

Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Monday 9 March 2015 at 1.00 pm

**To be held at the Town Hall, Pinstone
Street, Sheffield, S1 2HH**

The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend

Membership

Councillors Gill Furniss (Chair), Nasima Akther, John Booker, Mike Drabble, Talib Hussain, Karen McGowan, Pat Midgley, Colin Ross, Ian Saunders, Diana Stimely, Stuart Wattam and Cliff Woodcraft (Deputy Chair)

Education Non-Council Members

Jules Jones, Gillian Foster, Joan Stratford and Alison Warner

Substitute Members

In accordance with the Constitution, Substitute Members may be provided for the above Committee Members as and when required.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING

The Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny Committee exercises an overview and scrutiny function in respect of the planning, policy development and monitoring of service performance and other general issues relating to learning and attainment and the care of children and young people within the Children's Services area of Council activity. It also scrutinises as appropriate the various local Health Services functions, with particular reference to those relating to the care of children.

A copy of the agenda and reports is available on the Council's website at www.sheffield.gov.uk. You can also see the reports to be discussed at the meeting if you call at the First Point Reception, Town Hall, Pinstone Street entrance. The Reception is open between 9.00 am and 5.00 pm, Monday to Thursday and between 9.00 am and 4.45 pm. You may not be allowed to see some reports because they contain confidential information. These items are usually marked * on the agenda.

Members of the public have the right to ask questions or submit petitions to Scrutiny Committee meetings and recording is allowed under the direction of the Chair. Please see the website or contact Democratic Services for further information regarding public questions and petitions and details of the Council's protocol on audio/visual recording and photography at council meetings.

Scrutiny Committee meetings are normally open to the public but sometimes the Committee may have to discuss an item in private. If this happens, you will be asked to leave. Any private items are normally left until last. If you would like to attend the meeting please report to the First Point Reception desk where you will be directed to the meeting room.

If you require any further information about this Scrutiny Committee, please contact Diane Owens, Policy and Improvement Officer on 0114 27 35065 or [email diane.owens@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:diane.owens@sheffield.gov.uk)

FACILITIES

There are public toilets available, with wheelchair access, on the ground floor of the Town Hall. Induction loop facilities are available in meeting rooms.

Access for people with mobility difficulties can be obtained through the ramp on the side to the main Town Hall entrance.

**CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILY SUPPORT SCRUTINY AND POLICY
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA
9 MARCH 2015**

Order of Business

- 1. Welcome and Housekeeping Arrangements**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Exclusion of Public and Press**
To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public
- 4. Declarations of Interest** (Pages 1 - 4)
Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting
- 5. Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 5 - 14)
To approve the minutes of the meetings of Committee held on 26th January, 2015, and to note the attached Actions Update
- 6. Public Questions and Petitions**
To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public
- 7. Adoption and Fostering Annual Report** (Pages 15 - 28)
Report of the Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families
- 8. Looked After Children Annual Report** (Pages 29 - 44)
Report of the Executive Director, Children, Young people and Families
- 9. Date of Next Meeting**
The next meeting of the Committee will be held on a date to be arranged

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ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

If you are present at a meeting of the Council, of its executive or any committee of the executive, or of any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of the authority, and you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI)** relating to any business that will be considered at the meeting, you must not:

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, or if you become aware of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the meeting, participate further in any discussion of the business, or
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

You **must**:

- leave the room (in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct)
- make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any DPI at any meeting at which you are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.
- declare it to the meeting and notify the Council's Monitoring Officer within 28 days, if the DPI is not already registered.

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your **disclosable pecuniary interests** under the new national rules. You have a pecuniary interest if you, or your spouse or civil partner, have a pecuniary interest.

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner undertakes.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period* in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

*The relevant period is the 12 months ending on the day when you tell the Monitoring Officer about your disclosable pecuniary interests.

- Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority –
 - under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
 - which has not been fully discharged.

- Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.
- Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) –
 - the landlord is your council or authority; and
 - the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -
 - (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and
 - (b) either -
 - the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
 - if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

If you attend a meeting at which any item of business is to be considered and you are aware that you have a **personal interest** in the matter which does not amount to a DPI, you must make verbal declaration of the existence and nature of that interest at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent. You should leave the room if your continued presence is incompatible with the 7 Principles of Public Life (selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; and leadership).

You have a personal interest where –

- a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing (including interests in land and easements over land) of you or a member of your family or a person or an organisation with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the Authority's administrative area, or
- it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests that are defined as DPIs but are in respect of a member of your family (other than a partner) or a person with whom you have a close association.

Guidance on declarations of interest, incorporating regulations published by the Government in relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, has been circulated to you previously.

You should identify any potential interest you may have relating to business to be considered at the meeting. This will help you and anyone that you ask for advice to fully consider all the circumstances before deciding what action you should take.

In certain circumstances the Council may grant a **dispensation** to permit a Member to take part in the business of the Authority even if the member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest relating to that business.

To obtain a dispensation, you must write to the Monitoring Officer at least 48 hours before the meeting in question, explaining why a dispensation is sought and desirable, and specifying the period of time for which it is sought. The Monitoring Officer may consult with the Independent Person or the Council's Standards Committee in relation to a request for dispensation.

Further advice can be obtained from Gillian Duckworth, Interim Director of Legal and Governance on 0114 2734018 or email gillian.duckworth@sheffield.gov.uk.

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**Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development
Committee**

Meeting held 26 January 2015

PRESENT: Councillors Gill Furniss (Chair), Nasima Akther, John Booker, Mike Drabble, Talib Hussain, Karen McGowan, Pat Midgley, Colin Ross, Diana Stimely, Stuart Wattam and Cliff Woodcraft (Deputy Chair)

Non-Council Members in attendance:-

Jules Jones, Education Non-Council Voting Member
Joan Stratford, Education Non-Council Voting Member

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ian Saunders, and Alison Warner.

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

4.1 17th November 2014

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17th November 2014, were approved as a correct record and, arising therefrom, following a query by Jules Jones, the Chair stated that arrangements were to be made for the establishment of a small sub-group, comprising Members of the Committee, to look in more detail at any gaps in performance in connection with the attainment and progress of vulnerable learners in 2014, during February 2015, with the aim of reporting back on the work undertaken to the Committee's meeting in March 2015.

4.2 15th December 2014

The minutes of the special meeting of the Committee held on 15th December 2014, were approved as a correct record, with the exception of item 1 – Apologies for Absence, which was amended by the addition of Councillor Nasima Akther and Joan Stratford to the list.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 There were no questions raised or petitions submitted by members of the public.

6. CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ACT 2014

6.1 The Director, Children, Young People and Families, submitted a report on the implications of the Children and Families Act 2014 for Sheffield, and how the Council and its partners were responding to new legislation and any challenges posed by the Act.

6.2 Dorne Collinson, Director of Children and Families, stated that there were nine parts to the Act and presentations were made by officers in respect of the four main parts of the Act, as follows:-

6.3 Part 1 – Adoption and Contact

6.3.1 Jon Banwell, Assistant Director – Provider Services, reported on this element of the Act, referring specifically to issues related to Access to Information, Fostering to Adoption, Due Consideration, Outsourcing Functions, Adoption Support and Staying Put Post-18 Placement Support.

6.3.2 Members of the Committee raised questions and the following responses were provided:-

- If the Local Authority deemed it was not achieving its objectives regarding adoption, it had the ability to outsource its functions relating to the recruitment, assessment and approval of prospective adopters and adoption functions to an outside agency. This particular arrangement had been identified as the most contentious element of the changes set out in the new Act, and the Authority would only outsource its functions in extreme circumstances. Although the functions were outsourced, the Authority would still hold responsibility in terms of performance and costs. It was hoped that the Authority would not have to revert to outsourcing its functions, but the ability to take this course of action was available if needed.
- Whilst the Authority had to be mindful of keeping to required timescales as part of the adoption process, the first priority would always be to ensure that the process was followed correctly, and that the needs and requirements of all parties involved, as part of the process, were met.
- The Authority would continue to provide both pre and post-adoption training and its support for both the child and foster parents element of the process formed part of the work currently being undertaken with the Child and Mental Health Service (CAMHS). This ensured that any adopters were made fully aware of all the issues surrounding the child and, where necessary, efforts were made to provide additional training.
- As a way of encouraging more people to become adopters, work was currently being undertaken to review the Adoption Service's Marketing Plan,

which would include improvements to advertising material and its website. It was the aim to provide a high level of information, as early as possible, with the aim of ensuring that prospective adopters were provided with all the information they needed. The Authority received applications from all groups of people, including same sex couples, and it was hoped that any improvements made after the review of the Marketing Plan would help to maintain, or increase, the number of prospective adopters. It was hoped that Councillors would be able to generate interest from prospective adopters within their Wards, and would be welcome to comment on the various different forms of advertising literature, in terms of how it was tailored to different groups of people within the communities they represented.

- Every effort was made to contact members of a child's family, in order to see if they could look after the child, prior to registering them for adoption.
- All adopted children would be supported if they requested contact with their birth parents, with all relevant records being maintained. It was accepted that such requests would generally be made by older children and, not all such children would necessarily want to contact their birth parents straightaway. Adopted children would always be supported and encouraged to contact their birth parents, even if it was just by letter or other methods of communication. Staff in the Adoption Service would liaise with Sheffield Archives if they required any contact information.

6.4 Part 2 – Family Justice

6.4.1 Debbie Mercer, Assistant Director – Fieldwork Services, reported on Part 2 of the Act, which contained provisions relating to recommendations from the Independent Family Justice Review. She referred to the current challenges, new duties required under the Act and issues relating to workforce development.

6.4.2 Members of the Committee raised questions and the following responses were provided:-

- The requirement to introduce a maximum 26-week time limit for completing care and supervision proceedings was viewed as a major challenge, particularly as the present limit was 31 weeks. The Authority would use the Public Law Outline to ensure that all aspects of the procedure had been covered prior to the Court proceedings. This would include detailed work with the parents, as well as all wider family members being assessed. It had been identified that there was room for improvement in terms of assessing wider family members before the case going to Court. Consideration also had to be given to the complexity of casework in some cases, such as the requirement to undertake mental health assessments. It was important that as much preparatory work as possible was undertaken, prior to the case going to Court.
- In terms of workforce development, the Judge needed to be confident in the social worker's actions, and the social worker's work reports must contain an analysis based on research and evidence-based practice.

- There were obvious risks in terms of reducing the maximum time limit for completing care and supervision proceedings. In order to minimise such risks, there was a need to speak more openly, and be much more interactive with families in connection with what was involved in the process. As part of this work, there were a number of different projects taking place at the present time, including the introduction of a Strength-Based Case Conference, which involved the planning of smart actions and recognising a family's strengths, alongside the improvements they needed to make. There was a need to be very clear with families in terms of action plans and timescales, and it was important that there was timeliness and responsiveness, as well as transparency, all throughout the process.
- In terms of social workers' caseloads, every attempt was made to allocate cases based on their expertise and knowledge. The maximum number of cases to be dealt with by each social worker was now capped to 18, and steps were also being taken to look at how support could be provided by their Line Managers, so that they were in a position to better support their staff. As part of the work on workforce development, management were looking at ways of improving working practices in an attempt to make social workers' caseloads more manageable and minimise the possibility of any delays being caused by them in terms of re-allocating/non-allocation, which could incur costs to the Authority. It was accepted that the process would work better if social workers had lower caseloads, but there was also a need to be realistic in terms of the level of work required.
- The provision of training for social workers was managed in a balanced way in order to ensure that they were not removed from their role for longer than was required. The Authority offered a high level of training for social workers, which was reviewed on an annual basis.
- In terms of existing caseloads and ongoing budget pressures faced by the Authority, the Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, had given her support in terms of maintaining current levels of funding for the short-term. Although funding identified for this area of work was guaranteed only for a three-year period, it was envisaged that demand for such specialist services would decrease over this period.
- In terms of targets regarding improvements to the Service, other than meeting the required timescales, short-term targets included finding permanency for children at an early stage. Longer-term, the Service was looking to work more closely with the Drugs and Alcohol Co-ordination Team (DACT) in connection with providing support for those parents where drug and/or alcohol misuse was prevalent in the family, in order to stop regular recurrence of such problems.
- Although enquiries are made about all family members, during the initial mediation sessions, for whatever reason, the families did not always provide all the information required. As part of this process, it was important to ensure that the social worker asked the correct questions, and at the right

times. However, despite the best efforts of the social workers, there were, and always would be families who were not willing to co-operate which, ultimately, extended the process. The social workers would also obviously have to be aware of, and give consideration to, the families' predicaments.

- Social workers are required to include details regarding the child's views in their reports. For children under three, the social worker's observations of the child would be included in the report. The Court would appoint a Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) adjudicator, who would be responsible for providing their views on cases, both in private and public session.

6.5 Part 3 – Special Educational Needs

6.5.1 Dee Desgranges, Assistant Director for Lifelong Learning, Skills and Communities, gave a presentation on Part 3 of the Act – Special Educational Needs, which had a focus on improving outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities. She reported on the key changes, which included the replacement of statements with Education, Health and Care Plans, offering families personal budgets and improving co-operation between all services that support young people and their families, and referred to the timescales in terms of the transition to the new system.

6.5.2 Members of the Committee raised questions and the following responses were provided:-

- The national timeframe for dealing with children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities, following on from the date the Local Authority was first notified, to the production of the Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan, was 20 weeks. This was deemed a very challenging timescale. There were three officers whose role it was to undertake the review of the child or young person, with two additional members of staff available to assist if required. If the necessary arrangements could be made to improve outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities, it was hoped that similar work could be undertaken in respect of other vulnerable groups.
- One major challenge facing the Service was the lack of special school places in the City, although work was being undertaken to improve the infrastructure to try and accommodate this in the future. This work had involved building capacity in the system, as well as talking to parents to see what provision they wanted in respect of their children as opposed to attending special schools. During the past three years, not one post-16 child had been placed in specialist education outside the City on the basis that alternative provision had been made. Such provision had included specialist hubs across the City and staff from special schools going out to mainstream schools to teach children there.
- Personal Budgets were an element of the legislation and were discussed with families at the development stage of the EHC Plan. The Council had not

yet received any requests for an education personal budget, but already had well established processes for personal budgets for social care and health, which would be built upon.

- Children, Young People and Families was working closely with the Health and Wellbeing Board to establish joint commissioning processes and protocols. An agreement between the Authority and the Health Service in respect of data-sharing had been reached, which would establish a comprehensive understanding across all agencies of the current and projected need of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) children and young people to aid "intelligent" commissioning.

6.6 Part 4 – Childcare Reform

6.6.1 Dawn Walton, Assistant Director, Prevention and Early Intervention, reported on the key changes under Part 4 of the Act, which included new mechanisms for the registration of childminders via childminder agencies, the option for early years childcare providers to request, and pay for, inspections, the repeal of the duty to conduct a childcare sufficiency assessment every three years, and the removal of the requirements for governors to consult on offering childcare and wrap-around support.

6.6.2 In response to a question raised by a Member of the Committee, Ms Walton stated that, at the present time, there was capacity in terms of childcare provision for all three to four year olds. A significant proportion of childcare provision was not in schools, so there was a need for the Authority to encourage flexible options as to how such provision was offered. This could include private provision relocating to schools or collaborating with schools to provide responsive options. It was accepted that the Authority would have to be more proactive in the future in terms of how it managed the supply of Sheffield's childcare provision.

6.7 Part 5 – Welfare of Children

6.7.1 This part of the Act comprised mainly amendments that had been requested by the House of Lords, and the report set out details of the new duties required.

6.7.2 Members of the Committee raised questions and the following responses were provided by the officers present:-

- Steve Mathers had been in the post of Virtual School Head for around five years, and was responsible for championing the education of children in the Authority's care.
- The Young Carers Strategy Board, which linked into the Carers Board, had young carers representation. The voluntary sector was also well represented on the Board, but there was not currently any carer representation. The Young Children's Strategy Board informed the Action Plan and, although this was initially slow in development, it was now starting to take forward some actions on this.

- There were plans in place to undertake assessments in relation to young carers as there was an automatic assessment route through to Social Care.
- A response to the query as to how the Authority plan to put safeguards in place to protect children from nicotine would be produced and circulated to Members of the Committee. It was indicated, however, that there was a level of uncertainty in law with regard to this issue, and it was not clear how the Act stood on this.
- The recruitment process in terms of foster parents had been set up to ensure that placements succeeded. There would obviously be a small number of placements which were not successful, and investigations would be made into the reasons for this. Details of the number of placements which had not succeeded would be forwarded to Councillor John Booker.

6.8 Part 6 – Children’s Commissioner

- 6.8.1 This part of the Act reinforced the role of the national Children’s Commissioner, taking forward recommendations in John Dunford’s 'Review of the Office of the Children's Commissioner (England)', including giving the Commissioner a statutory remit to promote and protect children’s rights.

6.9 Parts 7, 8 and 9 - Statutory Rights to Leave and Pay, Time Off Work and Right to Request Flexible Working

- 6.9.1 Part 7 of the Act delivered the legislative commitments made in the Government response to the modern workplaces consultation (November 2012), including a new employment right to shared parental leave and statutory shared parental pay for eligible working parents.
- 6.9.2 Part 8 created a new right for employees and qualifying agency workers to take unpaid time off work to attend up to two ante-natal appointments with a pregnant woman.
- 6.9.3 Part 9 provided for the expansion of the right to request flexible working from employees who were parents or carers to all employees, and the removal of the statutory process that employers must currently follow when considering requests for flexible working.
- 6.9.4 The report set out the key dates in respect of the above.

6.10 Financial Pressures Generated by the Act

- 6.10.1 The report set out details of the financial pressures generated by the implementation of the Act.
- 6.10.2 In response to a question on this issue, it was reported that the financial pressures would most likely increase over a period of time, so there would not be an immediate impact following the implementation of the Act. Although the level of grant income would taper off over time, this provided the Authority an opportunity

to review the new duties and working arrangements required, following the implementation of the Act, and provided an opportunity to deliver the service differently in order to make savings.

- 6.11 RESOLVED: That the Committee notes the contents of the report now submitted, together with the responses provided to the questions raised.

7. WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15

- 7.1 The Policy and Improvement Officer, Diane Owens, submitted a paper containing the Committee's draft Work Programme 2014/15.

- 7.2 The Deputy Chair (Councillor Cliff Woodcraft) requested that the issue of how the Council, by working with its partner agencies, could assist families with disabled children, be added to the Work Programme.

- 7.3 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the draft Work Programme 2014/15; and
- (b) agrees that the issue now raised by Councillor Woodcraft be added to the Committee's Work Programme as a possible topic for consideration for 2015/16.

8. BUILDING SUCCESSFUL FAMILIES PROGRAMME - UPDATE

- 8.1 The Committee received, for information, a report providing an update on the Building Successful Families Programme, attaching, as an appendix, the Phase One Interim Report – July 2014, which contained an evaluation of the Programme undertaken by Ecorys, a leading European research and consultancy company.

- 8.2 Reference was made to a further interim report of Ecorys being available in January 2015, and the Policy and Improvement Officer stated that she would circulate this report to Members of the Committee.

- 8.3 RESOLVED: That the Committee notes the contents of the report now submitted.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 9.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Monday, 9th March 2015, at 1.00 pm, in the Town Hall.

Children, Young People & Family Support Scrutiny Committee
Actions update for meeting on 9th March 2015

Action	Minutes	Update	R A G
<p>2014 City-Wide Attainment Outcomes in Schools and Academies 6.5 (c) The committee; requests that arrangements be made for the establishment of a small sub-group, comprising Members of the Committee, to look in more detail at gaps in performance in connection with the attainment and progress of vulnerable learners in 2014, and to report back to the January 2015 meeting on their findings.</p>	17 th November	This meeting involved Cllr Gill Furniss, Cllr Diana Stimely and Jules Jones and was held on 2/2/2015. Feedback will be given at the next Scrutiny Committee meeting on 9 th March.	
<p>Assessment of Child Sexual Exploitation Services in Sheffield The scrutiny committee agreed to:</p> <p>a. Write to the Crown Prosecution Service (copying in Sheffield MP's) in support of the issue highlighted in the assessment that continuing work is required with the judiciary system to explain the complexities of CSE, to increase the level of knowledge and understanding about the complexities of this issue.</p>	15 th December- special	These letters have been sent.	
<p>b. Write to the Health & Wellbeing Board regarding the committee's concerns around a lack of resources and appropriateness of services for young people's health pathways</p>		A letter has been sent to each of the co-chairs of the Health & Wellbeing Board.	
<p>c. Request specific training in terms of interpretation of figures and statistics to assist members in their scrutiny role. This is in line with one of the identified areas for development within the assessment.</p>		The Policy & Improvement Officer is liaising with colleagues to arrange this session which will be held prior to the committee considering the CSE reports in the next municipal year.	
<p>d. Write to staff in the Children, Young People & Families portfolio who were involved in the production of the assessment to thank them for their dedication and ongoing work</p>		This letter has been sent.	
<p>e. Write to the young people involved in producing the assessment to thank them for their involvement</p>		This letter has been sent.	

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<p>8.2 Building Successful Families Programme – update report The Ecorys evaluation report that was circulated stated that a further interim report would be available in January 2015. The Policy and Improvement Officer will request and circulate a copy of this to Members of the Committee.</p>	<p>26th January 2015</p>	<p>This report will be circulated to committee members as soon as it is available, this should be within the next 2-3 weeks.</p>
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Report to CYP & FS Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee 6th February 2014

Report of: Jayne Ludlam, Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families

Subject: Adoption Service

Author of Report: Suzanne Whiteley, Adoption & Fostering Service Manager, Tel: 35155

Summary: Update on the Adoption Service in line with adoption services statutory regulations and guidance

Type of item: The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Community Assembly request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	x
Other	

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

Note the report and its contents

Background Papers:

List any background documents (e.g. research studies, reports) used to write the report. Remember that by listing documents people could request a copy.

- Adoption Service Dataset 2013/14
- An Action Plan for Adoption: Tackling Delay
- Adoption Scorecard Data
- Yorkshire & Humber Adoption Consortium Reform Plan
- Yorkshire & Humber Adoption Consortium Performance Reports
- Adoption Passport: A Support Guide for Adopters

Report of the Director of Jayne Ludlam, Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families

Sheffield City Council Adoption Service

1. Introduction/Context

- 1.1 In line with statutory guidance and regulation, all Adoption Services have to report to the executive side of the Local Authority in regard to the outcomes of the Adoption Service. The Senior Leadership Team and other Boards within Children, Young Peoples and Families Service have received regular updates in relation to adoption performance.
- 1.2 The Ofsted Inspection Framework for 'the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers', fostering services are now incorporated in to the single framework inspection process.

2. The National Adoption Agenda and Sheffield Adoption Service

2.1 The National Agenda

- 2.1.1 In March 2012, the Department for Education published its 'Action Plan for Adoption: Tackling Delay.' The report outlined what the Government intended to do to accelerate the whole adoption process so that more children benefited from adoption and more rapidly. Adoption scorecards for each Local Authority were first published in May 2012.
- 2.1.2 In July 2012, the Prime Minister announced proposals for the earlier placement of children in need of adoption, promoting the wider use of concurrent planning, and introducing the concept of 'fostering for adoption'.
- 2.1.3 In January 2013, the National Adoption Gateway was launched by First4Adoption with its information telephone helpline going live. The DfE also published 'Further Action on Adoption: Finding More Loving Homes' in January 2013. The document announced proposals for changes to the adopter recruitment process, and a number of changes to give approved adopters a more active role in the process of finding a child. It also

announced a package of improvements to the support available to adoptive families, including the launch of adoption passports from April 2013. Adoption passports are a guide to all adopters about the support and services that are available to them. Children who are adopted can have ongoing needs that both adopter and the child will benefit from post-adoption support. Local Authorities provide a range of support services for adopters and their children. Every adopter is entitled to advice about these services, and entitled to an assessment of their needs at any time.

- 2.1.4 A new format for recording adopter assessments was launched, in full, by BAAF in February 2013, ahead of the implementation of a new, shorter, 2 stage assessment process, the details of which were published by the DfE in the Spring 2013, and implemented in the July 2013. Stage 1 process was implemented in July 2013 with Stage 2 in September 2013.
- 2.1.5 In November 2014 it was announced that new funding would become available, through the Adoption Support Fund, to help adoptive families to help their children to settle into their new homes. The Adoption Support Fund will be implemented in May 2015. The funding will be available for children up to and including the age of 18 (or 25 with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education Health and Care Plan) who have been adopted from care in England or adopted in Wales but living in England. Local Authorities will be able to submit applications for funding before an Adoption Order is made, so that any package of support from the time of placement can continue once the Adoption Order is made.

2.2 **Sheffield Response**

- 2.2.1 Sheffield has taken a number of actions to ensure that the agency has the ability to meet the challenges ahead in improving timeliness. This has been balanced with continuing to ensure quality for each child, whilst maintaining the current low level of placement disruption, and high numbers of children placed for adoption, in particularly the more challenging to place children. These being, older children, children with additional needs, children with complex emotional and behavioural issues or sibling groups.
- 2.2.2 As at 23 February 2015 34 children have been adopted. There are 44 children currently placed in their adoption placements but do not as yet have the Adoption Order in place.
- 2.2.3 The Service is continuing to place 'hard to place' children or provide additional support to adopters with children that are

placed but not yet adopted. This has included for example, the recent adoptive placement of seven and nine year old boys, and eleven sibling groups.

- 2.2.4 In regard to the assessment of adopters, 41 new adopters have been approved as of 23 February 2015. It is anticipated that this figure will stand at 45 new adopter approvals for 2014/5.
- 2.2.5 The Adoption Service is working in partnership with Yorkshire and Humber Adoption Consortium. This consists of 15 Local Authorities across the region The Consortium is using funds, from the Adoption Reform Grant, at a regional and sub-regional level over a three year period using the Regional Adoption Consortium contract and network as the framework. The purpose of this is to improve the quality of service for children and adopters through faster delivery, sharing best practice, and improved performance management and data reporting.
- 2.2.6 The 4 Local Authorities in the South Region (Sheffield, Rotherham, Barnsley, and Doncaster) have set up specific working groups to support the Adoption Reform Initiatives and to improve further working partnerships. This has included sharing good practice, post adoption support and training and recruitment.
- 2.2.7 The Consortium has developed a regional marketing campaign that will compliment marketing activity within each local authority. Information evening dates across the sub region are being promoted by all the relevant Local Authorities.
- 2.2.8 The Service has 'rebranded' and this new image is used within marketing and recruitment alongside the regional approach. Various marketing activities will be undertaken the year and during Adoption Week (19 - 25 October 2015). The Marketing Strategy is currently being reviewed with the Communications Team.
- 2.2.9 The Adoption Reform Grant for 2013/14 has not been without its challenges. It has supported various activities within the Service. Increased activity has continued to take place in regard to family finding. This has resulted in additional children being placed with Voluntary Adoption Agencies or other Local Authority approved adopters.
- 2.2.10 A number of additional posts which were temporarily created to support both the Adoption Service and fieldwork area teams continue. This has included

- The appointment of an Agency Advisor to Adoption Panel who also has been a consultant to staff,
- Increase in the capacity of the Family Finders
- Additional social work capacity to ensure robust plans for children are being made in a timely way
- Increased management support.

2.2.11 Robust tracking and monitoring systems are established and in place in regard to children that have an adoption plan or a permanence plan. This includes monthly tracking meetings at each area site and agency prioritisation meetings that include the Medical Advisors to the Local Authority. Development of tracking and monitoring systems continue and work is being undertaken with Fieldwork Service Managers to further improve the timeliness of adoption with the aim of a positive impact on the Adoption Scorecard.

2.2.12 The Family, Adopters and Carers Team (FACT) continue to provide extensive support to families with the range of support services that are available to children and their families. This support includes direct work with children and their families, Theraplay group work and individual sessions; the group is a ten week Theraplay programme which is delivered twice a year. Theraplay is aimed at promoting the attachment between adopters and their children.

2.2.13 The provision delivered by FACT also includes children who have been placed on alternative permanence Court Orders, for example, Special Guardianship Orders (SGO's).

2.2.14 FACT is a well-established team that deliver innovative packages of support to families through varied approaches dependant on the assessment of need, for example, group work as well as individual work.

2.2.15 The Service has undertaken a readiness exercise with the nominated Adoption Support Fund link for Sheffield. Areas of strength and development were identified including the development of systems for direct payments.

2.3 **Statistics**

2.3.1 Children made subject to a 'Should Be Placed for Adoption' (SHOBPA) decision and outcomes.

Year	Total no of children with SHOBPA	Children linked/placed with adopters	No of SHOBPA rescinds	No of children disrupted	No of children adopted
2008/09	48	41	9	0	55
2009/10	44	45	5	3	41
2010/11	55	37	7	2	45
2011/12	60	40	11	0	45
2012/13	102	40	15	0	50
2013/14	165	101	15	0	53

In relation to SHOBPA, the 165 figure includes the children that are already placed with adopters.

2.3.2 Children may have SHOBPA decision/link/adoption in different years the figures above are taken as at end of March each year and will fluctuate throughout the year as the plan for children may change from adoption for various reasons, for example, family rehabilitation or Special Guardianship Orders (SGO's) with extended family or foster carers, long term foster placement.

2.3.3 The Service has two well established adoption panels which aim to meet monthly. Both panels have the same independent Chair that has significant knowledge and experience of adoption issues. All panels have been quorate which reflects the excellent commitment of the panel members.

2.3.4 In February 2013 a dedicated Agency Advisor was appointed. This provides consistency across both panels and provides independence to the post. The Agency Advisor plays a key role in the quality assurance of all documents that are to be presented to panel and manages activity in regard to prioritisation of the panel agenda and SHOBPA decisions.

2.3.5 Adoption Panels held each month

April 2014	1
May 2014	2
June 2014	2
July 2014	2
August 2014	1
September 2014	2

2.3.6 From April – September 2013 the Agency Decision Makers (ADM) have been Jon Banwell, Assistant Director, Provider Services, Trevor Owen, Senior Manager, Safeguarding Children Service and Debbie Mercer, Assistant Director, Fieldwork. Trevor Owen undertakes the ADM role in regard to SHOBPA's on a monthly basis. The ADM's role is to consider the adoption panel's recommendation to make the final decision. The ADM is a nominated person within the adoption

agency who has the legal responsibility to make an approval decision. In most circumstances this ADM accepts the adoption panel's recommendation and is supported by advice from the Agency Advisor.

2.4 Adoption Scorecard

The two main indicators in the adoption scorecard are both published as a three year average.

2.4.1 Indicator A1 – Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted (days). Before March 2015, 47 children are identified to be adopted and if this happens as expected then the average for A1 will be 536 days in 2014/15. This will mean a three year average of around 566 days which falls outside of the 487 days threshold set by DfE for 2012-15.

2.4.2 Indicator A2 – Average time between a Local Authority receiving Court Authority to place a child and the Local Authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (days). By March 2015, 43 children are identified for this cohort and if this happens as expected then the average for A2 will be 300 days in 2014/15. This will mean a three year average of around 268 days which falls well outside of the 121 days threshold set by DfE for 2012-15 onwards. 1) See Appendices for Adoption Scorecard Update

3. What does this mean for the people of Sheffield?

3.1 Sheffield continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to permanence placements for children through adoption. Children thrive in stable and loving families. Sometimes birth parents are unable to care for their children themselves. Getting the best possible care for these children is one of the LA's most important corporate parent responsibilities.

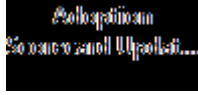
3.2 The LA has responded to the Government's Action Plan as outlined above in the main body of the report. The Local Authority will continue to drive forward the adoption agenda to ensure that the child's journey is undertaken in a timely manner whilst ensuring the best outcome. The priority for all children is to secure permanence. Adoption is therefore a key and vital choice in any decision making that secures a child's future within a stable family environment.

4. Recommendation

4.1 The Committee are being asked to note the report and its contents.

Appendices

1)





Report to CYP & FS Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee 9th March 2015

Report of: Jayne Ludlam, Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families

Subject: Fostering Service

Author of Report: Suzanne Whiteley, Adoption & Fostering Service Manager, Tel: 35155

Summary: Update on Fostering Service in line with Fostering Services Statutory Regulations and Guidance

Type of item: The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Community Assembly request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	x
Other	

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to: Note the report and its contents

Background Papers:

List any background documents (e.g. research studies, reports) used to write the report. Remember that by listing documents people could request a copy.

- Fostering Service Dataset 2013/14
- Fostering Service Business Case 2010
- Fostering Service Key Campaign 2013/14
- Fostering Capital Investment Report

Category of Report: OPEN

Report of the Director of Jayne Ludlam, Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families

Sheffield City Council Fostering Service

1. Introduction

- 1.1. In line with Statutory Guidance and Regulation, all Fostering Services have to report to the executive side of the Local Authority in regard to the outcomes of the Service. The Senior Leadership Team and other Boards within Children, Young Peoples and Families Service have received regular updates in relation to fostering performance.
- 1.2. Under the Ofsted Inspection Framework for 'the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers', fostering services are now incorporated in to the single framework inspection process.

2. Sheffield Fostering Service

- 2.1. The recruitment and retention of foster carers is a corporate priority, and is recognised as such in the Corporate Plan. The Communications Plan supports the Business Case 2010 and continues to support the Fostering Service in the recruitment of additional foster carers and the retention of its current foster carers. The Fostering Recruitment Campaign was launched in January 2011 and continues to date. This has included TV and radio advertising, web activity, bus and train station, JCD sites and attendance at community events across the city. Key marketing recruitment campaigns have more recently focused on the recruitment of foster carers for teenagers and sibling groups. Information Evenings continue to be scheduled every six weeks.
- 2.2. The retention of foster carers is crucial for the Business Case to continue to be successful. Various retention initiatives have been in place over the last four years and continue. These being:
 - Priority housing initiatives
 - Increase in 'refer a friend' fee
 - Skill Level progression
 - Increased learning & developments opportunities for foster carers
 - Events for children in care, foster carers and birth children
 - Increased Support Groups
 - Foster Forum web based communication tool
 - Voices Of Foster Carers Group
 - Foster Carers Open Forums
 - Kids of Foster Carers 'R' Us Group

- Involvement of foster carers in strategic initiatives
- Foster carers involvement in recruitment to staff to SCC
- Foster carers involvement in training for staff and prospective foster carers
- Experienced foster carers are mentors to newly approved foster carers.

2.3 The Fostering Service and its foster carers continue to provide a high level of care and promote the health, welfare and safety of children and young people. Foster carers receive a good level of support from qualified workers in line with statutory regulations and guidance. Foster carers have access to a wide range of learning and development opportunities. This enables them to develop their understanding and skills in supporting children and young people and promote positive outcomes for them. Learning and development opportunities include core training:

- Principles and values
- Roles and responsibilities
- Recording
- Safe caring
- Equality and diversity
- Effective communication

Other training includes, managing difficult behaviour, introduction to safeguarding, introduction to child development and attachment. Foster carers are also giving support for Foster Carers to complete the Training and Development Standards portfolio

2.4 The Service has two established Fostering Panels which aim to meet monthly. Both panels previously had a separate chair, more recently a single Panel Chair has been appointed to ensure a consistent approach in line with a proven way of working with Adoption Panels. All panels have been quorate which reflects the excellent commitment of the panel members.

2.5 In February 2013 a dedicated Agency Advisor was appointed to the Adoption Service Panel. This has provided consistency across Adoption Panels as well as the independence of the post. During 2014/15, this post took on the responsibility of Agency Advisor to the Fostering Panel. The post is filled by two part time staff where each has a primary role for each of the Fostering and Adoption Panel's and will allow for appropriate agency advice for all Fostering and Adoption Panel's.

2.6 Fostering Panels held each month

April 2014	1
May 2014	2
June 2014	1
July 2014	2
August 2014	2
September 2014	1

2.7 From April – September 2014 the Agency Decision Makers (ADM) have been Jon Banwell, Assistant Director, Provider Services, and Debbie Mercer Assistant Director, Fieldwork Services. The ADM's role is to consider the Fostering Panel's recommendation to make the final decision. The ADM is a nominated person within the fostering agency who has the legal responsibility to make an approval decision. In most circumstances this ADM accepts the fostering panel's recommendation; the Panel Advisor offers advice and support to enable this process.

2.8 There have been recent appointments to the roles of Service Manager, Suzanne Whiteley and Assistant Service Manager, Steph Kerr. The Fostering Service has an experienced staff group and management team which has provided stability and consistency within the Service and to foster carers and children and young people.

2.9 Statistics

As at 31 st March of each year	Number of newly approved foster carers	Number of new placements	Total number of approved foster carers
2009/10	27	35	223
2010/11	37	45	250
2011/12	39	47	272
2012/13	37	48	282
2013/2014	31	46	280
As at 31 st March of each year	Number of LAC in placement		
2009/10	233		
2010/11	256		
2011/12	271		
2012/13	280		
2013/14	280		

As at the 30th September the service had 33 vacancies. This includes three specialist remand beds. The number of children in care in placement includes eight family and friends carer placements and 12 young people aged 18 years and over.

2.10 It is anticipated that at the end of 2014/15 the number of new approvals will be 35 foster carers providing 46 new placements.

2.11 As at the 13th February 2015 the Fostering Service provided 272 placements. The number of children in care in placements includes 112 with permanence (long term permanent placements) foster

carers, 133 task (shorter term placements) placements, eight family and friends carer placements, six out of hours placements and 13 young people aged 18 years and over.

2.12 Where appropriate young people remain living with their foster carers after the age of 18 years. This is known as ‘Staying Put’, and seeks to extend the young person’s placement in a way that allows them to progress to more independent living at a time, and pace, that is based both on their assessed needs, as detailed within their Pathway Plan, and in accordance with their wishes and feelings. There are 12 young people aged 18 years older remain in placement with their foster carer.

2.13 During 2013/14 41 foster carers either withdrew from fostering or were deregistered as foster carers.

Number of Foster Carers	Reason for withdrawal or resignations
24	Personal circumstances or work commitments
3	Health
3	Retired
2	Deceased
1	Adopted 2 children
1	<i>Dissatisfied with support mechanisms</i>
2	Significant concerns
5	Reason unknown (declined to state)

The Assessment and approval of foster carers: Amendments to the Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations: Volume 4: Fostering Services July 2013 changed practice regarding the resignation of foster carers, meaning where a foster carer gives their resignation in writing this becomes final 28 days later without exception.

3. What does this mean for the people of Sheffield?

- 3.1 It is important that Sheffield children in care are cared for within the city, Local Authorities have a legislative requirement to ensure that children are placed locally and there is, so far as reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation within the city which meets the needs of children.
- 3.2 The sufficiency duty requires local authorities to do more than simply ensure that accommodation be ‘sufficient’ in terms of the number of beds provided. They must have regard to the benefits of securing a range of accommodation through a number of providers. The accommodation must also meet the needs of children.
- 3.3 By continuing to increase and retain the number of foster carers within the city outcomes for children in care are enhanced and it ensures that the Local Authority is complying with its statutory duties.

4. Recommendation

4.1 The Committee are being asked to note the report and its contents.



Report to CYPF Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee 09.03.2015

Report of: Jayne Ludlam Executive Director Children Young People and Families Service

Subject: Looked After Children and Care Leavers Annual Report

Author of Report: Jon Banwell, Assistant Director Children and Families Service.

Summary: Update on the progress of Sheffield's Looked After Children and Care Leavers.

Type of item: The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Community Assembly request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	x
Other	

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

- Consider the progress of our Looked After Children and Care Leavers.
- Note the progress of the Looked After Adopted Children and Care Leaver Strategy 2014.
- Note the Intention to publish a revised and updated Looked After Adopted Children and Care Leaver Strategy in 2015.

Background Papers:

- Independent Reviewing Service Annual Report
- Annual Looked After Children Health Report
- Report on the Sheffield Youth Justice Plan
- Ofsted Action Plan

Category of Report: OPEN

Report of the Director of CYPF

Update on the progress of Sheffield's Looked After Children and Care Leavers

1. Introduction/Context

- 1.1 There were 529 Children in Care in Sheffield in January 2015.
- 1.2 The proportion of Sheffield's 0 -17 year old population who are in care is currently 46 per 10000. This is below the national average of 60 children in care per 10000 and significantly below the statistical neighbour average of 76 per 10000 (2014 data).
- 1.3 Approximately three out of every five Sheffield Children in Care are male compared with the roughly 50:50 gender profile of the 0-17 year old population as a whole. Similarly, there are differences with the age profile too, 58% being 10 or above compared with 43% for the city as a whole.
- 1.4 The ethnicity profile of the Children in Care population is much more in line with that of the city; 28.5% BME compared with 30% for the 0 - 17 year old population as a whole.
- 1.5 The numbers of Children in Care have continued to reduce as a consequence of placing focus on delivering permanence for children. This has resulted in, the number of children who ceased to be looked after during the year changing from 225 in 2010/11 to 315 in 2012/13, and 264 in 2013/14. Of these, the number of children who have ceased to be looked after due to permanence, either through adoption, Residence Orders or Special Guardianship Orders, has increased from 72 in 2010/11 to 116 in 2012/13 and 83 in 2013/14.

2. Main body of report, matters for consideration, etc

- 2.1 The new 2014/15 Looked After, Adopted Children and Care Leaver Strategy was launched in June 2014. This is a joint statement of intent between Sheffield City Council and our partner agencies to work together to deliver the best outcomes we can for children who come into and leave our care.
- 2.2 Key objectives and actions in this strategy have been determined by local and national priorities, and in consultation with children and young people. They are:
 - Engagement and Influence (involvement) of children and young people who are in care
 - Educational attainment and achievement
 - Health and well-being
 - Permanence
 - Integrated placements and placement stability
 - Safeguarding and vulnerability

- Care leavers
- 2.3 A LAAC Strategy Service Business Plan Success Measures Dashboard has been developed to allow for the key indicators for Children in Care and Care Leavers to be measured and monitored on a regular basis.
- 2.4 The Dashboard is updated and presented to every Corporate Parenting Board.
- 2.5 The indicators are measured against targets to show performance towards target, the trend and benchmarked against national, core city and statistical neighbours.
- 2.6 The latest information (end of January 2015) showed that Sheffield is on or above target with:
- Numbers of children in care
 - Rate of children in care per 10,000
 - % of children in care who have had 3 or more placements in the previous 12 months
 - % of children in care in the same placement for at least 2 years
 - % of children in care with up to date SDQs
 - % of children in care with a permanence outcome
 - % of children in care placed within 20 miles of their home address
 - Average time between children entering care and being placed for adoption
 - Average time between placement order and match to adoptive carers
 - % of care leavers who have a pathway plan
 - % of young offenders who reoffend
 - % of child protection reviews carried out within timescale

Is below target but shows an improving trend for:

- % of children in care with up to date health assessments
- % of children in care with up to date dental assessments
- % of children in care with up to date immunisations and vaccinations
- % of children in care with an up to date PEP (January Data now shows further increase to 75.1%)

Needs to improve towards target for:

- % of reviews of children in care carried out within timescale
- % of children in care aged 4 and over who participate in their review
- % of care leavers aged 19-21 in suitable accommodation
- % of care leavers aged 19-21 in EET
- Rate of first time entrants 10-17 into the criminal justice system

3. 2014 Progress Report / 2015 Proposed Actions

Priority 1 – Engagement and Influence of Looked After Children and Young People

What we achieved in 2014

- 3.1 The Sheffield City Council Children's Involvement Team commenced implementing a new Children in Care Council (CiCC) from October 2014.

- 3.2 Since taking over the task in October the Children's Involvement Team have been speaking to other CiCC's in the region for ideas and advice who have all identified recruitment has one of the biggest challenges. Recruitment has therefore been one of the main focuses of the work undertaken in Sheffield to date:
- An Information evening was held in November; five young people attended. The event was advertised by attending team meetings, emailing Social Workers and IROs with new publicity materials, visiting all the residential homes and advertising on the Foster Carer Forum.
 - A workshop was held on Saturday 15th November for interested members to get to know each other and to give the council a kick start.
 - The Children Involvement Team has attended a drop in at the charity organisation SOVA and four young people expressed an interest.
- 3.3 After these events it was decided to carry out a series of home visits to see young people face to face, ensuring they had the reassurance of meeting the Children Involvement Team and be given an opportunity to ask any questions they may have. The Children Information Team has visited eight young people in addition to the young people who attended the information evening.
- 3.4 The first (revised) CiCC meeting was held on Thursday 8th January. Although the numbers still seem small, the Children Involvement Team feels that they are starting to attract a positive interest. They are hoping to achieve 8-10 committed members by Spring 2015. It is encouraging to note that new members are already starting to recruit friends and relatives to the group.
- 3.5 The Children Involvement Team have started working with Service Managers across Children and Families service to set up a rolling recruitment programme. They have discovered that maintaining members and gaining new ones is an ongoing difficulty for all CiCCs, so they have decided to offer home visits to anyone interested throughout the year. As well as this they will hold an annual recruitment event for any young people who have come into care that year or have turned 13.
- 3.6 The Sheffield Pledge to the children and young people in our care <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/caresupport/childfam/children-in-our-care/sheffield-pledge.html> contains 6 key promises / expectations of us as a local authority.
- 3.7 In consultation with the Children in Care Council a "Children in Care Tell Us What You Think" survey based on the Sheffield Pledge was completed. Two versions of the survey were sent out during the third week in October 2014. The decision was made to send out paper copies following members of the Children in Care Council checking with a range of young people how they would prefer to receive the survey. The overwhelming response was in a paper format.

- 3.8 We sent 250 surveys to the 0 -12 year olds and 260 surveys to the 13 – 17 year old. Total number of responses 0-12 years 78 **out of 250** = 31% and 13-18 years 41 **out of 260** = 16%
- 3.9 All responses were collated and the following partners/services were required to respond, by identifying key areas for their service to address, individually or in partnership; Health, Virtual School, Adoption and Fostering, Independent Reviewing Service, Principal Child and Family Social Worker, Residential, Permanence and ThroughCare service.
- 3.10 The Children in Care Responses and Action Report has been written in plain, accessible language so it can be shared widely with children and young people. It was presented to the Corporate Parenting Board 10th February.
- 3.13 Other Key Developments
- Children in Care and Young Carers continue to be involved in the recruitment process for social work managers and social workers.
 - Kids of Foster Carers 'R' Us Group continues and is well established. The group are consulted with as and when appropriate in regard to service developments or initiatives, and on-going self-evaluation of the group is in place.
 - Consultation with children takes place for children in care as part of the Looked After Children Statutory Review process.

2015 Priorities

We plan to : -

- 3.14 Look at creating appropriate branding for the new Children in Care Council and set up their own website.
- 3.15 Look at the results of the Looked After Children survey (which asked questions based on “The Pledge”) and consider what issues the care council members feel are most important for looked after children and young people. The Children in Care council will to work on 2-3 issues for the year.
- 3.15 Consider holding “Let’s talk about.....” sessions for some of the key projects that they’re working on. This would involve inviting relevant professionals who have a particular interest in the issue to a workshop run by the CiCC. The aim of the session would be come up with a visual action plan to move the issue forward.
- 3.16 Link the Children in Care council and the Corporate Parenting Board

So that there are joint meetings to ensure that there is joint oversight of the pledge and the Children in Care Responses and Action Report

Priority 2 - Educational Achievement and Attainment

What we achieved in 2014

- 3.17 During 2014 the Virtual School for Looked After Children has developed its role to promote the educational achievement of Children in Care and to challenge schools and providers to ensure that Children in Care have the best possible education. Key developments include:
- Access – The Virtual School has monitored closely the number of children placed in schools judged by OFSTED to be good/outstanding. We have challenged any plan to place a child in care at a school judged to be inadequate or requiring improvement. We have worked with social workers to understand better and agree the rationale for placing one of our children in such schools.
 - Pupil Premium for Children in Care – Throughout the year the Virtual School has ensured that all schools of eligible children/ young people have received their Pupil Premium allocation in line with the Sheffield policy. Schools have been advised on best practice in the use of the grant, and have been challenged to make better use of it.
 - Personal Education Plans – Following the establishment of a secure electronic system to write and store plans, there has been a significant improvement in the number of in-date plans, and the number of them that are of good quality. There have been improvements in the use of the plans as working documents that can be amended when appropriate rather than when there is a formal review.
 - Special Educational Needs – The Virtual School has worked in partnership with schools to ensure that good quality plans are in place and delivered to ensure special educational needs are met, and to ensure they receive the funding to manage those needs. Statements of Special Educational Needs, or Education Health Care Plans, are included in the Personal Education Plan.
 - Enrichment Activities – A number of additional activities have been commissioned and delivered to enhance and enrich the educational experience of our children and young people. These include the Y6 Intensive Study Programme delivered by the University of Sheffield; a Y6.
 - Residential visit to Whirlow Farm; a Y7 Basketball Day delivered by Sheffield Sharks; the 'Go Further, Go Higher' programme for Y10/11 held jointly by Sheffield University and Sheffield Hallam University; an introduction to Sheffield College; the Letterbox programme that sent personalised reading materials, games and exercises directly to Y3/5/7 children.
 - Training – The Virtual School has delivered training and conferences to social workers, foster carers, independent reviewing officers, residential homes staff, designated teachers and other groups of teachers including senior leadership teams and support staff. As a result there is a better understanding among partners of the

importance of stable educational placements and the role of the Virtual School.

- 3.18 Staffing in the Virtual School has been strengthened through the appointment of good quality candidates following the departure of three members of staff.

What we plan to do in 2015

- 3.19 In 2015 we are keen to build on the partnerships we have established over the last two years. In particular we are keen to develop links with the Children in Care Council so that their voice is heard in everything we do.
- 3.20 Access – continue to ensure that each Looked After Child is educated within a school that best meets their needs, and seek to increase the number educated in ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ schools.
- 3.21 Pupil Premium – develop and promote examples of best practice in the use of Pupil Premium for Children in Care.
- 3.22 Attendance and Exclusions – challenge schools and care professionals to improve the engagement of Children in Care in education provision by increasing attendance and reducing exclusions.
- 3.23 Personal Education Plans – revise the template to make the document more child and user friendly.
- 3.24 Free Early Learning – challenge care and education professionals to ensure that all 2, 3 & 4 year old Children in Care have access to Free Early Learning
- 3.25 Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) – work in partnership with the post-16 services and providers to ensure that each Year 11 Children in Care is able to progress into post-16 learning appropriate to their individual needs and aspirations.
- 3.26 Emotional and Mental Health – improve the knowledge and understanding in schools of attachment and the mental health of Children in Care.

Priority 3 - Health and Well Being

What we achieved in 2014

- 3.27 During 2014 there has been a focus on ensuring the health assessment information reflects the child and young person’s current circumstances and through partnership working establishing processes that will ensure that health assessments are timely and robust and monitoring is in place to further ensure this.
- 3.28 All children and young people have access to GP and the services of a school nurse, health visitor or a specialist LAC nurse. A dental nurse is

available at Star House for young people and there is a midwife who supports young people as appropriate.

- 3.29 Training for health professionals has further raised the health needs of Children in Care and there has been an improvement in the quality of the health assessments.
- 3.30 The percentages of dental checks have improved.
- 3.31 Immunisation rates are in line with comparator areas.

What we plan to do in 2015

- 3.32 During 2015 there will be further partnership working to ensure that health assessments are timely, robust and meet quality standards Monitoring is in place to further ensure this.
- 3.33 To improve the dental health of Children in Care and Care Leavers and to ensure that all Children in Care and Care Leavers are adequately immunised. Public Health England have supported a time limited project to support the increase in dental and immunisation performance and to recommend long term sustainability of this.
- 3.34 To review the effectiveness and access of prevention and early identification of substance misuse problems amongst Children in Care, adopted children and care leavers.
- 3.35 Ensure that CYPS policy and procedures with regards health are up to date to support staff in their day to day responsibilities.
- 3.36 To review access to CAMHS, MAPS & Forensic CAMHS in order to plan for the future delivery of services. Along with this to undertake an Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires with all Children in Care aged 4-16 years who have been accommodated for 12 months and incorporate this into the statutory holistic health assessment.
- 3.37 To review referral pathways into sexual health services to ensure they meet the needs of the young person and identify those at risk as the earliest opportunity.
- 3.38 Provide further training to foster carers on the health needs of Children in Care (including sexual health) and health assessments.

Priority 4 Permanence

What we achieved in 2014

- 3.39 During 2014 an audit and review of children subject to a SHOBP (Should be placed for adoption) and/or Placement Order was completed to ensure that their plan remains adoption or to amend SHOBP and discharge the Placement Order as appropriate.

- 3.40 Robust tracking and monitoring systems have been established and in place in regard to children that have an adoption plan or a permanence plan. This includes monthly tracking meetings at each area site, agency prioritisation meetings that include the medical advisors to the local authority and the development of the adoption milestones tracking form.
- 3.41 Recruitment to three additional social work posts within the Adoption Service.
- 3.42 In November 2014 it was announced that new funding would become available, through the Adoption Support Fund, to help adoptive families help their children settle into their new homes. The Adoption Service has undertaken a readiness exercise with the nominated Adoption Support Fund link for Sheffield. Areas of strength and development were identified including the development of systems for direct payments.
- 3.43 The Adoption Service continues to work in partnership with the Yorkshire and Humber Adoption Consortium. This consists of 15 local authorities across the region. The Consortium is using funds, from the Adoption Reform Grant, at a regional and sub-regional level over a 3 year period using the regional adoption consortium contract and network as the framework. The purpose of this is to improve the quality of service for children and adopters through faster delivery, sharing best practice, and improved performance management and data reporting. A regional marketing campaign has been developed and will complement marketing activity within each local authority.
- 3.44 The Adoption Service has 'rebranded' and this new image is used within marketing and recruitment alongside the regional approach.

What we plan to do in 2015

- 3.45 Continue to develop monitoring and tracking systems in relation to children subject to a SHOBPA and other permanence options, work is currently being undertaken with Field work Service managers to enable oversight of timeliness of the adoption and permanence process and implementation of the adoption milestones tracking form.
- 3.46 Achieve target for 2014/15 of the approval of 45 adopters
- 3.47 Continue to develop and embed the adoption reforms in response to the government's Action Plan for Adoption including implementing the requirements of the roll out of the Adoption Support Fund
- 3.48 Ensure there are sufficient numbers of adoptive parents in the local area that reflect the needs and diversity of local children waiting to be adopted
- 3.49 Continue to develop and embed regional and sub-regional adoption support mechanisms through the Yorkshire and Humber Adoption Consortium partnership, 'Being Family' as well as further develop and implement Sheffield's marketing plan.
- 3.50 Workforce development and training including delivery of child permanence report writing training to fieldwork and adoption service staff

- 3.51 Ongoing involvement in regional and national activity, for example exchange days and activity days

Priority 5 Integrated Placement Strategy

- 3.52 The Fostering Service Business Case was implemented in October 2010. Actions implemented under the Fostering Business Case have increased the choice, range, number of placements available and the number of foster carers. Please see sections 2.9, 2.10 & 2.11 within Fostering Scrutiny report
- 3.53 We continue carry out sufficiency placement mapping exercises to ensure Sheffield is able to provide the appropriate range of placements within Sheffield for our Children in Care and Care Leavers. We are proactive in placing children in or near Sheffield wherever possible and /or appropriate to do so. The figure for January was 85.6% (453) were placed within 20 miles of their address on becoming looked after.
- 3.54 Sheffield is one of 12 Local Authorities who are part of the White Rose Regional Consortium. The consortium collaboratively commission and quality assure a range of children's services with the aim of achieving: quality assurance; robust information sharing protocols; a consistent regional contract management framework; provider markets responsive to demand and need; regional strategic commissioning, and; value for money. A Contract Management and Monitoring Group has been established to undertake the Contract Management for all Frameworks, the group consists of representatives from 12 Local Authorities from the Region.
- Residential - There are approximately 48 Providers and in excess of 300 homes on the current framework
 - Fostering - Sheffield joined this framework in Feb 2013. There are 28 Providers on the IFA Framework.
- 3.55 Children in Care who have many changes of placement fare worse than those who do not in terms of psychological, social and academic outcomes. Placement moves often entail a change of school and can also have an impact on health care due to the time taken to transfer records and set up new appointments. Within Sheffield, Children in Care with 3 or more placements have decreased from 13% in 2014 to 9% at the end of December. Approximately 2% of the annual improvement is likely due to the recording of missing placements for Children in Care being removed from the calculation, however performance at the end of December still represents a good improvement against comparators.
- 3.56 Children in Care remaining in the same placement for 2 years or more was in line with comparators at 69% in 2014, this improved to 74% by the end of October and has since dropped to 73%; this still represents good performance.
- 3.57 The Staying Put policy has been revised and updated. The "Staying Put" initiative is in regard to extending children/young people's transition to adulthood within a family and household supported environment. The

intention is to ensure young people can remain with their former foster carers until they are prepared for adulthood, can experience a transition akin to their peers, avoid social exclusion and be more likely to avert a subsequent housing and tenancy breakdown. We currently have 12 Staying Put placements.

- 3.58 The Youth Justice Service and the Fostering Service remand fostering initiative continues to be successful with 27 placements

What we plan to do in 2015

- 3.59 The 2015 Children in Care and Leaving Care Sufficiency Report is underway with an expected completion date of March 31st
- 3.60 Continue our work with the White Rose Regional Procurement project to procure a range of placements from external providers
- 3.61 Continue to progress the fostering recruitment and retention business case to maximise our range of in house foster placements.
- 3.62 Continue to monitor and support our in house residential children's homes.

Priority 6 Safeguarding and Vulnerability

What we achieved in 2014

Young People who go missing

- 3.63 A clear system has been established jointly with South Yorkshire Police and partners for the reporting and monitoring of children who go missing from care. This includes enhancing the process whereby every child who goes missing is spoken with by the police and relevant care staff to support the efforts to prevent further missing episodes.
- 3.64 A six month update report was presented to the Safeguarding Operational Board in November.
- 3.65 There are structures and processes in place to complete the analysis of the data. 'Absent' and 'missing' will continue to be monitored within each three month period.
- 3.66 Although numbers of reported missing has gone up, this can actually indicate a positive change that risk and vulnerability is being assessed correctly and in a timely manner.
- 3.67 A South Yorkshire plan to commission services supporting the 'missing' agenda is being developed
- 3.68 A multi-agency approach is being developed to tackle the particular issue of unaccompanied asylum seekers going missing and not coming back.

Young People Placed in Sheffield from other areas

- 3.69 To ensure compliance with the Amendments to the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 (the "Care Planning Regulations") which created new requirements for local authorities making distant placements to consult with children's services in the area of placement, and for the Director of Children's Services (DCS) of the responsible authority to approve these placements a document in the form of a letter has been written by the Priority 6 group on behalf of the Director of Children's Services outlining the procedure for notification by local authorities wanting to place children in Sheffield and also information about relevant contacts and services for LAAC.
- 3.70 A Single Point of Contact has been identified to co-ordinate requests for information, ensure placements are recorded appropriately and ensure all receiving services have appropriate information to ensure all needs, including safeguarding needs are met.

Children's Homes Location Assessment

- 3.71 In response to the changes in legislation namely *The Children's Homes and Looked after Children (Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) Regulations 2013* introduced the following changes to the *Children's Homes Regulations 2001* and the *Registration Regulations* and the Children's Homes regulations amendments 2014 which put new duties on providers to:
- carry out a risk assessment of the area before the opening of the home and at regular intervals for existing provisions,
 - put in place appropriate safeguards where risks had been identified before a home opens or where new risks appear over time
 - collaborate with the police and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) at all stages of this process, not just in putting the safeguards in place but also in trying to identify the risks in the first place.
- 3.72 A Location Assessment has been completed on all existing children's homes.
- 3.73 The assessment report considered information provided by various agencies on local crime statistics, deprivation issues, safeguarding issues, CSE, public protection issues, education provision, health services, leisure, sports and local voluntary provisions.
- 3.74 Where analysis identifies concerns about the location, the manager of an existing home will have developed strategies for supporting children in their care to manage any safeguarding concerns and,

Restorative Justice Training

- 3.75 Restorative Justice Training was provided to all staff in the Youth Justice Service, Children's mainstream Residential Service and to several foster carers.
- 3.76 The training was delivered in a mixed multi-agency format with representatives from each of the three services receiving the training together.

- 3.77 This has enabled all who attended to learn the key principles of restorative justice techniques and the skills required to develop and embed a restorative approach within children's homes and foster homes to prevent young people entering the criminal justice system whilst supporting staff to intervene confidently. South Yorkshire police have also identified link officers from those based within the community youth teams, who regularly visit children's homes to build positive relationships with staff and young people.

Child Sexual Exploitation

- 3.78 The Children's Sexual Exploitation Service has reduced vulnerability and increased safeguarding against the risk of sexual exploitation of children by enhancing staff awareness and training the children's workforce on risks and indicators. The multi-agency sexual exploitation service have provided training throughout children's services and now provide a link person to each Children's home to offer advice and support to children young people and staff.
- 3.79 The Children's Sexual Exploitation Service has received positive feedback from a number of homes regarding the link workers and the work they have done with staff and residents, recent requests have been made for further training which will be provided.
- 3.80 In response to the Jay Report into Children's Sexual Exploitation an internal review of the service against the 15 recommendations of the report has been completed and disseminated.
- 3.81 Sheffield City Council has also completed an internal review of Children's Sexual Exploitation services across the city which was published in December.
- 3.82 The Children's Sexual Exploitation Service is a partner in a social care innovation bid with the aim of providing wrap around Children's Sexual Exploitation and CAMHS support for young people at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation.

Reducing Re-Offending

- 3.83 Both nationally and locally, the success of prevention and diversion programmes has produced a large decrease in the numbers of young people entering the youth justice system at any level. This means that the smaller cohorts who do are necessarily more troubled and more entrenched in anti-social or criminal environments.
- 3.84 The Youth Justice Service recognises the importance of understanding the changing characteristics of the reoffending cohort and to target our resources most effectively to deal with both increased risk and increased vulnerability and has completed an analysis of re-offending patterns.
- 3.85 The Youth Justice Service has become a member of the Youth Justice Board's reducing reoffending project, which has given them access to a number of analytical tools and useful prompts on what to consider when looking at the results.

- 3.86 With regard to young people who are in care who enter the criminal justice system, whilst the number of individual children is on target to not rise, our analysis has shown that the percentage of looked after children who reoffend once entering the system is disproportionately high.
- 3.87 At the time of reporting the youth justice service is setting out a reducing reoffending action plan which will have a section dedicated to work focused on reducing the number of children and young people who are, or who have been looked after from Reoffending.
- 3.88 This is recognised as a priority area of work for the youth justice service and will be incorporated within the priority 6 groups plan.
- 3.89 A new Independent Reviewing Officer has been appointed to specifically review the Assessment, Planning and Interventions for young people whom become looked after as a result of being remanded and will be working alongside the Youth Justice Service and custodial establishments to develop this area of work. This will also provide an opportunity for data collection and analysis.

What we plan to do in 2015

- 3.90 Continue to develop the CSE offer to children who are looked after and care leavers. This will include a continuation of support through maintaining the link worker in children's homes, delivering training and multi-agency awareness-raising in all who work with children and young people, including foster carers etc.
- 3.91 Progress the development of the joint working protocol for Sheffield, to enhance and deliver early intervention and diversion from the criminal justice system, will be complemented by an across county protocol to further reduce the prosecution of looked after children across South Yorkshire.
- 3.92 Revise and develop our multi agency Tackling Offending protocol to ensure compliance with all new legislation and guidance.
- 3.93 To minimise the numbers of children and young people who are, or who have been, looked after from entering the criminal justice system and providing swift and effective holistic interventions to ensure that those who do enter the criminal justice system are supported and achieve positive outcomes.

Priority 7 Care Leavers

What we achieved in 2014

- 3.94 The CLIC event in November was a success and was developed after listening to the feedback from young people who were asking for a different event for older Children in Care and Care Leavers. This will be an annual event.

- 3.95 Regular meetings have taken place to examine the young people who are Not In Education or training (NEET). This has examined the training needs of the workforce i.e. motivational interviewing. Examining whether There should posts that can develop young people's English skills, support for dyslexia and speech and language support. In the next month we will have clear profiles of the young people that fit into this category.
- 3.96 It is recognised that due to the unique needs of care experienced young people they may require additional support when beginning to think about their own tenancies. In order that we can ensure this group of young people have the best possible start in this area we are currently looking at a Tenancy Ready course. In Sheffield there are some of these course already on offer and we need to examine which one best fits with the needs of this group. It is felt that the housing will not be in specific areas. It is hoped that this will be up and running in 6 months.

What we plan to do in 2015

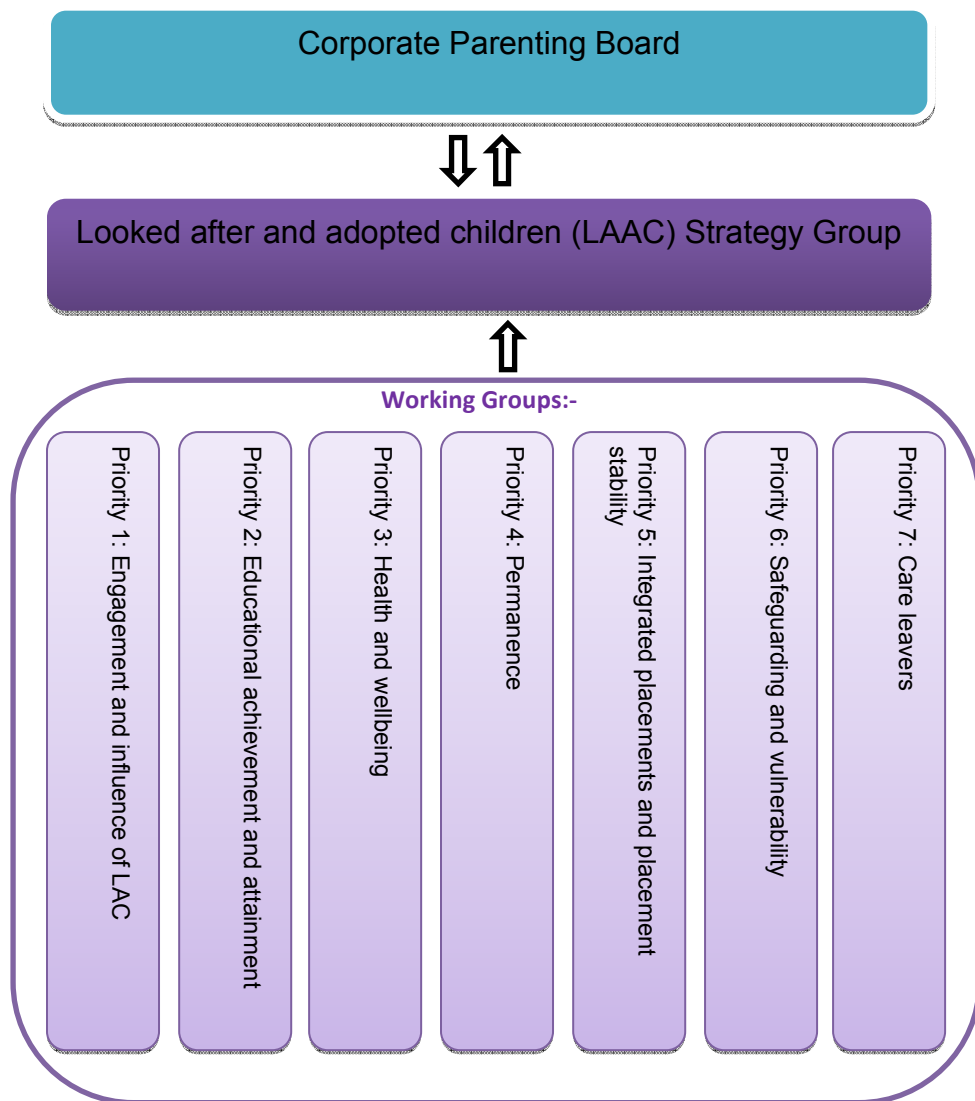
- 3.97 In 2015 there will be work developed around the area of transitions. For some young people it is clear that they will require additional support when they become independent. These young people will begin to be identified at the age of 14 plus and the needs will be part of the pathway plan. Once they reach 16 an Adult Questionnaire will be completed by the Social Worker in PTC team along with a worker from the Children's Disability Team (CDT). This will then be presented to the TM in CDT and PTC to ensure that the needs of the young person will be met on transition to adulthood. The Team Manager in CDT will ensure that she supports people in this area.
- 3.98 In 2015 we will be working more closely with the bench marking forum to examine what is working well in other authorities to establish positive working models in Sheffield. The revised staying put policy will be launched and will include briefings to all social workers and foster carers across the city.

4. Corporate Parenting Oversight

Corporate Parenting responsibilities are identified at three levels

- Universal Responsibility (Level 1) - All Elected Members and Managers
- Targeted Responsibility (Level 2) - Councillors undertaking visits to Children's homes members of Fostering and Adoption panel, other Looked After and Adopted Children and Care Leavers reference groups
- Specialist Responsibility (Level 3) - Lead Member for Children's Services, Director of Children's Services and Chairs of Corporate Parenting Groups / Boards.

Within Sheffield the Looked After, Adopted Children and Care Leaver Strategy Governance structure is as described below



The Corporate Parenting Board meets on a bi-monthly basis. Each meeting receives specific reports

- Performance Management (Ofsted Inspection Action Plan)
- Regulation 33 Reports (Placement Reports)
- Specific Priority Updates / Reports.

A new revised and updated Looked After, Adopted Children and Care Leaver Strategy will be published in June 2015.

5. Recommendation

5.1 The Committee are being asked to note the report and its contents.

6. Appendices



Fostering Scrutiny
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