additional internal capacity and expertise to ensure delivery of the outcomes (both financial and non-financial) within a timeframe that supports the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
- 1.2 The MTFP being presented as an agenda item at this meeting of the 22 February 2022 includes the financial benefits and if investment is not approved this will destabilise the budget position and change the assumptions in that report.

2 Background (including outcomes of consultation)

- 2.2 Children's Services in Nottingham have improved, however there is a need to go further and faster. There is scope to both improve the outcomes of children supported by NCC and significantly reduce the cost of doing so, thereby releasing pressure on the council's budget. An assessment of the Children's Social Care service conducted from October to November 2021, which compared NCC service activities to similar councils elsewhere, identified:
 - a number Children in Need (CIN) and Child Protection (CP) plans could have been prevented through an earlier intervention
 - a number of CIN and CP plans ran on for longer than necessary.
 - a revised focus on early intervention would avoid children being taken into care

- there is scope to increase the number of children in foster care with a corresponding reduction in residential care
- there is potential to enable more children in care to leave care earlier than is currently enabled.

Moreover, this assessment demonstrated that the implementation of a service redesign programme, centred on improving outcomes for children supported by NCC, would also result in a significant reduction in forecasted expenditure growth currently assumed within the MTFP.

- 2.2 Over the last two years the council's Children's Social Care budget has grown by approximately £11.7m as a result of continued growth and cost over the past 5 years. The 2022/23+ MTFP also contains a further £18.5m to support growth and increasing costs from 2022/23 to 2025/26.
- 2.3 In November 2018, NCC's OFSTED inspection was judged to be 'Requires improvement' and during two further targeted visits, further improvement requirements have been identified by OFSTED. The opportunities to improve that were identified in the October-November assessment are consistent with the opportunities to improve service quality and hence OFSTED performance. The October - November assessment identified the need for a substantial redesign of the Children's Social Care service, from Early Help (EH), through CIN, CP and Children in Care (CIC). The objectives of the redesign would be to:
- **Help families stay together** more safely and with greater resilience using effective targeted interventions. This will significantly reduce the trajectory of growth of children in care of the Authority
 - **Ensure the most timely and effective support is consistently provided from early help through CIN and CP.** This will be a significant driver of service quality and reduced risk as well as reducing future establishment growth requirements
 - **Reduce bottlenecks and improve processes** and ways of working to help practitioners spend more time helping young people, and thereby gain greater satisfaction from their roles
 - **Improve commissioning and recruitment processes** around residential and foster carers

This is a multi-year change programme, touching all parts of the service. Due to its ambition and scale, an option appraisal has been carried out to determine how best to resource the programme. A summary of the appraisal is set out in **Section 3** below. The option selected is to invest in expert, external support and the summary below makes clear that alternative options cannot deliver both the financial and non-financial benefits of the required programme at sufficient scale.

3. Other options considered in making recommendations

Option	Reason option was not selected
Option 1: to do nothing	There is significant risk to outcomes of residents and financial and reputational risk to the Authority if these opportunities to improve are not delivered.
Option 2: to undertake a transformation programme aimed at a smaller subset services	<p>NCC requires a transformation programme of sufficient size and scale to deliver improved and lower cost services. Undertaking only limited sections of the full identified opportunities within the October - November 2021 assessment would not achieve the necessary scale.</p> <p>There are also significant interdependencies between workstreams that would make the overall programme more difficult to deliver if not all done at once. For example, critical capacity from staff may be freed up through the CIN/CP work that will support more timely and effective interventions with young people and their families.</p>
Option 3: to undertake the transformation programme with only internal resources	<p>First, an experienced transformation partner will bring with them the wider expertise of an organisation that has conducted public sector, and Children’s Services transformational changes across the country.</p> <p>Second, an experienced transformation partner would negate the requirement for NCC to add significant additional transformation management capacity and capability resource. This would require hiring, onboarding, experiential learning and training before a transformation programme of this magnitude could begin. This would add a critical time delay to any programme and is likely to significantly reduce the magnitude of improvement achieved.</p>

4. Consideration of Risk

- 4.1 The programme links to the mitigating actions for the financial management, safeguarding children and workforce capacity risks on the Corporate Risk and Assurance Register.
- 4.2 The risks associated with this decision are as follows:
- a) **This decision not being approved** –
 - i. this will destabilise the MTFP being presented on the same agenda and result in an unbalanced budget and
 - ii. Put at risk the opportunities to improve services for children and families when Nottingham’s children’s services require improvement. A poor inspection outcome would have material additional financial implications for the council.
 - b) **Delay in the procurement** of a delivery partner and associated supportive resources – this will delay the delivery of the savings profile set out in **Table 1** below.

A risk value has been assigned to this programme and will form part of the robustness of the budget report to mitigate any risk of delay.

- c) **Slippage in delivery** of the programme – as above, a risk value has been captured in the robustness of the budget report to mitigate any impact from this.

5. Finance colleague comments (including implications and value for money/VAT)

- 5.1 This programme will deliver financial benefits in full by 2029/30 on the assumption that a delivery partner and additional specialist resources are invested in.

The profile of these benefits over the 8 year period is set out in **Table 1** below which shows **£63.376m gross savings**.

This equates to a **Return on Investment (RoI) of 7.1:1** on the basis of a maximum investment cost of £8.9m.

Any reduction in this estimate or increase in savings will increase the yield.

The programme contains ‘target’ and ‘stretch’ savings; the MTFP and the figures in this report are based on ‘target’ values. The ‘stretch’ savings could deliver a further £13m over the 8 year programme and have been excluded from the MTFP report as at this stage they are considered too high a risk to include but not to aim for through delivery.

As the programme progresses benefit realisation will be monitored and the budget updated accordingly.

Details of the investment are shown in **Exempt Appendix A**.

TABLE 1: Return on investment profile									
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	TOTAL
	£m	£m							
Gross	0.539	3.557	7.322	9.331	10.139	10.417	10.829	11.241	63.376
Net	0.539	3.557	5.222	7.231	8.039	8.317	8.729	9.141	50.776

The net return of £50.776m is after the alignment of any savings already assumed in the MTFP preventing future budget destabilisation.

- 5.2 The requirement of the transformation programme is that investments will yield a return of at least 3:1 over the 4 year period however, due to the need for long term systemic improvements from significant early years investment a slightly longer timeframe is required to deliver on this requirement.

By year 4 the RoI is 2.3 : 1 increasing to 7.1 : 1 by year 8.

The 3:1 return occurs between year 4 and 5.

5.3 The figures being captured in the 2022/23+ MTFP will only align to the reports timeframe (4 years) and therefore only capturing savings that total £16.549m net (£20.759m gross), this is 83% of the programmes progression.

5.4 Costs of delivery are estimates with:

- i. Robust procurement processes to ensure delivery of an appropriate and value for money contract and
- ii. Targeted recruitment processes to drive pace and success in the recruitment of temporary resourcing.

Robust contract management for the development and monitoring of the delivery partner contract is key to ensuring payments align to results and will capture:

- i. Agreement of a baseline in order to benchmark savings aligning to the MTFP and
- ii. Robust performance indicators.

5.5 The funding of this will be met from:

- The review and reduction of earmarked reserves;
- Reprioritisation of the Childrens budget resources;
- Transformation funding.

There will be other financial opportunities from:

- Delivery of stretch targets;
- Slippage and
- Further contractual reductions

The value of this report is predicated on an estimated contract value, if this value is exceeded the appropriate approval process will be required and further funding identified.

6. Legal colleague comments

6.1 The approval of the expenditure outlined in this report in order to procure a delivery partner is a key element in the delivery of savings as part of the Council's budget for 2022/23 onwards. Failure to agree this expenditure will mean that the budget itself then has savings targets but no funded delivery plan for elements of it. That could then lead to questions about the robustness and deliverability of the budget when viewed through a rationality lens. As a consequence it is recommended that this expenditure and the subsequent procurement that would follow should be considered in that light.

Comments provided by Malcolm R. Townroe, Director of Legal and Governance, on 11 February 2022.

7. Other relevant comments

7.1 Due to the likely value of the contract this service is covered by the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (PCRs) therefore the process used must comply with the legislation.

Procurement have explored the procurement routes for this service and will manage the process with the Transformation and Children's Teams, to ensure best value is secured through the process. It is proposed to undertake a further competition through a national

framework and all terms of that framework will need to be adhered to, in order to ensure compliance with PCRs 2015.

Comments provided by Steve Oakley, Head of Contracting and Procurement, on 7 February 2022.

8. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1 An EIA is not required because the report does not represent proposals for a new or changing policy, service or function.

8. Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)

9.1 Not applicable

10. Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA)

10.1 Not applicable

11. List of background papers relied upon in writing this report (not including published documents or confidential or exempt information)

11.1 None

12. Published documents referred to in this report

12.1 Medium Term Financial Plan – Executive Board 22 February 2022

Meeting Title	Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee
Report Title	Children's Integrated Services: budget proposals, current financial position and transformation
Meeting Date	25 November 2021

Corporate Director(s)/Director(s):	Catherine Underwood, Corporate Director for People Helen Watson, Interim Director for Children's Integrated Services
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Cheryl Barnard
Report author and contact details:	Lisa Kitto, Deputy S151 Officer Sophie Russell, Head of Children's Strategy and Improvement Christine Green, Strategic Finance Business Partner Michelle Roe, Executive Officer

Summary of issues:

Providing services for Children and Families is a key statutory responsibility for the local authority and a priority for Nottingham City Council.

The Council has published a series of budget proposals for consultation as part of the development of its medium term financial plan. A number of these relate to Children's Integrated Services.

Children's Integrated Services have been forecasting an in-year overspend. This report provides information on the forecast, reasons and mitigating actions being taken. The report also sets out the implications for the medium term financial plan.

The Council is committed to ensuring outcomes for children are met in a cost-effective way. To support this, a transformation plan is being developed. This report provides information about developments to date.

Recommendation(s):

1. Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee consider the budget proposals as they relate to Children's Integrated Services.
2. Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee considers the in-year financial position and mitigating actions and implications.
3. Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee considers the development of transformation proposals in the service.

1. Background

Providing services for Children and Families is a key statutory responsibility for the local authority. The Strategic Council Plan sets this out as a priority reflected in outcome 5: Child Friendly City. The plan sets out the vision that:

“Every child in Nottingham will get the best start in life, regardless of their circumstances. We will support local children to thrive academically, emotionally and physically, ensuring equality of opportunity for all.”

The plan notes that the Council will “continue to provide the vital statutory services that support and protect vulnerable children, including safeguarding, children in care, those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and other vulnerable groups” and that the Council will “Work hard to improve our children’s services, to ensure we provide the quality of service local children and families deserve.”

2. Budget proposals relating to Children’s Integrated Services

On 09 November 2021, the Council published a series of budget proposals (attached as Appendix A) as part of developing its medium term financial plan. Consultation on these proposals runs from 16th November 2021 to 10th January 2022.

A number of these proposals relate to Children’s Integrated Services:

- Play and Youth
- Children’s Centres
- NGY Grant Funding
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Business Support
- Targeted Support to Children and Families
- Strategy and Improvement

3. In-year financial position of Children’s Integrated Services

Children’s Integrated Services has been forecasting a significant overspend during 2021/22. At the end of September 2021 (Period 6), this was forecast at £3.671m overspend for this financial year. This is an improved position to the previously reported overspend of £5.232m at the end of June 2021, this is as a result of spending controls across the service and improved forecasting on children’s placements. The biggest pressure is within our Children in Care Service which is currently forecast to overspend by £5m by the end of the year. This is as a result of increased demand for placements and increased placement costs, some of which is due to increased complexity of cases. This pressure is off-set, in part, by underspends across other services within Children’s Integrated Services and the Directorate is working on reducing the in-year overspend and achieving a balanced budget by the end of the financial year as much as possible.

The pressure on the Children in Care budgets is forecast to continue into future years and is reflected in the Council’s Medium Term Financial plan, details of which are set out later in the report.

4. Costs relating to children in our care

Local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure sufficient accommodation for their children in care. This is referred to as the 'Sufficiency Duty' as laid down in Section 22G of the Children Act 1989. This duty should be undertaken within the context of the planning and co-operation duties, which the 2004 Act places on partners in order to improve the wellbeing of the children in the local area.

Spend in this area is driven by three key factors:

- 1) Numbers of children in care
- 2) The types of placement available / utilised
- 3) The costs of placements

It is nationally recognised that there are increasing demands and costs in relation to providing the right placements for children in care and care leavers. The pressures that the Council is facing are also being experienced in other Core Cities. Some of the cost pressures relate to Covid, as an example, the backlog in family courts resulting from Covid is impacting on the Councils ability to discharge children from care. Some are likely to continue into the next, and potentially future financial years.

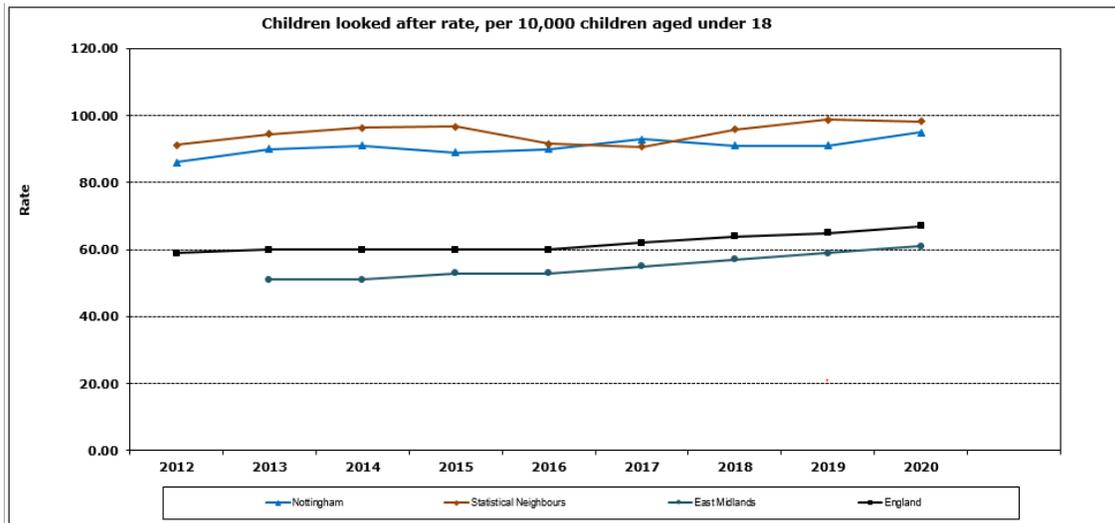
Table 1 below summaries the CIC numbers and spend from 2018/19 to date.

Key Performance Indicator	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22 Pd5	2021/22 Pd6**	Variance
Financial Performance							
Average Rate £p/wk	1,095.33	1,159.17	1,120.88	1,213.87	1,358.50	1,344.37	-14.13
<i>Annual % Change</i>		5.8%	-3.3%	8.3%		10.8%	
Numbers	632.64	614.12	632.52	673.65	702.18	703.60	1.42
<i>Annual % Change</i>		-2.9%	3.0%	6.5%		4.4%	
External Provision							
Core Placements over £4,100 p/w - No's	12.69	15.81	22.19	31.76	43.18	42.90	-0.28
<i>Annual % Change</i>		24.6%	40.4%	43.1%		35.1%	
Core Placements > £4,100 p/w - £m	3.188	4.258	6.162	9.774	12.548	12.435	(0.113)
<i>Annual % Change</i>		33.6%	44.7%	58.6%		27.2%	
Core Placements > £4,100 p/w -AR £p/wk	4,831.86	5,179.64	5,340.21	5,917.25	5,588.07	5,573.82	-14.25
Health Care Contributions	1.364	1.889	1.699	1.521	1.308	1.135	(0.173)
<i>Annual % Change</i>		38.5%	-10.0%	-10.5%		-25.4%	

Excludes Secure & UASC placements

***Pd6 growth is indicative only due to a review of assumptions*

The service regularly benchmarks the number, rate and costs of children in care with national, regional and core cities comparators. For a number of years, Nottingham's rate of Children in Care per 10,000 has been lower than statistical neighbours. We are currently waiting for 2020/21 comparator data to be released.



The below are cost comparators from the region:

- Residential – the average cost of a placement in Nottingham City is less than the average weekly cost across the region (£4554 against at £4663).
- Fostering – the average cost of a fostering placement in Nottingham City is 2.7% higher than the average weekly fee across the region (£858 against £835). It is worth noting that Nottingham City Council have a number of specialist foster placements that are included in this average. These placements carry a higher tariff, however are commissioned in order to prevent an admission to residential care. Nottingham has a comparatively high percentage of in-house fostering placements compared to many other local authorities which is positive for children and in terms of financial impact. Further investment in our in-house fostering team and foster family cohort could reduce our reliance on independent fostering agency placements to meet these bespoke needs.
- Semi-independence – the average cost of a semi-independence placement in Nottingham City is the second lowest in the region (£1403 against £2396).

Action undertaken to mitigate Children in Care Costs

Given the forecast overspend, the service has taken action to mitigate this. The focus has been on ensuring that children and young people are receiving the right care in the right setting. Alongside this, work is undertaken to ensure that the right price is being paid for care.

- We have increased local placements and maximised value for money achieved through Nottingham City Council's long term residential block contract, established in 2015. We are already committed to savings for 2021/22 onwards and have an established programme of work to deliver through the expansion of our current external residential block contract and the development of a semi-independence block contract.
- We have a proactive Placements Team, working closely with corporate commissioning colleagues. We are currently seeking additional contract management capacity and a role to focus on ensuring appropriate Continuing Care contributions. This will improve the ability of this team to reduce costs by scrutinising, challenging and renegotiating packages of support with providers and maximising income from health contributions.

- We have an extensive package of support at the edge of care delivered through our Targeted Support Team (TST), Multi Systemic Therapy Team (MST) and MST Child Abuse and Neglect (MST CAN) and Edge of Care Hub, which are identifying and supporting families as an alternative to care.
- We are reviewing permanence plans and care packages on a case-by case basis. Two specific Reviews were carried out in September 2021.
- Arrangements for all 89 children in external placements were reviewed by Essex County Council which has assisted us in prioritising focus on care packages and some cost reduction.
- We have reviewed arrangements for all 131 children in care aged 17½ and over and those Care Leavers who appear to still be in some sort of supported housing. This has ensured a stronger 'grip' on care and cost.
- We have an established programme to invest in a Supported Lodgings Project with Barnardos to deliver existing savings commitments for 2021/22 onwards.
- We have an established Reunification Panel and support offer for children who may be able to leave care and return safely to family or significant others.
- We have an ongoing programme to expand our internal residential provision, opening a ninth in-house residential children's home with 4 beds to meet the needs of our most complex children.
- We are working with the STARS project to prevent placement break down; entry into care and support reunification and step down from residential to foster care.
- Following our transformation sprint (outlined below) we have identified a significant programme of work around our in-house fostering provision.

Despite this work, the presenting needs of our children and families mean that the Council is expecting to see continued increases in demand for services and also for the cost of placements to increases and these have been reflected in the Medium Term Financial Plan that is presented to the Executive Board in November. The Table below sets out the additional demand cost pressures, totalling £18.4m over the 4 financial years, which have been built into the Medium Term Financial Plan.

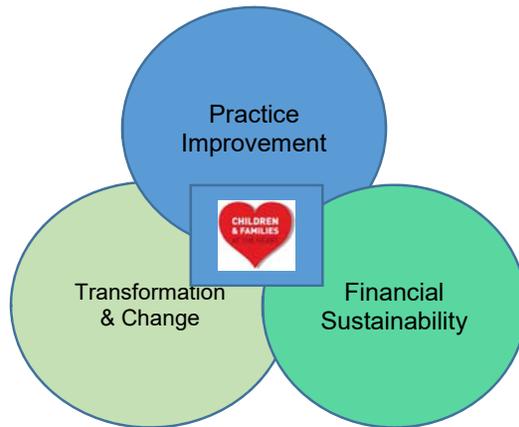
Demand Cost Pressures Assumed in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 – 2025/26				
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Children In Care Cost Pressures	6.5	3.6	4.0	4.3

The assumptions include an element of catch-up from the 2021/22 financial year and then assume growth of 3% per annum and 3.1% per annum in placement costs. The figures will be updated to reflect any changes in both demand and cost as the year progresses and as the impact of any transformation activity unfolds.

5. Transformation Activity

We are on a journey of transforming Children's Services in the city, proactively responding to the rising, and changing, demands on our services: the needs of children and families, the increasing costs of providing those services, the pressures staff come under day-to-day and the need to continually improve the quality of the work we do.

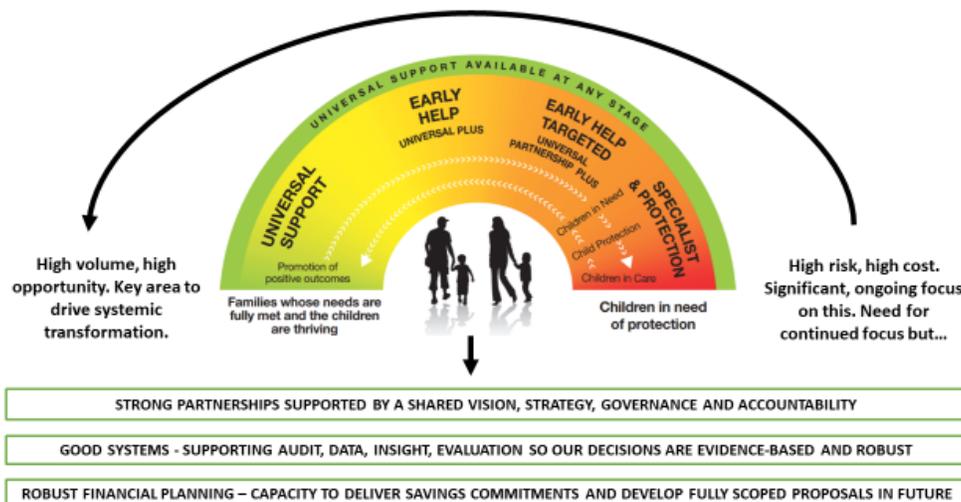
Children’s Integrated Services is managing a programme of work, responding to three key drivers for change and transformation and this work will contribute towards the next phase of the Medium Term Financial Plan and delivering a balanced budget for 2022/23.



Our programme of practice improvement has been in train since our Ofsted Focused Visit in February 2020, and reviewed in our recent Focused Visit in June 2021. Progress is overseen by our Children at the Heart Improvement Board.

Alongside our Ofsted Improvement Plan, we developed a separate workstream which addresses financial sustainability with key programmes of work addressing the financial aspects of the service, including savings delivery, in-year mitigations and future planning. This programme is monitored through the Sustainability Board.

In order to ensure we achieve outcomes for Nottingham’s children in a sustainable and cost-effective manner, in common with many areas, we are reviewing our service operating model. This will allow us to scope a crucial wider programme of transformation and change. This will involve work across the wider Council and partnership to ensure families get the right help at the right time, preventing escalation to costly statutory services where this is appropriate.



We are committed to doing the very best that we can for our children and their families. To support this work, we are working with our front-line staff to look at how to improve what we

do and how we do it, focussing on achieving better outcomes for children. This will ensure our service is set up, resourced and operating in the best possible way to keep children safe and ensure they can enjoy their lives and fulfil their potential in the city. During November and December our front-line staff are taking part in a series of workshops to identify what we could do better and how, so that we can develop a transformation plan founded on outcomes for children and young people.

We are being supported in this work by Newton Europe who are specialists in operational transformation. We are undertaking a rigorous process, focused on the root cause of issues, bringing specialist expertise and capacity to both support and challenge us as a service. Newton are working with frontline staff to forensically identify, design and implement effective change. This work is in train, but we are confident in the progress made already and that this will help us to identify opportunities to improve which are quantified, precise and achievable.

Newton Europe commenced their assessment in September, focusing on:

- Children in Care:
 - Preventing children from coming into care;
 - Placement type of children in care setting;
 - Placement costs and frameworks;
 - Supporting children leaving care.
- Early Help, Child in Need (CIN) and Child Protection (CP) Plans:
 - Ensuring right intervention and support;
 - Case progression

The Assessment includes the following activities:

- Review of data, live studies and discussion with members of NCC's team;
- Development of a project plan with clear performance targets together with resource requirements, owners, and timescales;
- Identification of opportunities to work with and/or train NCC's staff as part of the implementation process;
- Developing a vision for change that links to the organisational strategy

This process will allow us to identify what our priorities should be, to determine how we transform the way we work with children and their families and to put in place a programme to deliver this change.

New Savings Proposals requiring Public Consultation

Appendix 1

	Department	Service Area	Title of Proposal	Narrative	2022/23 £m	2023/24 £m	2024/25 £m	2025/26 £m
1	People	Early Help	NGY Services	Ending the grant funding of the youth services and NGY base provided by Base 51	(0.200)	(0.180)	(0.180)	(0.180)
2	People	Early Help	Play & Youth Services - Excluding buildings	Reduction of the service to provide targeted youth provision only. All play services would cease and there will be a reduction in staffing.	(0.615)	(0.838)	(0.838)	(0.838)
3	People	Early Help	Play & Youth Services - Buildings only	Reduction of the Play and Youth buildings in line with a reduced service as above	0.000	(0.165)	(0.165)	(0.165)
4	People	Early Help	Children's Centres - Excluding buildings	The Early Help service will operate from only three Children's Centres across the City, with a reduction in staffing and early help offer to families	(0.332)	(0.449)	(0.449)	(0.449)
5	People	Early Help	Children's Centres - Building Only	Children's Centres operate from three centres. 6 Centres would close	0.000	(0.344)	(0.344)	(0.344)
6	People	Early Help	CAMHS City Wide Service	Working with the Clinical Commissioning Group and Public Health to transform Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)	(0.215)	(0.215)	(0.215)	(0.215)
7	People	Children In Care	Agency Decision Maker (ADM) for Adoption and Fostering	Currently delivered by an external consultant this would be delivered in house within the senior management team	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)
8	People	Strategy & Improvement	Management reductions in Strategy and Improvement	Reduction in management capacity within Strategy and Improvement section	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)
9	People	Strategy & Improvement	Business Support	Savings linked to reductions in Play & Youth and Children's Centre provision	(0.200)	(0.200)	(0.200)	(0.200)
10	People	Targeted Family Support	Targeted support to children and families	Review and reconfiguration of Targeted Family Support and Edge of Care Services to consolidate and target the offer.	(0.309)	(0.309)	(0.309)	(0.309)

Report Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee Thursday 31st March 2022

Item Name: Children's Transformation Programme

Corporate Director and Lead Officer: Catherine Underwood Corporate Director for People
Ailsa Barr Director of Children's Integrated Services

Lead Portfolio Holder: Councillor Cheryl Barnard

1. Purpose:

The purpose of the report is to provide an introduction to, and update on progress with the Children's transformation programme.

2. Recommendations

Children and Young People Scrutiny committee to consider progress of and proposals for Children's Transformation programme

3. Proposal or Issue:

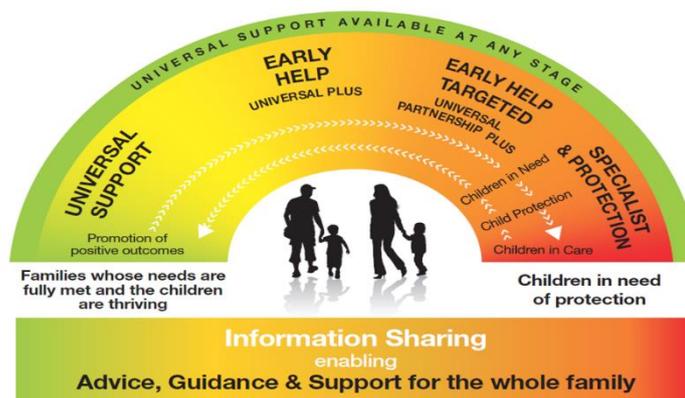
3.1 Context

Providing support to children in need of care and protection, and their families, is one of the key priorities for Nottingham City Council. It reflects significant statutory responsibilities and reflects the Council's commitment to and ambition for the children in our city. The Council's Strategic Plan sets this out in the "Child Friendly City" priority.

As part of the Council's improvement journey, developed in response to the Non-Statutory Review of 2020 and the subsequent requirements, the Council is committed to delivering its statutory responsibilities and priorities within a clear medium term financial plan. This underpins the need for sustainable children's services which deliver outcomes for children and families within an affordable budget.

The transformation programme for Children's Integrated Services is founded on the principles of improving outcomes for children, learning from elsewhere and designing a solution which is right for Nottingham.

In March 2021 a report was presented to Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee detailing the Children's Integrated Service improvement programme following the Ofsted Inspection in 2018 and the Focused Visit in 2020. Following this report there was a subsequent Focused Visit in July 2021 and an updated improvement plan was developed. Transformation recognises and responds to this context of service improvement.



This diagram above is the Nottingham model of universal prevention, early help and specialist services. If needs cannot be met with universal services practitioners will need to consider early help and more targeted or specialist and protective support is required.

3.2 The diagnostic assessment of Children's Services:

A diagnostic assessment of the Children's Social Care service conducted from October to November 2021, which compared NCC service activities to similar councils elsewhere, identified:

- a number Children in Need (CIN) and Child Protection (CP) plans could have been prevented through an earlier intervention
- a number of CIN and CP plans ran on for longer than necessary
- a revised focus on early intervention would avoid children being taken into care
- there is scope to increase the number of children in foster care with a corresponding reduction in residential care
- there is potential to enable more children in care to leave care earlier than is currently enabled.

Moreover, this assessment demonstrated that the implementation of a service redesign programme, centred on improving outcomes for children supported by NCC, would also result in a significant reduction in forecasted expenditure growth currently assumed within the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

The diagnostic process was undertaken through workshops reviewing cases to establish if the right outcomes were achieved and if not what were the barriers. This output formulated the proposals contained within the outline business case (OBC) and that through improved children's outcomes recurrent annualised gross financial benefits of £11.2m - £16.1m from the target and stretch programme respectively, can be achieved after an 8 year period when all workstreams are at maximum delivery benefit.

Following the diagnostic assessment a business case was developed for the proposed Children's transformation programme that would see Nottingham City Council (NCC) improve the outcomes, safety and experience of the children supported by NCC.

Due to the size, scale and pace of the transformation programme needed, NCC would need to procure an external delivery partner to provide the experience, expertise and capacity to deliver on the values set out in this document.

In conjunction with this requirement and after a rigorous diagnostic in October/November 2021 with Children's Services colleagues, further resource investment was identified for Children's specialists to support the delivery partner which has been updated further as the business case has developed.

To align to the current MTFP period, by the end of financial year 2025/26, the gross financial benefits from the target programme will be:

Annually - £9.3m and cumulatively - £20.7m.

This programme will also be a significant enabler on the Authority's journey to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families and therefore links positively with the children's improvement journey.

3.3 Supporting change

Due to the ambition and scale of change required, significant additional external resource will be needed to deliver the financial and non-financial benefits. This resource will provide the capacity and expertise needed and has been assumed as a cost throughout the OBC. This resource has also been assumed when calculating the risk assessment of this programme, any change to that assumption will impact the overall cost, savings and risk value.

External commissioning of resources would be based on the appropriate procurement process, post award contract management and necessary approvals.

4. The transformation programme:

4.1 The scope of the programme

The transformation programme is focused across all of Children's Social Care, from Early Help (EH) including Play and Youth (P&Y), through Child in Need (CIN) and Child Protection (CP) plans and all the way through to Children in Care (CIC). **Fundamentally the programme is designed to improve the outcomes of Nottingham's young people and families.** This will be achieved by working with practitioners across the service to design and implement a new operating model that will:

- **Help families stay together** more safely and with greater resilience using effective targeted interventions. This will significantly reduce the trajectory of growth of children in care of the Authority
- **Ensure the most timely and effective support is consistently provided from early help through CiN and CP.** This will be a significant driver of service quality and risk as well as reducing future establishment growth requirements

- **Reduce bottlenecks and improve processes** and ways of working to help practitioners spend more time helping young people, and gain greater satisfaction from their roles
- **Improve commissioning and recruitment processes** around residential and foster careers
- Support Nottingham on the journey to **establish consistent good practice** and the operating environment required to sustain this
- Work with supporting functions in the Authority including finance, data, HR and others to enable this ambitious change programme
- **Creating a legacy of change approach** and skills transfer to NCC to ensure the maximum sustainability of change is achieved

Improvement in these processes and practices will deliver the cost reductions referred to above.

4.2 Objectives and Outcomes

The objectives of the transformation programme business case are summarised in the table below and are based on full financial benefit by year 8 of the programme after 12-18 months of implementation. For each objective there is a target operational volume with associated financial opportunities. These are net of the resources identified in October/November 2021 and the project is expected to deliver within the range.

<i>Description</i>	<i>Target</i>
Avoidance of children coming into the care of Nottingham through better use of targeted, timely and effective interventions and familial placements as appropriate.	35 additional children supported per year
Safely support the children in friends and family placements to transition to SGO.	20 additional children supported per year
Successfully support more children per year to safely reunify.	4 more children reunifying per year
Reducing the delays experienced by children leaving care to reunification, adoption or SGO	5-week reduction in average duration
Effectively close plans first time to avoid future plans. Bringing repeat CIN / CP plans down with targeted, effective and understandable interventions	141 fewer (CIN) 89 fewer (CP) ...children needing our support each year
Increasing the visibility and control that we have around our plans, reducing durations to those of the most effective teams.	6-week reduction (CiN) 2-week reduction (CP) ...on the length of time children have to spend on a plan
Increasing the net number of foster carers (leavers and joiners)	11 additional foster carers per year
Increasing our block residential provision	10 additional block beds

NET BENEFIT BY YEAR 8	10.610
Add back Implementation costs	0.631
GROSS BENEFIT BY YEAR 8	11.241

4.3 Scope

The proposed project of work contains two elements:

The first is a transformation programme encompassing the previously stated objectives and the second is a further assessment looking into the area of special education needs (SEN) and Assisted School Transport (AST).

a) The transformation programme:

Considering the above objectives and opportunities identified through the Oct-Nov 2021 assessment, although subject to change, an indicative series of workstreams has been developed:

- **Pathways to permanence (SGO/reunification)** – Increasing the number of children supported to permanence through the SGO or reunification channels.
- **Edge of Care** – Supporting less children to require NCC care through increasing the number of children who can be supported with effective and targeted interventions.
- **Plan quality / duration** – Looking at the effectiveness of intervention and the management of our plans. This will also involve development and deployment of establishment modelling
- **Fostering** – Increasing the net number of foster carers with NCC Commissioning – Ensuring the correct capacity at improved unit costs exists, with full consideration of the operational changes to be delivered
 - **Supporting workstreams** – A number of enabling workstream will be required to support the programme and these will include working across functions such as management, BI, finance alongside looking at how the service distributes its skilled staff.

b) The SEN assessment:

A Diagnostic of the SEN service is proposed which will be akin to the Diagnostic of Children's Social Care undertaken already. This will identify opportunities to improve outcomes and ways of working and reduce cost.

There are **no benefits realisation captured for this at present**. This will be developed as the programme progresses.

5. Formal Consideration of Implications

5.1 The following implications of the children's transformation programme:

- Financial Implications
- Legal Comments
- Procurement Comments

- Risk Management
 - HR Considerations
- Are addressed within the following reports:

- Executive Board on 22 February 2022:
 - [MTFP 2022/23 to 2025/26 and](#)
 - [Childrens Social Care Service Redesign](#)
- City Council on 7 March 2022
 - [Budget 2022/23](#)

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 Transformation specification for procurement is completed and timescales for planning and implementation have been finalised.

It is anticipated that the Transformation Delivery Partner start delivery onsite in May 2022, subject to successful procurement exercise.

The table below outlines key dates and milestones for the next steps.

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Date</i>
<i>Invitation to Submit Initial Bid issue date</i>	<i>14/03/2022</i>
<i>Deadline for tenderer clarification requests</i>	<i>24/03/2022</i>
<i>ITSIB tender return date</i>	<i>28/03/2022</i>
<i>Negotiation round</i>	<i>04/04/2022</i>
<i>Invitation to Submit Final Bid (ITSFB) issue date</i>	<i>11/04/2022</i>
<i>ITSFB tender return date</i>	<i>19/04/2022*</i>
<i>Contractor outcome notification by</i>	<i>25/04/2022</i>
<i>Contract start date</i>	<i>May 2022</i>



Meeting Title	Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee
Report Title	Children's Integrated Services: Implementation of agreed Budget Savings
Meeting Date	9 th June 2022

Corporate Director(s)/Director(s):	Catherine Underwood, Corporate Director for People Ailsa Barr, Director for Children's Integrated Services
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Cheryl Barnard
Report author and contact details:	Chad Thompson, Children's Transformation Lead / Head of Children's Strategy and Improvement Christine Green, Strategic Finance Business Partner Michelle Roe, Executive Officer

Summary of issues:

Providing services for Children and Families is a key statutory responsibility for the local authority and a priority for Nottingham City Council.

The Council has set its medium term financial plan and this was signed off at Full Council on 7th March 2022. Included within this are savings commitments within Children's Services. Appendix A sets out the final savings committed.

A major programme of transformation in Children's Services was agreed at Executive Board in February 2022 (attached as Appendix B). This is part of the Medium Term Financial Plan which includes £2.4m for CIS and £6.5m funding to support delivery. This report provides an update on developments to date.

This report provides information on the implementation of the agreed budget savings and summary of progress on each Play and Youth and Children's Centre's budget savings heading.

Recommendation(s):

1. Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee consider the summary of progress on the budget savings relating to Children's Integrated Services.
2. Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee considers the development of transformation of Children's Centres and Play & Youth Services.

1. Background

Providing services for Children and Families is a key statutory responsibility for the local authority. The Strategic Council Plan sets this out as a priority reflected in outcome 5: Child Friendly City. The plan sets out the vision that:

“Every child in Nottingham will get the best start in life, regardless of their circumstances. We will support local children to thrive academically, emotionally and physically, ensuring equality of opportunity for all.”

The plan notes that the Council will “continue to provide the vital statutory services that support and protect vulnerable children, including safeguarding, children in care, those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and other vulnerable groups” and that the Council will “Work hard to improve our children’s services, to ensure we provide the quality of service local children and families deserve.”

On 25th November 2021 a paper was presented to Children’s and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee which set out Children’s Integrated Services current financial position and budget savings proposals which at the time were part of a public consultation (attached as Appendix C. This report will provide a summary of progress under each budget saving heading.

On 31st March 2022 a paper was presented to Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee (attached as Appendix D) providing an introduction to the Children’s Transformation programme. This report provides an update against this programme.

2. Medium Term Financial Plan (Children’s Integrated Services)

The Council has set its medium term financial plan and this was signed off at Full Council on 7th March 2022. Included within this are savings commitments within Children’s Services. Appendix A sets out the final savings committed.

Consultation on these proposals ran from 16th November 2021 to 10th January 2022.

3. Current position of Children’s Integrated Services Budget Savings

- **Play and Youth**

The public consultation closed 10 January 2022. They were well attended by children, young people and their families. Following feedback from the initial consultation additional funding was agreed for 3 workers.

Play and youth workers have been accepted for VR and most will leave at the beginning of July.

Internal recruitment has started and waiting to conclude following sickness absence. This has been done with partners organisations to support with the shaping of the future.

External vacancies are out with the view to interview in the first week of June.

There are delivery plans in place for the transformation of Youth Service which includes work associated with the restructure, new service design and exiting from buildings.

The new design will focus on induction of colleagues, delivery of direct targeted work at Bulwell Riverside, linking this to the future development of Family Hubs , i.e sexual health sessions & mental health support. Re-instating & supporting partnership delivery and designing support packages for voluntary groups to ensure Children and Young people access safe quality sessions and they are able to have a voice.

The youth service is providing a reduced service over the coming weeks. They are ensuring that they are working with the most vulnerable, through group work session, 1:1 support from existing play and youth sites. They have supported families with signposting to other voluntary services delivering play sessions and sports activities in the local area, as play services have ceased following the Easter holidays. Joint exit plans have been done with families and social care colleagues for those Children and young people who attend sessions and are on plan.

The five Play and Youth Centres proposed for closure are presently being offered to lease to Voluntary organisations via a robust Expression of Interest process which is weighted around the financial sustainability of those organisations interested. Additionally, information about services to be offered, how services link to our corporate plans along with any risk and support required is being sought as part of the process.

Additional consideration was to include the budget for Hyson Green Youth Club. The service is paying lease arrangements until 2nd June. This was the only lease arrangement in place for voluntary ran building that the service used.

The savings from the reduction in staffing Youth Services will mean that budget saving are met and the savings for the buildings are on track to be met for next financially year.

- **Children's Centres**

Further to the consultation in November, the Council undertook a further consultation process to determine which Children's Centres would remain open and which would close.

Following feedback from the initial consultation, additional funding was agreed to increase the number of increase the number of Children's Centres retained (now 4 Children's Centres will be retained) and increase the Early Help Business Support retained to ensure reception cover at the additional centre.

Phase 2 of the Children's Centre consultation took place between 24 February 2022 and 22 April 2022. This included:

- Public consultation, via face-face consultation events and the online consultation.
- Colleague consultation, including Voluntary Redundancy applications
- Partner consultation regarding future use of Children's Centre buildings proposed for closure.

There are delivery plans in place for the transformation of Children's Centres which includes work associated with the restructure, new service design and exiting from buildings. The outcome of the consultation was that a fourth Children Centre (Hyson Green) will also remain open. There were no further alternative viable proposals submitted to change the original proposal.

The five Children's Centres proposed for closure are presently being offered to lease to organisations via a robust Expression of Interest process which is weighted around the financial sustainability of those organisations interested. Additionally, information about services to be offered, how services link to our corporate plans along with any risk and support required is being sought as part of the process.

Budget savings within the Early Help staffing is anticipated to be achieved through Voluntary Redundancy. The Early Help service manager is working with HR to review applications, with application figures achieving required savings in 3 out of the 4 pools. We will potentially have to commence an assessment process in one pool of colleagues to achieve the savings required.

The redesign of the service brings opportunities to integrate revenue funding yet to be agreed from Family Hubs to create a 0 to 19 service (25 for disabled children/young people).

Children's Centres have now agreed an interim service offer for Children up to the summer whilst recruitment/induction for Level 3 Family Support Workers takes place and those exiting the service taking Voluntary Redundancy vacant their positions.

- **NGY Grant Funding**

Budget saving of £200k was met by ending the grant funding of the youth services and NGY base provided to Base 51.

Ongoing discussions are being held between NGY and NCC on how to access other funding sources. Violence Reduction Unit are currently supporting NGY and are delivering youth provisions at the Centre.

- **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services**

£215k Savings are on track to be achieved.

There has been no impact on the service with NCC funding being removed. NCC has worked with the CCG and Public health to transform CAMHS and additional funding for CAMHS to mitigate the removal of NCC funding has been agreed with Public Health in line with the Section 75 agreement.

- **Business Support**

Early Help Business Support budget reductions have been achieved through removing vacancies and Voluntary Redundancy applications. A revised Business Support structure has been agreed across Early Help and Youth services.

- **Targeted Support to Children and Families**

Savings are on track to be achieved.

- **Strategy and Improvement**

Restructure of the service has been carried out and now completed. A management post was deleted following a staff member leaving the Authority meaning that a reduction in management capacity has been achieved.

- **Agency Decision Maker (ADM) for Adoption and Fostering**

The ADM work has been brought back into the service as opposed to paying for the work to be completed by an external person. The adoption ADM is now the Director of Children’s Integrated Services and the fostering ADM is the Head of Service for Children in Care. The new arrangements commenced on 1st April 2022 meaning that the saving has been achieved.

4. Children’s Transformation Programme

A major programme of transformation in Children’s Services was agreed at Executive Board in February 2022 (attached as Appendix B). This is part of the Medium-Term Financial Plan which includes £2.4m for CIS and £6.5m funding to support delivery.

The Children’s Transformation specification for procurement is completed and timescales for planning and implementation have been finalised. It is anticipated that the Transformation Delivery Partner start delivery onsite in July 2022 this is slightly later than anticipated as we have spent time working with a case study council (Leicestershire) to ensure we have all the governance, resourcing and funding requirements in place before finalising requirements for the supplier and subsequent contract., The table below outlines key dates and milestones for the next steps.

Stage	Date
Invitation to Submit Initial Bid issue date	14/03/2022
Deadline for tenderer clarification requests	24/03/2022
ITSIB tender return date	28/03/2022
Negotiation round <i>Please ensure your availability during this period</i>	04/04/2022
Invitation to Submit Final Bid (ITSFB) issue date	11/04/2022
ITSFB tender return date	25/05/2022
Contractor outcome notification by	01/06/2022
Contract start date	July 2022

Report Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee Thursday 1st December 2022

Item Name: Children's Transformation Programme

Corporate Director and Lead Officer: Catherine Underwood Corporate Director for People and Ailsa Barr Director of Children's Integrated Services

Report author: Chad Thompson, Children's Services Transformation Delivery Lead

Lead Portfolio Holder: Councillor Cheryl Barnard

1. Purpose:

The purpose of the report is to provide an introduction to, and update on progress with the Children's transformation programme.

2. Recommendations

Children and Young People Scrutiny committee to consider progress of Children's Transformation programme

3. Context of Programme:

3.1 Context of Pre-Programme Period

Providing support to children in need of care and protection, and their families, is one of the key priorities for Nottingham City Council. It reflects significant statutory responsibilities and reflects the Council's commitment to and ambition for the children in our city. The Council's Strategic Plan sets this out in the "Child Friendly City" priority.

As part of the Council's improvement journey, developed in response to the Non-Statutory Review of 2020 and the subsequent requirements, the Council is committed to delivering its statutory responsibilities and priorities within a clear medium term financial plan. This has been further reinforced by an Ofsted inspection of Nottingham City Council's Children's Services in July 2022 which judged the council's Children's Services to be 'Inadequate'. These have both underpinned the need for sustainable children's services which deliver outcomes for children and families within an affordable budget.

The transformation programme for Children's Integrated Services is founded on the principles of improving outcomes for children, learning from elsewhere and designing a solution which is right for Nottingham.

3.2 The diagnostic assessment of Children's Services:

A diagnostic assessment of the Children's Social Care service was conducted from October to November 2021. This process was informed by detailed

workshops with practitioners where the journeys of individual children were anonymised and reviewed to consider where the opportunities lay for improving outcomes. Alongside that, there was significant analysis of activity data and benchmarking with appropriate comparator authorities. Key headlines for identifying improvement opportunity were:

- a number Children in Need (CIN) and Child Protection (CP) plans could have been prevented through an earlier intervention
- a number of CIN and CP plans ran on for longer than necessary
- a revised focus on early intervention would avoid children being taken into care
- there is scope to increase the number of children in foster care with a corresponding reduction in residential care
- there is potential to enable more children in care to leave care earlier than is currently enabled.

Moreover, this assessment demonstrated that the implementation of a service redesign programme, centred on improving outcomes for children supported by NCC, would also result in a significant reduction in forecasted expenditure growth currently assumed within the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

The diagnostic workshops reviewed cases to establish if the right outcomes were achieved and if not what were the barriers. This output formulated the proposals contained within the outline business case (OBC) and that through improved children's outcomes recurrent annualised gross financial benefits of £11.2m - £16.1m from the target and stretch programme respectively, can be achieved after an 8 year period when all work streams are at maximum delivery benefit.

Following the diagnostic assessment, a business case was developed for the proposed Children's transformation programme that would see Nottingham City Council (NCC) improve the outcomes, safety and experience of the children supported by council.

3.3 Supporting the Change:

Due to the size, scale and pace of the transformation programme needed, NCC identified it would need to procure an external delivery partner to provide the experience, expertise, and capacity to deliver on the values set out in this document. Transformation investment was agreed in the MTFP.

A competitive tender process took place between March-April 2022, which resulted in the Newton Europe being appointed as Transformation Delivery Partner.

It was initially anticipated that the Transformation Delivery Partner would start delivery onsite in May 2022. However, contracting delays and the full Ofsted inspection of Children's Services in July led to delay. Work began during August 2022 and a re-profiled programme of delivery has been agreed.

4. The transformation programme:

4.1 The scope of the programme

The transformation programme is focused across all of Children's Social Care, from Early Help (EH) including Youth (Y), through Child in Need (CIN) and Child Protection (CP) plans and all the way through to Children in Care (CIC). **Fundamentally the programme is designed to improve the outcomes of Nottingham's young people and families.** This will be achieved by working with practitioners across the service to design and implement a new operating model that will:

- **Help families stay together** more safely and with greater resilience using effective targeted interventions. This will significantly reduce the trajectory of growth of children in care of the Authority
- **Ensure the most timely and effective support is consistently provided from early help through CiN and CP.** This will be a significant driver of service quality and risk as well as reducing future establishment growth requirements
- **Reduce bottlenecks and improve processes** and ways of working to help practitioners spend more time helping young people, and gain greater satisfaction from their roles
- **Improve commissioning and recruitment processes** around residential and foster careers
- Support Nottingham on the journey to **establish consistent good practice** and the operating environment required to sustain this
- Work with supporting functions in the Authority including finance, data, HR and others to enable this ambitious change programme
- **Creating a legacy of change approach** and skills transfer to NCC to ensure the maximum sustainability of change is achieved

4.2 Objectives and Outcomes

The objectives of the transformation programme business case are summarised in the table below and are based on full financial benefit by year 8 of the programme after 12-18 months of implementation. For each objective there is a target operational volume with associated financial opportunities in brackets). These are net of the resources identified in October/November 2021 and the project is expected to deliver within the range.

Description	Target (Financial Equivalent)
Avoidance of children coming into the care of Nottingham through better use of targeted, timely and effective interventions and familial placements as appropriate.	35 additional children supported per year (£4.770m)
Safely support the children in friends and family placements to transition to SGO.	20 additional children supported per year (£0.580m)
Successfully support more children per year to safely reunify.	4 more children reunifying per year (£0.540m)
Reducing the delays experienced by children leaving care to reunification, adoption or SGO	5-week reduction in average duration (£0.730m)
Effectively close plans first time to avoid future plans. Bringing repeat CIN / CP plans down with targeted, effective and understandable interventions	141 fewer (CIN) 89 fewer (CP) ...children needing our support each year (£0.900m)
Increasing the visibility and control that we have around our plans, reducing durations to those of the most effective teams.	6-week reduction (CiN) 2-week reduction (CP) ...on the length of time children have to spend on a plan (£0.940m)
Increasing the net number of foster carers (leavers and joiners)	11 additional foster carers per year (£1.800m)
Increasing our block residential provision	10 additional block beds (£0.350m)
NET BENEFIT BY YEAR 8	10.610
Add back Implementation costs	0.631
GROSS BENEFIT BY YEAR 8	11.241

4.3 Programme Plan and Approach

The children's transformation programme will comprise of two phases; the 'Design, Prototype, and Trial' phase, and the 'Implementation and Sustain' phase.

'Design, Prototype, and Trial' phase (November 2022 – Spring 2023): to develop frontline-led, new ways of working that are tested and measured to demonstrably deliver the best outcomes for children and families in Nottingham

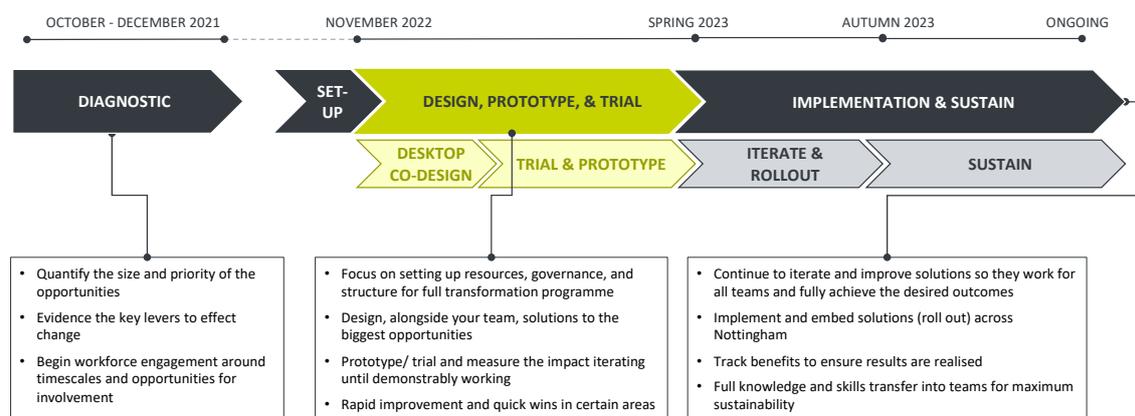
and as a consequence, achieve a lower overall cost and/or reduced demand growth to the Council. This will specifically involve work in one geographic area of the city with selected teams to develop, measure, test and iterate new ways of working until we are confident that they will deliver the total target benefit.

The outcome of the design phase set the vision for the future transformation of the services and confirmed the opportunities identified in the diagnostic assessment. It also refined the solution to deliver those opportunities, prepared the organisation for change, and set up an implementation plan for rollout to all districts across the city.

‘Implementation and Sustain’ phase (Spring 2023 – Winter 2023/2024): takes the newly designed tools, practices and processes and iterates them with the remaining locality teams to ensure they work seamlessly together, continuing to improve them to deliver the target operational and financial benefits. By the end of the implementation phase, the new ways of working will be in place, sustainable new levels of performance will have been achieved and teams in the service will have the ability to build and improve on them over the long-term.

Programme Expected Timescales

What does this next 12-18 months look like?



4.3 Within Children’s Services designated colleagues will act as Design Leads who will work alongside Newton Europe on co-production. These individuals will share practice experience, relationships, local knowledge, and great ideas to ensure the successful design and delivery of the transformation programme. Their key responsibilities will include:

- Develop in depth understanding of practice, process and culture relating to their workstream.

- Leadership of the workstream, influencing the prototype teams to change the way they work.
- Develop a workstream plan to design, test and iterate a new way of working.
- Report progress against the plan, escalating risks and opportunities.
- Develop and implement a method of measuring impact of the trials.
- Engage with and support teams as they test and iterate new ways of working.
- Coordinate with other Design Leads to ensure the new ways of working are complementary.

4.4 Revised Programme Benefits Timeline

With the delay to the start of the programme delivery from May 2022 to November 2022 described in 3.3, this has resulted in the overall benefits timeline being delayed by the same period. Therefore the cumulative benefit delivered over the MTFP will be £10.61.

5. Formal Consideration of Implications

5.1 The following implications of the children's transformation programme:

- Financial Implications
- Legal Comments
- Procurement Comments
- Risk Management
- HR Considerations

Are addressed within the following reports:

- Executive Board on 22 February 2022:
 - [MTFP 2022/23 to 2025/26 and](#)
 - [Childrens Social Care Service Redesign](#)
- City Council on 7 March 2022
 - [Budget 2022/23](#)

6. Next Steps

6.1 The children's transformation programme will move into the 'Design, Prototype, and Trial' phase as outlined in 4.3.

Future reporting back to the committee will describe progress against both operational plans and expected financial benefits plans.



Meeting Title	Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee
Report Title	Education Division Budget Update
Meeting Date	26 th January 2023

Corporate Director(s)/Director(s):	Catherine Underwood, Corporate Director for People Nick Lee, Director of Education
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Cheryl Barnard
Report author and contact details:	Nick Lee nicholas.lee@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Summary of issues:

This report provides Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee with an update on the following areas:

- Progress in implementation of agreed savings for 2022/23;
- Budget proposals for 2023/24.

Recommendation(s):

1. Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee notes the summary of progress on the budget saving relating to Education Division.
2. Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee notes the 2023/24 budget proposals

1. Progress in implementation of agreed savings for 2022/23

All agreed savings identified prior to 2022/23 have been achieved by the Education Division. The new saving agreed in 2022/23 relates to the disposal of the vacant Thorneywood Hospital School building and site. The agreed saving is £60,000 per annum which represents the revenue budget allocated for the maintenance and security of the building. It is anticipated that disposal will also generate a capital receipt for the Council.

This building became vacant upon the move of the hospital school to the new Nottinghamshire Healthcare Child and Adolescent Mental Health in-patient facility from Thorneywood to Woodthorpe. The site was scoped for potential re-use for

either alternative provision or the Nottingham Education Sanctuary Team but ultimately it was determined that the location and nature of the site led to a decision to declare the site surplus to requirements.

As it had functioned as a school site, any proposal to dispose does require an application to the Secretary of State for Education for approval. The application was submitted in conjunction with property colleagues, but has been subject to a formal consultation by the Department for Education with any interested education providers. An enquiry has been received from an independent provider of specialist education, and there is further consideration now required by the Department for Education and the playing field advisory panel.

Due to the delay in securing the formal approval to dispose of the site, the revenue budget has been required to support costs relating to security affecting delivery of the full saving. This amounts to £7,800 in 2022/23. This shortfall in the agreed saving of £60,000 has been offset by increased income generation elsewhere in the wider service area. We continue to press the Department for Education for a decision to approve the disposal.

2. Budget proposals for 2023/24

The saving detailed above will continue to deliver savings as part of the medium-term financial plan signed of at full council on 7th March 2022.

Executive Board approved consultation on new proposals for the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan in December 2022.

The report and appendix detailing these proposals is at:

https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/documents/s141273/MTFP_report.pdf

https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/documents/s141274/MTFP_appendix.pdf

Three new proposals relating to the Education Division have been agreed for inclusion in the consultation on the Council's 2023/24 budget:

- **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Team**

Passenger Transport - Independent Travel training for young people with Special Educational Needs who are able to do so will be accelerated and consideration of make or buy in terms of transport where provided transport remains a requirement and enhanced route planning.

Saving of £0.065m in 2023/24 and £0.100m in 2024/25.

- **Education Welfare**

Funding of Education Welfare Service - Work with Schools Forum to transfer £0.458m from Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools Block to fully fund statutory duties relation to the Education Welfare Service, School Attendance and Employment Licensing. This will have no change on delivery of the service. Schools Forum approved the proposed transfer on 6th December 2022.

Saving of £0.458m in 2023/24.

- **Outdoor Learning**

Remove subsidy from Curriculum Service Projects - This proposal relates to Adventure Team, School Swimming and Why Nott Transport. These commercial projects have previously not earned enough income to be financially self-sustaining. Each service has been reviewed and with a more commercial focus and public health funding, the subsidy can be removed. One vacant post (1.0 FTE) will also be removed, currently subject to formal consultation with the Trade Unions.

Saving of £0.138m in 2023/24.

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**Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
26 January 2023**

Work Programme

Report of the Head of Legal and Governance

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To consider the Committee's work programme for 2022/23 based on areas of work identified by the Committee at previous committee meetings, the informal meeting of the Committee to scope its work programme for the year ahead and any further suggestions raised at this meeting.

2. Action required

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the work that is currently planned for the municipal year 2022/23 and make amendments to this programme as appropriate.

3. Background information

- 3.1 The purpose of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is to carry out the statutory overview and scrutiny function in relation to matters affecting children and young people.
- 3.2 The Committee is responsible for setting and managing its own work programme to fulfil this role.
- 3.3 In setting a programme for scrutiny activity, the Committee should aim for an outcome-focused work programme that has clear priorities and a clear link to its roles and responsibilities. The work programme needs to be flexible so that issues which arise as the year progresses can be considered appropriately.
- 3.4 Where there are a number of potential items that could be scrutinised in a given year, consideration of what represents the highest priority or area of risk will assist with work programme planning. Changes and/or additions to the work programme will need to take account of the resources available to the Committee.
- 3.5 The current work programme for the municipal year 2022/23 is attached.

4. List of attached information

- 4.1 Appendix 1 – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee 2022/23 Work Programme

5. Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information

- 5.1 None

6. Published documents referred to in compiling this report

- 6.1 None

7. Wards affected

7.1 All

8. Contact information

8.1 Jane Garrard, Senior Governance Officer
Tel: 0115 8764315
Email: jane.garrard@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee 2022/23 Work Programme

Date	Items
9 June 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of agreed budget savings for 2022/23 To review progress in implementation of budget savings relating to Children's Integrated Services and the development of transformation of children's centres and play and youth services. • Family Hubs To look at the possible future of family hubs and associated service design. • Work Programme 2022/23
28 July 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holiday Activity Programme • Work Programme 2022/23
3 November 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's Integrated Services Improvement – Ofsted Inspection To consider the findings of the Ofsted Inspection of Children's Integrated Services and the action being taken/ proposed to address any arising issues • Work Programme 2022/23
1 December 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's Integrated Services Transformation To review progress with the transformation programme • Work Programme 2022/23
26 January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's Integrated Services Improvement Plan To review the Improvement Plan, as refreshed following the Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services. • Medium Term Financial Plan – Children's Integrated Services and Education/ Schools

Date	Items
	<p>To consider the in-year position; review progress in implementation of agreed savings for 2022/23; and consider budget proposals for 2023/24</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Programme 2022/23
30 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s Integrated Services Improvement Plan Verbal update from the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Schools on progress • Education Investment Area To review the progress in activity taking place with multi-agency trusts to improve educational standards under the Education Investment Area programme • Child Exploitation • Work Programme 2023/24

Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2021/22 – to be circulated to Committee members with a briefing on key points to note

Other issues suggested:

- Implications of the Independent Review of Children’s Social Care
- Development of Early Help Strategy

Items to be scheduled for 2022/23

- **Changes to Children’s Centres and Play and Youth Services** - To review how services are working and the impact of changes.
- **SEND** - To review progress in responding to the issues raised in the review of SEND, with a focus on communications and engagement with parents and families
- **Youth Justice** - To review improvements that have been made in relation to the Youth Justice Service, with a focus on responding to the findings and recommendations of HMIP Inspection of Youth Justice Services and the peer review carried out in November 2022