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

Monday 14 October 2019 at 10.00 am

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

The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend

Membership

Councillors Mick Rooney (Chair), Mike Levery (Deputy Chair), Olivia Blake, Mike Chaplin, Julie Grocutt, Francyne Johnson, Alan Law, Joe Otten, Kevin Oxley, Colin Ross, Jim Steinke, Alison Teal, Sophie Wilson and Cliff Woodcraft

Education Non-Council Members
Alison Warner, Sam Evans, Peter Naldrett, Vacancy and Vacancy

Healthwatch Sheffield
Alice Riddell (Observer)

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

Sheffield
City Council

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 Alice Nicholson, Policy and Improvement Officer on 0114 27 35065 or email alice.nicholson@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
14 OCTOBER 2019

Order of Business

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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 <u>not</u>:

- 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 Audit and Standards Committee in relation to a request for dispensation.

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

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SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

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

Meeting held 16 September 2019

PRESENT: Councillors Mick Rooney (Chair), Mike Levery (Deputy Chair), Olivia Blake, Mike Chaplin, Julie Grocutt, Francyne Johnson, Joe Otten, Kevin Oxley, Jim Steinke, Alison Teal, Sophie Wilson and Richard Shaw (Substitute Member)

Non-Council Members in attendance:-

Alison Warner, (School Governor Representative - Non-Council Non-Voting Member)
Sam Evans, (Diocese Representative - Non-Council Voting Member)
Peter Naldrett, (Parent Governor Representative - Non-Council Voting Member)

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1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1.1   Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Alan Law, Colin Ross and Cliff Woodcraft, with Councillor Richard Shaw attending as substitute for Councillor Woodcraft.

1.2   An apology for absence was also received from Alice Riddell (Healthwatch Sheffield).

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   In relation to Agenda Item 9 (Inclusion Update) (Item 8 of these minutes), Sam Evans – Diocese Representative declared a personal interest as a friend of Tim Armstrong – Head of SEND.

4. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

4.1   *11th March, 2019*

4.1.1   The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11th March 2019 were approved as a correct record and, arising therefrom, it was requested that all

documentation previously circulated to Members referred to in Item 4.1 – Minutes of Previous Meeting (i to vii), be circulated again to ensure that new Committee Members had all necessary information.

4.2   *25ᵗʰ March, 2019*

4.2.1   The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 25ᵗʰ March 2019 were approved as a correct record and, arising therefrom, it was requested that all documentation previously circulated to Members referred to in Item 5.1 – The Council's Response to Ofsted on the Recent Inspection of the SEND Service (a to b), be circulated again to ensure that new Committee Members had all necessary information.

4.3   *15ᵗʰ May, 2019*

4.3.1   The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15ᵗʰ May 2019 were approved as a correct record.

5.   PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1   There were no public questions or petitions.

6.   OFSTED REPORT OF INSPECTION OF SHEFFIELD'S SOCIAL CARE SERVICES - JULY 2019

6.1   The Committee received a report regarding the recent Ofsted inspection judgement.

6.2   In attendance for this item were Councillor Jackie Drayton (Cabinet Member for Children and Families), John Doyle (Director of Business Strategy), who had been Acting Executive Director – People Services at the time of the inspection and Andrew Jones (Head of Primary and Targeted Interventions).

6.3   Councillor Jackie Drayton circulated a document which outlined the headline areas for improvement arising from the Ofsted inspection and the progress made to date.

6.4   As an introduction, Jackie Drayton gave thanks to all foster carers, adoptive parents and front line staff, and explained that the last inspection in 2013 had rated the service as needing improvement. However, steady progress had been made since then and the 2019 inspection had rated the service as good. There were still some areas that needed improvement however and these had been identified by officers in the pre-inspection self-assessment. The Inspectors had found no further areas for improvement.

6.5   John Doyle stated that the report was a good assessment of the service, but the Council could not afford to become complacent. Children were at the centre of all practises and much had been done to improve over the last couple of years. The

views of children were valued and the Council was supporting them to grow up well supported. The Council was looking to improve the service further and would continue to challenge itself.

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

- The inconsistency of the application of the threshold to step up to children's social care from early help had arisen in one or two cases where the Council had been trying too hard to keep the children out of care and had not passed the cases to social care early enough. At no point had children been at risk. Further training for the Multi Agency Support Team (MAST) had been identified and arranged.

- All children were contacted following a missing episode, but not all of them were contacted within the prescribed timescale. The Council was working with Sheffield Futures who were responsible for making contact with children who had missing episodes and would consider bringing the service back in-house in the future. An audit of the service was to be carried out to ensure that the work was carried out in a timely manner. The policy and procedure was also being reviewed.

- The service had worked hard with Human Resources to make Sheffield attractive when recruiting Social Workers and had developed a package including training, mentoring, possibility of career breaks etc. and a good senior management structure was in place. However, there were still gaps in some areas and contract workers were used.

- Life story books were now considered for all looked after children.

- Further Teachers had been appointed to the Virtual School and all Personal Education Plans (PEP) were reported to the Child Protection Board. However, PEP's needed to be more consistent across local authority areas. This was to be raised nationally.

- Aspire – a virtual hub worked with foster carers and those on the edge of care to try to keep children with their families wherever possible, with support.

- Operation Fortify was in place to look at the prevention of exploitation of children for criminal activity but the Council was still looking to see if it could do better.

- Recruitment and retention of staff in MAST was an issue. There was currently a very varied team and staff were encouraged to train to become social workers.

- It was suggested that numbers of young people in care accessing further education were lower than general population.

6.7   RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

    (a)   records its thanks to all those involved in the Ofsted Inspection; and

    (b)   requests that:-

        (i)   a report be submitted to the Committee in six months' time with an update on the areas for improvement along with progress on maintaining the areas that are good and moving towards outstanding;

        (ii)   details of the statutory timescale for conducting a missing child interview and the Council's performance against it be circulated to Committee Members;

        (iii)   statistics of the number of children in care who access and complete higher education courses be circulated to Committee Members;

        (iv)   the issue of different PEP processes be raised nationally in the appropriate forum; and

        (v)   update reports be submitted to the Committee on the following:-

            (A)   an update on the performance with regard to missing children interviews by Sheffield Futures;

            (B)   a performance/impact report on Aspire;

            (C)   an update on the new process with regard to PEPs and the national conversation; and

            (D)   recruitment and retention of staff within MAST (this could be covered in a scheduled report, if available).

7.   ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION

7.1   The Committee received a report of the Director of Commissioning, Inclusion and Schools regarding Elective Home Education.

7.2   In attendance for this item were Joel Hardwick (Head of Commissioning, Inclusion and Schools), Andrew Jones (Head of Primary and Targeted Interventions) and Venetta Buchanan (Elective Home Education Advisory Teacher).

7.3   It was explained that Elective Home Education (EHE) had previously been under the remit of Education, but had recently been moved to sit with the Virtual School. There had been an increase, both locally and nationally, of parents who were electing to educate their children at home, especially those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This area of work focused on ensuring that children educated at home were safe and well, ensuring that suitable education was being provided and ensuring that the school system was

able to support all children.

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

- 'Off-rolling' was a recent development and work was being developed to combat the issue. It was a national problem and a process had been drawn together over the last month which was family focused. Work was underway to embed the new process. An increase in funding for SEND needed to be discussed with schools. A clear policy regarding reintegration to school was also needed and conversations needed to take place with both the school and families.

- There was no evidence that families in Sheffield were being pressured to remove children from school, however, there was some anecdotal evidence. Families were supported in their reintegration process with schools.

- There was a large cohort of home educated children in Sheffield, but the Council needed to put in support measures that didn't overstep legislation. Parents could always ask for advice. Parents were able to access tutoring and children at KS4 had access to Sheffield City College.

- EHE was divided between children who were vulnerable and parents who wished to home educate. The Council could signpost parents towards exam venues etc. but the final decision was with the family. There was no requirement to enter exams.

- It was difficult to monitor EHE as the rules around it were vague. Families who withdrew children from schools were contacted as soon as possible for an initial information visit, but it was difficult to track as there was no set criteria to follow. Parents with children who had never been to school did not have to inform the local authority, but some chose to and were offered support. There was no national definition of a suitable provision.

- The updated 2019 consultation had coincided with the work on the Virtual School, therefore no further comment had been made.

- Non statutory guidance had been issued by the Government and there was support to make the guidance statutory.

- It may be possible to look at a set of local indicators to measure performance of home educated children.

- There was a need to have conversations with families to ensure that the right support and the right access was available.

- Whilst some parents elected to home school, safeguarding was important and needed to be a duty on the Council. A letter should be sent to the

Secretary of State to highlight the issue.

7.5   RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

(a)   requests that it receives information on the following:-

(i)   what percentage of home educated children are receiving suitable or unsuitable education
(ii)   what length of time, on average, are children home educated
(iii)   what systems can be put in place to measure performance of home educated children

(b)   requests that a letter be sent to the Secretary of State for Education in lieu of a consultation response focusing on safeguarding and vulnerability issues of home educated children; and

(c)   encourages schools to accept flexible/part time school proposals from families to help keep children in school.

8.   INCLUSION UPDATE

8.1   The Committee received a report of the Director of Commissioning, Inclusion and Schools regarding SEND and the Inclusion Strategy.

8.2   In attendance for this item were Dawn Walton (Director of Commissioning, Inclusion and Schools) and Tim Armstrong (Head of SEND).

8.3   It was reported that a wide range of views had been sought about SEND and Inclusion in the city and how the needs were being met across education, health and care services. Consultation was ongoing and the results would be collated and analysed to inform the strategy development. A co-production session had been set to develop the draft strategy.

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

- The Written Statement of Action (WSOA) was being monitored on a monthly basis. Progress had been made, but there had not been enough of a culture shift to recognise this process.

- There was a perception from families and organisations that the statutory SEND Service was not performing well. The service was improving with 79% of Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans now completed in timeframe for the year.

- All actions in the WSOA would be completed by the time of the review and would be monitored by the Department for Education and NHS England.

- The Council, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and NHS England were working on robust joint commissioning arrangements.

- The Council was working on a training programme with the Department of Education to ensure that enough officers who write plans were appropriately trained, recognising that there was no national framework for training.

- The CCG were intending to increase the time of the designated clinical officer.

- There was a clear graduated approach and expectation of schools to put in place 'my plans' for children with SEND when they were needed. These were live documents and should be owned by the school.

8.5   RESOLVED: That the Committee requests that a copy of the Ofsted Report, the WSOA, details of what the Council is doing to achieve the actions and proof of progress, be submitted to its meeting to be held on 4th November, 2019.

9.   WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20

9.1   The Committee received a report of the Policy and Improvement Officer containing the Work Programme for 2019/20.

9.2   A draft scope for a task and finish group (Voice and Involvement of Children and Young People in this Committee) was included in the report and Members were requested to contact the Policy and Improvement Officer if they wished to be part of the group.

9.3   RESOLVED: That the Committee notes the contents of the report now submitted, together with the information now reported, and approves the contents of the Work Programme for 2019/20.

10.   DATE OF NEXT MEETING

10.1   It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Monday 14th October 2019, at 10.00am, in the Town Hall.

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Report to the Children and Families Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee
14th October 2019

Report of: **John Macilwraith, Executive Director, People Services**

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Subject: **Adoption Service Annual Report**

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Author of Report: **Vicky Brooke, Adoption Service Manager**

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Summary:

This is a cover sheet for the Adoption Service Annual Report 2018/19. The annual report provides information about the activity and performance of Sheffield City Council's Adoption Service in 2018/19. Strong performance in the Adoption Service is important for the people of Sheffield because it means children who need adoption will have it secured for them in a timely manner, and applicant adopters and adoptive parents will be supported in their journey to and through adoption.

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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	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	
Other	**Annual Report**

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

Consider and comment on the content of the annual report

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Background Papers: None

Category of Report: Open

Sheffield City Council Adoption Service Annual Report 2018/19

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report is the Annual Report of Sheffield City Council's Adoption Service. The report details the activity and performance of Sheffield's Adoption Service for 2018/19 and sets out improvement and development work planned for 2019/20.

2. Introduction

2.1 Sheffield City Council Adoption Service's remit is to recruit and approve prospective adopters, match and place children with approved adoptive families, and to provide adoption support to adopted children, adoptive parents and adopted adults.

2.2 It is a legislative requirement that the service provides reports on its activity and performance to Elected Members at least every 6 months

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3. Adoption Activity - Children 2018/19.

3.1 Table 1 below sets out the number of children who have been through different stages of the adoption process in Sheffield in 2018/19 compared to the previous two years:

Table 1

	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
Early permanence placements in year	11	4	5
Children made subject to SHOBPA decision	55	51	76
Children made subject to Placement Orders	41	38	56
Children matched to adoptive families	38	41	52
Children placed with adoptive families	38	44	44
Children adopted in year	40	39	51
Number of disrupted placements	1	2	3

3.2 As can be seen from Table 1, the number of children subject to a 'should be placed for adoption' is slightly higher than the previous year but has not returned to the significantly greater figure of 76 in 2016/17. The number of children adopted is also similar to the previous year. This has gone hand in hand with the growth of the number of special guardianship orders and is a pattern that is mirrored nationally.

3.3 The percentage of children who left care via adoption in 2018/19 was 14.8% which is similar to 2017/18 when it was 14.7%. Both these figures are down from 18.3% in 2016/17 but remain higher than the most recent national average of 13.9%.

3.4 Early permanence placements have grown over the year compared to the previous two years. The service made 11 'Foster to Adopt' placements in 2017/18 compared to 5 the previous year. These are used for children who have not yet had a plan of adoption agreed by the Court but are placed with approved adopters under Fostering Regulations, as a foster placement. We use these placements where it is assessed as extremely likely that the Court will agree a plan of adoption for a particular child, and we want to place the child with its forever family as early as possible in his or her life. The approved adopters foster the child, until such time as all assessments are complete and the Court has awarded a Placement Order, at which point the child becomes legally placed for adoption with the family. The advantage for the child is that it reduces the number of moves and means he/she is placed with their permanent family at a very young age. Any risk associated with foster to adopt placements is taken by the approved adopters. There is always the risk the plan of adoption may not be agreed, even if this is a small risk. The benefit to the adopter is that they get a child at a very young age that has experienced fewer moves since entering care.

3.5 During the year two of the children placed with Foster to Adopt carers were returned to the care of family members following a change in care plan away from adoption. Following this we have carried out a learning exercise to see if there are any practice issues for the service in relation to these cases and practice generally. An experienced member of the Independent Reviewing Service has scrutinized the cases and themes from this are being be shared across the teams. A key area to reinforce is the need to proactively and thoroughly explore all paternal family members as potential carers for children.

3.6 There was one child whose adoption placement disrupted during the year. The service held a disruption meeting to learn lessons from this disruption and the learning has been shared across the service.

4. Adoption Timeliness

4.1 National scorecards for adoption agencies are based on two primary indicators. These are used to compare performance of adoption agencies both nationally and with statistical neighbours. A low number of days represent good performance for the first two primary indicators which are known as A1 and A2). .

4.2 **A1**- **'average time in days between a child entering care and being placed for adoption':** Our average timescale for this indicator during the year 2018-19 was 351days. This isn't quite as good as the year before when it was 317 days but is still strong performance and 75 days quicker than the government target of 426 days.

4.3 **A2 – 'average time in days between placement order being granted and the decision to match with adoptive families:** Our average timescale for this indicator during the year 2018-19 was 159. This isn't as good as last year's performance when it was 122 days. We haven't yet met the Government target of 121 days. However this hasn't impacted upon A1 which is the overall timeframe from entering care to being placed for adoption. Additionally the time lag in this data (children aren't counted until they are adopted) means it does not cover the time since last September when the dedicated family finding team came into being. It is anticipated this will start to improve performance against this indicator. The increase in the use of fostering to adopt placements will also have a positive impact.
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4.4 Timeliness for achieving permanence for all children who enter care remains a priority. The re-organisation of the adoption team and drive to recruit more adopters are both part of this, along with the increased use of Early Permanence Placements. We now hold permanence tracking meetings for all children with the aim of reducing delay. This should impact on performance in a positive way. Unfortunately this won't be seen until the children currently being placed are adopted. There is a time lag in them being counted as children are not adopted for at least 6 months after they are placed.

5. Adoption Activity – Adopters 2018-19.

5.1 There has been a national fall in the numbers of adopters approved in the last couple of years. The gap between the number of children waiting nationally for adoptive families and the number of adopters approved has grown.This led to the decision to make improving the sufficiency of adoptive placements for the children needing them part of the Sheffield Children's Services Improvement Plan. The information below provides data in relation to adopters.

5.2 Recruitment and approval of adopters

	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17
Number of adopters approved	31	21	29
Number of Sheffield adoptive families with children placed in the year.	25	24	25

5.3 This table shows a significant increase (almost a 50%increase), in the number of adopters approved in the last 12 months. The target was 32 approvals and we were only one short of this.

5.4 Use of inter-agency adopters

- In total, 16 children were placed with adopters approved by external agencies during the year. Of these 10 were with other local authorities adopters and 6 were with voluntary adoption agencies. There is a fee when we place our

children with other agency adopters. For placing a single child with other local authorities' adopters the fee is £27,000. The fee for placing a sibling group of two is £43,000. It is more if we place with adopters from voluntary adoption agencies. The cost last year was £31,000 for a single child and £50,000 for a sibling group of two.

- The agency will quickly agree an interagency fee for children where we have no suitable internal adopters in order to avoid delay for the child. It also means a child leaves care more quickly so achieving permanence more promptly and the costs are off set against this in the longer run.

- At the same time as placing some of our children with other agency adopters, we have provided 5 adoptive homes for 5 children from other local authorities under the same inter agency fee arrangements.

5.5 Recruitment Activity Undertaken.

- The latter part of the year saw an increase in recruitment activity. The website has been updated to include a campaign page and the design of advertising materials has been updated. There has been a communications plan based around the new branding which has included advertising on buses and trams, along with adverts on clear channels and public banners during national adoption week and in the buildup to Christmas. Attendance at local events has continued.

- The above activity saw an increase in enquiries at the start of 2019. This will continue into 2019-20 while plans to regionalize unfold.

- We have started to develop a regional program of Preparation Training for adopters in conjunction with our neighboring local. This is to ensure there is always training available and that this doesn't lead to delay in processing adopters. It is due to go live in 2019-20. Our adopter voice coordinator is part of the working group to try to ensure it is relevant and informative to adopters.

- Where enquirers are interested in inter-country adoption they are directed to Adoption Yorkshire which is a voluntary agency who provide specialist advice to those wishing to adopt children from abroad. Sheffield commissions this service along with other members of the One Adoption Hub.

- Direct recruitment based on children's profiles took place at Exchange and Activity Days. We also placed children's details on Link Maker and the National Register run by First 4Adoption until it was suspended at the end of the year.

6. Adoption Support 2018-19

6.1 Adoption support work continues to grow and this is supported by the nationally available Adoption Support Fund for families in need of therapeutic support. The fund has been extended until 2020 and now covers adopted people up to the age of 21(25 with an EHC plan/SEN statement. Referrals to the fund in Sheffield have continued to grow. An accredited providers list is maintained regionally through North Yorkshire County Council on behalf of Yorkshire and Humberside.

6.2 There is no clarity about what will happen when the Adoption Support Fund ends in 2020 and this is a cause for concern. Expectations have been created about being able to access therapeutic services for children and families via this route particularly while meeting the threshold for CAMHS services remains difficult. However the future is unclear for both adoption agencies and families in this respect.

6.3 A challenge for the service has been to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of this therapy and we have had to think more clearly about how we measure and evaluate this. Further work is required around this. An additional element highlighted by the regional 'Adopteens' group is that young people are not always clear about why they are receiving therapy and the timing of it does not always feel right. This is a complex area as we know that many families and children have also benefited from the therapy provided via the fund.

6.4 We are currently creating a more robust review and evaluation process of support provided. At the time of writing the service is undertaking a systematic evaluation of the impact of therapeutic support and the wider support offer to adoptive families through surveying the views of all families we work with and who are in receipt of services. However we do have feedback from a large number of adopters about the value of the support provided either directly from this service or via the ASF. We have surveyed families about the support they have received. The majority of feedback is positive and adopters have said that the support provided has helped. There are some frustrations about the delays in providing therapy since, even with the ASF there is a shortage of providers. Additionally adopters can sometimes overestimate the ability of the adoption support team to access resources from other agencies such as education or CAMHS.

6.5 The data below provides information about adoption support referrals during the last year compared to 2017-18.

- **New requests for assessments for post adoption** support made to the adoption support team during the year 2018/19: **88 referrals** were received. Of these 73 resulted in the provision of support. During 2017/18: 60 assessments were requested and 50 resulted in the provision of support. This is a significant increase from last year to this.
- **Adult adoptee support**: there were **40 adults** in receipt of support, not one off advice during the year 2018-19. This compares to 33 during 2017-18.
- Letterboxes contacts: 570
- Adoption allowances: 311
- **Applications to the Adoption Support Fund**: There have been **78 applications** made to the ASF during 2018/19; these include new referrals,

current open cases and further requests for ongoing therapy. There were 80 ASF applications in 2017/18.

6.6 The Adoption Support Fund is only one element of Sheffield's adoption support offer. There are a number of support groups and activities in place to assist children of every age range (including teenagers), as well as their parents. The Adoption Fun Days in summer and the Christmas Party are well attended popular events. Newsletters are provided to adoptive families to inform them of events and give useful information. There is also a range of adopter led groups with an active WhatsApp group. Adopters also use the Adoption UK Adopter voice Facebook page to share ideas and opportunities. We are also members of New Family Social which provides support and advice to LGBT adopters.

6.7 We have 5 team members trained in different levels of theraplay, which is a therapy aimed at building attachments within adoptive families. They do group and individual work as well as training for adopters. One is a fully certified theraplay practitioner and member of the practicum. She does direct work with families but also through our Stars group, where she teaches theraplay techniques to adopters with young children. This group receives excellent feedback from those that attend.

6.8 Additionally the last year has seen us jointly commission, along with other Yorkshire and Humberside local authorities, an adoption support service from PAC UK/ Family Action/ Adoption UK. This includes the following support services for adoptive families, adult adoptees and birth families:

•   Advice line for those affected by adoption: birth families; adopted adults; adopters to be provided 5 days a week for 3 hours a day with two early evening sessions up to 7pm;

•   '*ADOPTEENS*' - Support for adopted teenagers and including a website, online chat forum where support can be provided, a Youth Council across Yorkshire and Humber with social events with the aim of using views and experiences to help improve and develop policy and practice.

•   Improving the participation of adopters' views (adopter voice) in service development and delivery of services across the region.

•   Improving the participation of birth parents in service development across the region.

•   Support for adopted adults, schedule 2 counselling and intermediary services

•   Pro- active birth parent support and counselling; and

•   Independent support for adoptive parents.

6.6 Adoption duty hours have been extended to offer an all-day duty service to members of the public regarding any adoption related matter.

7 Adoption Panel Business

7.1 Business and Meetings

- Sheffield Council operates a single adoption panel which meets every two weeks. There have been **23** panels in the period from 01/04/18 to 31/03/19. One panel was canceled due to insufficient business.

- The panel has recommended **32** approvals of adopters, although the decisions did not all occur in this year.

- There have been **36** matches considered by the panel. 6 of these were for sibling groups of 2 children.

- There have been **2** relinquished child presented to panel for consideration as to whether they should be placed for adoption.

- Panel activity has increased slightly from the year before due to the increase in adopter approvals. However there have been adequate panels to meet demand and no emergency panels have been required. During the year 2017-18 there were **20** panels. There were **44** matches considered and **21** approvals.

7.2 Panel Membership

- The panel has an experienced independent Chair who previously worked for BAAF. The medical advisers to the panel are very committed and knowledgeable in the field of adoption. They provide comprehensive and clear advice to the agency and to Panel- as well as adopters. Legal advice is readily available as required. Both the Chair and Agency Adviser have good relationships with these advisers.

- The central list is sufficient to meet need. It is in line with regulatory requirements. There are long standing, committed members who are very knowledgeable and they have a range of skills and experience. Over the last few years it has been recognised by the Panel that further diversity of panel membership would be welcomed and recruitment to Panel bears this in mind. Additional social work members are always welcome. An adopted adult and a care leaver would be welcome additions.

- The Agency Adviser has a long history in children's services and the field of adoption. She has good knowledge of the regulations and legal context of adoption. She has provided panel members with regular updates on cases as well as informing them of relevant case law and research. She has organised training for Panel and provides regular information on relevant case law or research. She has ensured appraisals and DBS checks are all up to date.

7.3 Quality Assurance

- Panel provides feedback to workers and the agency on the quality of reports presented and the worker's presentation. Since October 2018 this has included newly developed feedback forms which include a grading of the quality of reports in line with OFSTED guidelines. This is collated to give an overview of the quality of reports over time and so that workers and their managers can be given a clear indication of Panel's view of the standard of reports. The table below summarises the grades given for the period since the system was introduced in October 2018 to the end of March 2019:

	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Inadequate
Child permanence reports	0	9	8	3
Prospective adopter reports	2	14	6	0
Adoption Placement Reports/Support plans	0	11	9	0
Total	2	34	23	3

It should be noted now that no decisions are made on inadequate reports – decisions are deferred until reports are amended and of sufficient quality.

- The overall quality of report has improved but needs further improvement and following discussions between the Panel Chair and the ADM it has been agreed to provide mandatory training to team managers on the effective quality assurance of adoption reports. It is recognised that they are best positioned to drive up standards in this area.

- The Agency Adviser provides robust and thorough feedback on reports which come through for both Panel and SHOBPA ADM.

- It has been agreed by the Assistant Director for Provider Services and the ADM that any reports deemed inadequate by the Panel Chair and Agency Adviser prior to Panel should be stood down.

8. Regional Adoption Agency Update

8.1 Plans for the regionalisation of the adoption services in South Yorkshire have made some limited progress over the year. The four local authorities concerned have continued to look at possible models. A new Project Manager will develop a business case with a view to a regional Adoption Agency going live in 2020.

9. Developments in the Year:

9.1 **Re-structure of the Service**; The adoption team re-structured in September 2018. There is now a dedicated recruitment team. Support to families with special guardianship orders moved away from adoption to the connected person's team in the Fostering Service. There is now an adoption support and family finding team. The family finders are a dedicated group of workers who track children from an early stage. They pick up cases at legal gateway which facilitates early consideration of fostering to adopt as well as allowing them to understand which children are entering care and will potentially need adoptive families. They support children's social workers with the adoption element of the care planning. It is intended that this should improve the child's journey by ensuring that they are well prepared, have good quality information for later life and achieve permanence as soon as possible. It is anticipated that the benefits of this should be seen in our performance indicators over 2019 into 2020. Another element of this restructure has been to introduce an all-day duty service.

9.2. **Children's Improvement Plan**: Adopter recruitment increased and the re-vamped communications strategy saw the website being updated along with a more cohesive recruitment campaign. This went live in January 2019 and will continue into next year to assist with recruitment activity moving forward.

9.3 Alongside this we have looked to increase the frequency of preparation training by working with our neighbour's. Feedback from adopters is a big part of this development.

9.4 In terms of the Children's Improvement Plan the two key elements relating to adoption were to increase the numbers of approved adopters and the use of Early Permanence Placements. Both of these have been achieved. Both are ongoing.

9.5 **Adoption Tracking**: the team manager who supervises the adoption family finders now attends a legal gateway meeting which means tracking children from entering care is easier. They also have developed an effective tracking tool known as a 'traffic light' which helps them follow the progress of care proceedings and assessments. The third element of this is Permanence tracking meetings which replaced adoption tracking meeting in December 2018. These ensure all children who have not yet secured permanence are monitored and from an adoption perspective none are missed.

9.6 **Adopter Voice**: The new adopter voice meetings have been launched, facilitated by our Sheffield Adopter Voice Coordinator. In addition to local adopters input to service development he also brings the regional and national perspective about adopter's experience. We have held workshops on adoption support and the role of the virtual head in adoption. Information is fed into services and updates are provided to the group about how their input has been acted upon.   The adopter voice coordinator is part of the working group on developing adopter training and part of the work relating to regionalisation.

9.7 **Signs of Safety**: team members have continued to attend training in Signs of Safety and we have appointed leads within the adoption support team and the recruitment team. As a specialist service there are particular challenges around using this approach but it is being integrated into supervision and work with children. We are still understanding how best to use it in adopter assessments but have plans going into next year to look at how we include this with Signs of Wellbeing.

9.8 **Liquid Logic:** 2018 saw the introduction of a new Integrated Children's System (ICS) in Sheffield. This came into being in July 2018. There are still difficulties with some of the pathways particularly relating to adoption support and built in forms for adopters and children's pathways but these are being worked on. Staff are growing in confidence about using the system although learning all the time. It is hoped that this will make performance and management information more easily accessible. This hasn't yet bought the ability to run reports supporting performance due to pathway improvements being required.

9.9 **Staffing**: The service has had changes of staff. The recruitment team manager left in December 2018 and it took some time to replace her. The permanent replacement took up post on 01/07/19. This has impacted upon the team developments as operational leadership has been dispersed across the service. Additionally we have had three new social workers join the team- two in recruitment and one in adoption support. Filling the vacant posts was not easy with adverts having to go out several times. The reasons for this are unclear. The business support team continues to have high levels of sickness and performance issues which impacts upon business continuity. The team has also been adjusting to a new Service Manager and a new Assistant Director during this year. Both were appointed in March 2018.

10 Developments and Improvement Actions for 2019/20

10.1 **Corporate Parenting Strategy**-
As per the Corporate Parenting Strategy we will continue to work on sufficiency of adopters and the use of Early Permanence Placements. We have updated the recruitment and communications strategy to support this. We are also in the process of planning roadshows regarding good practice in early permanence placements.

10.2 **Signs of Safety**
Training is ongoing for all new team members. Sheffield Council has a 5 year agenda to implement the approach. We have workshops planned to look at its application across fostering and adoption recruitment as well as peer mentoring sessions to look at its application to specific cases. It is hoped this will help staff understand the approach and how it might be used in adoption. The worksite leads are actively supporting this. It is ongoing within the service.

10.3 **Performance Information**
The pathways in Liquid Logic relating to adoption are being further developed and this will support our ability to track performance and support our current methods of data collection. We will continue to work on improving timeliness; particularly in

terms of the length of time it takes from placement order to matching decision (A2), by continuing to embed the role of the family finders. The new adoption support pathway is currently under development.
.

10.4 Introduce a Peer Mentoring Scheme for adopters
It is intended to develop a Peer Mentoring Scheme in conjunction with Adoption UK and our neighbouring authorities in South Yorkshire. This is something that adopters have requested in adopter voice meetings and will impact positively on our adoption support offer. The experience of other agencies who have introduced this is that it has reduced the need for higher levels of support and helped stabilize adoptive families. Adopters will be trained to offer this service and the aim is to go live in October 2019.

10.5 Evaluation of Impact of Adoption Support Services:
Further develop the mechanisms for reviewing and evaluating the impact of adoption support services, including those commissioned via the ASF. This will include more of an emphasis on clarity of desired outcomes following assessment of need, review and evaluation against the goals - including the child's voice.

10.6 Continue to drive the Quality of Adoption Reports:
It is planned to roll out the mandatory training for team managers concerning what to look for in good child permanence and prospective adopter reports and learn from Panel grades/feedback. Good quality adoption support plans will also be supported by the introduction of a new pro-forma.

10.7 Regionalisation
A Project Officer has been appointed to finalise the business case for the South Yorkshire Regional Adoption Agency and this will be progressed over the year. The aim is to go live in 2020.

11. Summary

11.1 The last twelve months have seen a continuation of good performance in relation to timeliness from when children enter care to being placed for adoption (A1). We are meeting the national target. Also the percentage of children leaving care via adoption is nearly 15% which is above the national average. Timeliness from court decision to match (A2) has fallen slightly.

11.2 There has been a rise in the number of adopters approved this year and they have primarily provided families for Sheffield children although some have also provided adoptive families for children waiting nationally.

11.3 The team has restructured to help meet targets and develop services. This has included expanding the role of family finders and creating specialist adoption support workers.

11.4 The Adoption Panel has completed similar levels of activity to the previous year- the number of adopter approvals being the key increase. They have taken on a more robust QA role through the grading of panel reports.

11.5 Regionalisation of the adoption services in South Yorkshire has continued albeit slowly, with agreement at Directorate level about how to progress this work. Meetings have taken place with the Department for Education about the regional plans and direction.

11.6 Staff changes have presented difficulties but the restructure of the service has been positive and supported by staff. It has been a busy year and staff have worked hard and responded well to the challenges.

Vicky Brooke
Service Manager, Adoption

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Addendum to the Adoption Service Annual Report 2018/19

Response to Issues Raised at Scrutiny Committee Meeting February 2019 in Relation to Sheffield City Council Adoption Service

1. The following sets out a response as at the end of September 2019 to the requests made at the Scrutiny Committee meeting in February 2019 about the Council's Adoption Service.

2. The requests made by the Scrutiny Committee with a response are as follows:

(*i*) *Provide a briefing note for the Committee on the status of the Regional Adoption Agency and include progress reports within the regular Committee reports on the Recovery and Improvement Plan;*

Response:

The Government has set a requirement that all adoption services in the country become part of a regional adoption agency by 2020. Many areas nationwide have already established regional agencies, although there are still a number of places, including South Yorkshire, where they are not in place. During 2019 development work has re-commenced on establishing a South Yorkshire Regional Adoption Agency (RAA). This work is being led by Doncaster Children's Services on behalf of the Directors of Children's Services for the four South Yorkshire local Authorities. Doncaster has employed a project manager to lead the development work and he is working with the four Heads of Service for Adoption in the four authorities to establish a RAA by April 2020.

A draft business case has been completed on establishing the RAA and this will be considered at a meeting of the four Directors of Children's Services on 4th October 2019. Sheffield's position in the development work has been that moving to a RAA must be cost neutral, must not involve our staff moving to the RAA organisation under TUPE legislation, and that the new service improves outcomes for children and adoptive families.

The business case currently being considered proposes that staff are seconded into the RAA so that our adoption staff working for the RAA will remain employed by Sheffield City Council on the same terms and conditions, although they will be managed by the RAA Head of Service.

Once the four Directors of Children's Services have agreed a final proposal for the RAA it will need to be considered and approved through the usual political process in each of the four local authorities.

(ii) reconsider publicity and communications of the Adoption Support Fund, via the website and other means;

Response:

We have updated our website and this now includes a link to information about the Adoption Support Fund. We have also updated our adoption support leaflet with information about the Adoption Support Fund and include this in our information to adopters who are going through assessment. Adopters are reminded of the support available throughout the process. Our adoption newsletter is used to advertise training and support group meetings as well as direct information to adopters on our mailing list.

We have extended our adoption social worker duty hours to offer an all-day service and have a single point of contact so if people wish to enquire about the Adoption Support Fund, or any other support then they can use this option too.

(iii) circulate information on national benchmarks for adoptions;

Response:

We will be circulating information about benchmarks and targets in adoption to adopters and applicant adopters systematically via our information material, training and adopter newsletters

The key national benchmarks/performance targets about adoption are around the percentage of children adopted from care and the timeliness with which children are placed for adoption.

On these two measures Sheffield's Adoption Service performed relatively well in 2018/19. Firstly, we secured adoption from care for 40 children in 2018/19. This equates to 15% of the children who left care in 2018/18 leaving via adoption. This compares well to the latest national average on this measure of 13.7%

On the timeliness measure, on average for the 40 children adopted in 2018/19, we moved the children on their journey from admission to care to 'placed for adoption' in 351 days. This is 75 days quicker than the Government target for this measure. So far this year (2019-20), we continue to perform better than the national target.

There are no formal bench marks nationally on adoption support. We have and are developing performance measures for our adoption support service and these developments are listed below under section iv.

One indicator of how adoptive families progress post adoption, and related to the support that they may or may not get, is the number of adoption disruptions, i.e. those situations where there is family breakdown to such an extent that the adopted

child has to move from the family back into local authority care. It is very difficult to quantify the numbers of adoption disruptions post adoption nationally and locally as families sometimes move away from the local area and are not required to inform the local authority from which they adopted a child if it disrupts.

Research in 2014 by the University of Bristol (Julie Selwyn) found that there was a 3.2% disruption rate in adoptions post Adoption Order and that most of these happened in the child's teenage years. This was the biggest research study into adoption disruption ever with 37,000 adoptions over 12 years analysed.

We are aware of only one post adoption disruption in 2018/19 of a Sheffield child.

(iv)report back to the Committee in three months regarding formal feedback mechanisms post-adoption, including performance indicators.

Response:

We have recently established a number of performance and evaluation measures/systems in relation to adoption support, as follows:

The number of adoption support cases unallocated - all cases are currently allocated to a named worker

The timeliness of allocation – all adoption support assessments in the last 6 months have been allocated within our target 5 working days

The timeliness of adoption support assessments. There is no guidance set around how quickly an adoption support assessment is completed. However we have set a target equal to that for completing child in need assessments which is 45 days. For adoption support assessments completed in the past 6 months only just over 50% have been completed in the 45 day target. We are working hard to improve this. The development of the Liquid Logic Pathway for adoption support will make this easier to measure.

We have recently reviewed our systems for evaluating the quality and impact of adoption support assessments and services. Following completion of all assessments, an electronic alert is sent to the social worker to send an evaluation feedback form to the adopter asking their opinion on the worker and the way in which the assessment was carried out. We have started to receive some of these back and will be systematically evaluating what the feedback tells us and using it to develop the service.

We have been systematically surveying adopters who have received therapeutic support via the Adoption Support Fund to ascertain the views of its impact and effectiveness. To date 22 families have responded. Of those 15 rated the service

received as good (4) or excellent (11). (the remaining 7 gave varying narrative comments in their response but did not answer the grading question)

We encourage those who attend theraplay sessions or any of our support groups to complete feedback forms. Feedback from those who have completed feedback forms about theraplay have been very positive about its quality and impact. However all the questions are free text questions. We will be revising this and all other feedback forms to include scaling questions so it is possible to aggregate and collate the feedback into meaningful management information.

We use the Adopter Voice meetings to get input into service developments and adopters experiences of using a particular service. The next meeting is on 09/10/2019, when the AD for Provider Services is attending to answer questions and respond to matters raised by adopters. The Adoption UK co-ordinator also provides advice and feedback to the service based on both regional and national feedback. This has impacted upon our core offer to our adopters in terms of the range of support groups we offer. We have developed our post approval training to include workshops on contact, life story work and therapeutic parenting. Adopters have told the service for some time that they would like a Peer Mentoring Scheme. Sheffield, along with the other South Yorkshire local authorities is exploring commissioning a Peer Mentoring Scheme from Adoption UK.

In the recent Ofsted inspection of Sheffield's Children's Services, Ofsted reported positively about the Adoption Service, including our adoption support offer, as follows:

'Systems, processes and procedures for recruiting and supporting adopters are effective. The service has a strong programme of targeted recruitment to increase placement options for those children who wait longer for a new home. Adoption assessments are thorough, with good analysis. Adoption panels execute their functions well and provide good scrutiny of applicants' motives to adopt. Strong quality assurance systems improve the quality of reports, ensuring that a clear focus on improvement is maintained. Adoption support plans are clear, and adopters say that they receive good-quality social work support. There is a range of support services for children and adopters, who are at various stages of their adoption journey. Adopters speak positively about the support they receive. The service is using the Adoption Support Fund effectively to buy packages of therapeutic support and training and put them to goof effect.'

Next Steps

The performance measures on children adopted and timeliness are monitored each month at the Directors Performance Clinic. We plan to include indicators around adoption support performance into the Directors Performance Clinic, from October, to ensure senior management oversight and to drive improvements.

Paul Dempsey

Assistant Director Provider Services

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Report to the Children and Families Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee
14th October 2019

Report of: **John Macilwraith, Executive Director, People Services**

Subject: **Fostering Service Annual Report**

Author of Report: **Anne-Marie Banks, Fostering Service Manager**

Summary:

This is a cover sheet for the Fostering Service Annual Report 2018/19. The annual report provides information about the activity and performance of Sheffield City Council's Fostering Service in 2018/19. Strong performance in the Fostering Service is important for the people of Sheffield because it means children who need foster care placements will have access to high quality and local foster care and Sheffield's foster carers will receive high quality support.

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	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	
Other	**Annual Report**

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

Consider and comment on the content of the annual report

Background Papers: None

Category of Report: Open

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

People Services

Children & Families

Fostering Service

Annual Report

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1   Purpose of Report

1.1   This report is an annual report which sets out the business and activity within Sheffield City Council's Fostering Service in 2018/19.

1.2   The report provides performance and activity data on the service, reports on the activity and functioning of the Fostering Panel, and details service developments that have occurred in the year and those planned for 2019/20.

2   Introduction

2.1   Sheffield City Council Fostering Service operates within the Fostering National Minimum Standards, the Fostering Services (England) Regulations 2011 (the "2011 Regulations"), and the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010, which form the basis of the regulatory framework under the Care Standards Act 2000 for the conduct of fostering services.

2.2   It is a legislative requirement that the Fostering Service reports on its activity and performance to Elected Members.

2.3   Prior to September 2013, local authority fostering services were inspected separately by Ofsted. Since then, inspection of local authority fostering services work has been incorporated firstly into the Single Inspection Framework and now currently in the Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) Framework, which takes into account the role of fostering in the wider children's services department.

2.4   Sheffield City Council Fostering Service's remit is to provide family based placements for Sheffield's children in care population. The Service recruits and approves prospective foster carers, matches and places children with

approved foster carers, and provides support and supervision to approved foster carers.

2.5   At end of reporting year 2018/19, Sheffield City Councils' Fostering Service is made up of three 'Fostering Supervision Teams' who support and supervise our foster carers; a Recruitment and Assessment Team', whose focus is on the recruitment and assessment of prospective foster carers; and a dedicated Connected Persons Team. The Connected Persons Team undertakes Regulation 24, (temporary approval of a foster carer) assessments through to full Connected Persons Foster Carer approval. Childcare legislation requires that these connected person foster carers, who are most often grandparents or other close relatives to the looked after child, be assessed and approved, where suitable, as local authority foster carers. The Connected Persons Team also undertakes Private Fostering assessment and support, and provides support to families subject to Special Guardianship arrangements.

2.6   In this report we are able to demonstrate a net gain of foster carers in the reporting year, and an increased number of Sheffield's looked after children cared for by the service. Our foster carers do a remarkable job for Sheffield's children in care and in transforming the lives of so many of children.

3   Our Vision and Aims

3.1   Our City's 'Big Ambition' is that every child, young person and family achieves their full potential. Sheffield's Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018/20 sets out how we are going to meet this ambition for our looked after children and care leavers. We are determined to ensure our children and young people in care, adopted children and care leavers succeed.

3.2   Our vision is that 'children and young people are safe and supported to achieve their full potential'. We set out four principles to how we will work to achieve this, as follows:

> o   Children are at the centre of our practice
> o   We intervene at the earliest opportunity

o Our workforce is skilled and supported to do the work that they need to

o Children and families benefit from high performing and high quality services

3.3 The Fostering Service supports the department's policy to enable children and young people to stay with their birth families wherever this is safe and suitable and where they cannot, to place them without delay with alternative carers.

3.4 The aim of Sheffield's Fostering Service is to provide high quality foster care as part of a full range of accommodation provision for looked after children and provide the best possible standards of care, safety and protection for children who cannot live with their own families. In doing so the service strives to:

o Provide a service that is welcoming, accessible and inclusive

o Provide a choice of high quality foster placements to meet the individual needs of children and young people

o Ensure foster carers provide a good level of parenting to all children in foster care and assist children and young people to engage in their care and placement planning

o Work together with partner agencies to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people, to enhance and develop health, education & well-being

o Work with foster carers to support 'staying put' placements for children remaining post 18

o Provide support and assessments for family and friends of foster carers

4 Looked After Children Placement Data

4.1 Sheffield City Council Fostering Service keeps children at the heart of what it does. At the end of 2018/19 we were caring for 19 more children and young people in mainstream in-house fostering provision than we were at the same time last year. This closely correlates with the reduction in numbers of children that have been placed in Independent Fostering Agency placements. This means that more of our children have the opportunity to live in family-

based care within the local community that they know and identify with, where they can continue to have meaningful relationships with the people and places important to them with quick access to local provision. All of this will have a positive impact on our children's self-esteem, identify and wellbeing, and support them to achieve better outcomes through their childhood and into adult life.

4.2 Sheffield's overall looked after children population on 31st March 2019 totalled 638 children and young people compared to the 628 children who were looked after on 31st March 2018. This figure not only includes children in fostering provision, but also those in residential care, adoptive placements., and semi-independent living for older young people.

4.3 As of March 2019 there were a total of 451 looked after children placed in fostering households. Of those, 268 children were placed with Sheffield's in-house mainstream foster carers, 45 children placed in connected persons foster care, and 138 in independent fostering agencies placements. There were 19 more children being cared for by our Sheffield City Council foster carers and 19 fewer children placed in Independent Fostering Arrangement (IFA) placements.

4.4 Despite this improving picture, Sheffield does not yet have a sufficient number and range of in-house foster carers to meet the needs of all our looked after children without commissioning placements from the independent sector. This means that we have to place children in independent fostering agency placements. These are always more expensive and often out of city. In some cases, where we cannot identify an in-house foster carer or an independent fostering agency placement, a young person may have to be placed in a children's home. This may be in contrast to the child's needs for a family and again will be very expensive and may be out of city.

4.5 We aim to place as many of our looked after children in our in-house fostering placements as possible. As such it is essential that we have access to a sufficient number and range of high quality, local foster carers which can only

be achieved by increasing the numbers of carers approved while at the same time reducing the numbers of those carers leaving the agency.

5   Voice of the child in care

5.1   In this reporting year, Sheffield City Council commissioned the 'Bright Spots' Survey to consult with our looked after children about their experiences in order to better understand the voice of the child in care, (University of Bristol and Coram BAAF). The survey findings identified 8 'Bright Spots' of good practice, (areas of practice where children's responses were more positive about their experience and wellbeing than children in other local authorities who have undertaken the Bright Spots survey and for children in the general population who have been asked similar questions). The vast majority of our children, 88% had moderate to high well-being. High numbers reported having a trusting relationship with a carer and that their carers were interested in their education. *"I really like that I have been able to stay in the same school with my friends," (Child aged 4-7yrs).*

5.2   Children and young people in Sheffield felt safer in comparison with children being brought up by their parents: 95% reported feeling safe in care compared with 75% of peers living at home. *"Everything is ok. I'm very happy where I live," (Child aged* 8-11yrs). Most children and young people (63%) in Sheffield were in placements where there was a pet and where they were given opportunities to explore the outdoors. A greater proportion of young people (85%) liked school in comparison with their peers (80%) in the general population. Compared with the responses (78%) from looked after children (8-11yrs) in 17 LAs, in Sheffield a larger proportion (90%) felt that they were given opportunities in school to be trusted. All (100%) the children (8-11yrs) felt included by their social workers in decision-making compared with 84% of the same age group in 17 LAs. We are really pleased with the findings from this survey, but there are areas for development and an action plan will be devised in 19/20 to promote even better outcomes for our children in care.

6 Placement stability

6.1 Placement stability in Sheffield is good. On short term stability, 9.6% of our looked after children has 3 or more placements moves in a year compared to 10% nationally. On long term stability, 71.2% of our children in care for at least 2.5 years had been in the same placement for the last two years, compared to 70% nationally and 66.1% amongst statistical neighbours.

6.2 In 2018/19 there were 6 placement disruptions of children in our foster care; 4 of the young people moved onto other fostering families within the service. Research suggests that disruptions are much less likely in younger children. In comparison, 'teenage' placements have a 50% chance of breaking down through disruption. This appears to be the case in the disruptions which occurred in within our Fostering Service in 2018/19 with all of the children being aged from 11 years of age up to 16+ years. Whilst the number of disruptions may be relatively low, we realize that for that young person, the loss of this relationship and connection can have a detriment impact of them. Wherever possible, foster carers are encouraged to maintain links and relationships with our young people who move on, and many of our foster carers continue to be a vital source of emotional and physical support to that young person as they move into adulthood.

7 Recruitment and Retention Activity and Outcomes in 18/19

7.1 Recruitment and retention of foster carers is probably the most important factor for any fostering service in delivering an effective fostering service for looked after children. In seeking to improve recruitment and retention, Sheffield City Council has recently invested £1.1 million into the fostering service, to improve financial incentives and wrap around support to carers with an ambition to recruit more carers and lose fewer.

7.2 In 2018/19 the Service approved 24 new foster carers, and 'lost' 20 foster carers through retirement and deregistration giving an overall net gain of 4 fostering families in that reporting year. This reversed the trend from the previous year where we had a net loss of 10 carers.

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7.3   At the time of writing, (June 2019) we have approved five fostering families in 2019/20. We have a further 21 families in assessment and booked on to Foster Panel before September 2019 and 15 applicants booked on to preparation training. Our target is to approve 40 new foster carers in 19/20 and to achieve a net gain of at least 20 new carers.

7.4   Whilst it is clearly important that we maintain a grip on our recruitment activity, it is equally important that we understand the reasons why foster carers leave the agency to maximise our sufficiency potential. All fostering services lose carers during any one year to retirement, deciding fostering is no longer for them, or that their family circumstances have changed, so there is a need to continually recruit just to maintain capacity. The Fostering Stocktake (Narey & Owers February 2018) estimate that the average carer loss per fostering agency is approximately 10% of each agency's carer pool annually.In reviewing the reasons why carers left the agency in 2018/19 the following was noted:

No: of households	Reason for leaving
4	Deregistered due to safeguarding concerns
2	Carer resigned as the agency was working with them surround practice concerns
2	Secured Special Guardianship Order fro the fostered child
12	Change in circumstances, including moved out of area, returning to paid employment, own children requiring more support, becoming grandparents, and care needs of elderly family members

7.8   Whilst there is an investment and strategy around the recruitment of foster carers, a key task in 19/20 is to build on our retention strategy, which this year has included the recent investment, engagement of our carers, annual celebrations events, fostering forums, placement support and psychological intervention to ensure that foster carers are provided with a high quality support offer.

7.9   On reviewing carers letters of resignation, it has been pleasing that retired foster carers have generally been pleased by the fostering experience, with other carers indicating that they would like to return to fostering at a later stage in their lives. As one retiring foster carer described, "*it is with a heavy heart…. I have decided to retire after nine years …. I have enjoyed every moment …. we have taken every child and their families into ours.. but for now the right thing to do is take a break from fostering. Thank you to everyone in fostering… it's been great. Who knows in the future we might be back to do it all again*".

8   Recruitment Plans for 2018/19:

8.1   A full and detailed Recruitment and Retention Strategy for 19/20 has being produced based in partnership with the Councils' Communications and Marketing Team. Recruitment events have been timetabled throughout the year, focussing on three specific campaigns. These are in May which concentrates on harnessing the national promotion of fostering in the national Foster Care Fortnight campaign. Secondly in October to re-launch a refreshed campaign focussing on images of our foster carers and to target the 'empty nesters' within the population who may have recently had birth children leaving home to start university. Finally, in January 2020 when we will be focussing on promoting the impact of stories written by our foster carers giving their experiences and reflections of being a foster carer for the Council. This approach looks to stimulate good quality enquiries by telling stories and communicating key messages relating directly to those people who could foster.

8.2   In addition we have ensured that we remain visible across the city, having banners up in all local parks, advertising on the back of public transport and also attendance at key events across the city including park runs, Owls in the Park, Pride, Out of this World and the Christmas lights switch on.

8.3   The service ensures we have high visibility on Facebook/Twitter updating our posts 2-3 times per week and we hold regular (6 weekly) information evenings in the city centre.

8.4 The increased financial package and support offer to foster carers means that the recruitment campaign can now be more explicit with regard to finances carers will receive and promote the benefits of fostering for the Local Authority.

8.5 We also continue to revisit all enquiries, even those that have been rejected for reasons such as 'no spare room' or 'not financially viable at present'. By re-contacting enquires within an agreed timescale to ascertain if their circumstances have changed, they know that they can come back to us. It is more financially viable to focus on converting existing leads than generating new enquiries.

9 Support and supervision for carers:

9.1 All carers are allocated a fostering social worker who undertakes their assessment; where possible for consistency they will maintain some involvement until the point of first placement is made. Another fostering social worker will be identified and allocated post approval, who will continue to support and supervise the foster carer post approval in their journey as foster carer.

9.2 All carers are offered a mentor for the first 12 months post approval to offer additional support and guidance. Consideration is given to the mentor carer's approval category and location of carer so support can be more practical if necessary.

9.3 All carers are visited a minimum of every 6 weeks. Many will be visited far more frequently, depending on their circumstances.

9.4 During office hours we have a duty service available to carers and outside working hours we have a foster carer's telephone helpline.

9.5 Sheffield City Council has invested in a Clinical Psychologist within the fostering service. This enables a better understanding for foster carers on the

impact of trauma and abuse on children and the significance of building healthy attachment relationships. The psychologist provides consultation to carers and workers and attends team around the placement meetings to give a therapeutic perspective on the needs of children and carers, and how best to support everyone. In helping carers, there has been additional investment in training and development and the fostering service have recently recruited an additional training and development officer and we are looking forward to her starting in post and being in a position to develop this role.

9.6   The Service has a contact and liaison officer, whose key role is liaise and engage with foster carers to ensure that they are heard and promote any upcoming events to encourage attendance and collaboration.

9.7   The Service holds quarterly Foster Carer Forums, and has a closed secure webpage, Foster Forum, where carers can book onto training and access any policies and procedures and be updated on any service developments.

9.8   There are 7 foster carer support groups across the city that takes place on a monthly basis. The support groups are well attended by foster carers, which demonstrate how our foster carers identify with the service. The groups include induction year group, BME, LGBT and men's support group. The service also offers events for sons and daughters of foster carers through the year. In partnership with foster carers the service facilitate a range of events and activities, including fostering families picnics/ parties in the park events, 'bag a book event,' a 'fostering family fun day,' and involvement and contribution toward the annual 'Star Awards,' celebration event.

9.9   For the coming year 2019/20, the Service have introduced three cultural celebrations; an Eid Celebration, a children's Christmas party and a Christmas themed evening celebration event for foster carers.

10   Fostering Panel:

10.1   In 18/19 a total of 24 panels meetings were held with 83 items of business being considered as outlined below:

New approvals	25
1sr Review	12
Resignations	16
Re-approvals after allegations	9
Re-approvals after practice concerns	3
Reg 24 connected carer	18

10.2   In general, two panels are held a month, and where necessary additional panels can be arranged. The Service has two different panels with different membership. Each panel has an independent chair with significant knowledge and experience of fostering issues and all panels meetings have been quorate which reflects the excellent commitment of the panel members.

10.3   There continues to be a system of each panel having a dedicated professional Panel Advisor. This is well established and continues to work well and provide consistency within and across panels. The Panel Advisor has been recruited on a permanent basis in the service to facilitate this role in addition to contributing towards development plans, liaising with the ADM, escalating concerns and areas of good practice, conducting exit interviews and contribute to the six-month and annual fostering panel report. Both panels have the same Chair and Vice-Chair, enabling the panel to remain consistent in its leadership and in the recommendations they make. The Vice-Chair assumes the chairing role four times per year in order to develop and maintain their chairing skills.

10.4   Regarding the quality assurance role of panel, all panel members have an individual responsibility to raise 'practice issues' as a contribution to quality assuring the work undertaken by the Fostering Service. This ranges from typing and factual errors to practice/performance issues of individual workers or feedback to the Service at a more senior level in relation to how procedures and policies are being implemented. These issues are reported back to the service predominately via the Panel Adviser, but also

directly from the Panel Chair and Vice Chair to the Agency Decision Maker via business meetings. Challenging the performance and practice of the Fostering Service is seen as an essential role of panel.

10.5   Business Meetings are held twice per year and these are an effective means of communication between the Fostering Panel and the Service.

10.6   All panel members are reviewed annually in relation to their performance as panel members. Reviews take place throughout the year to coincide with members appointments. The panel member reviews are instrumental in establishing the training needs for panel members.

10.7   Panel training in 18/19 included Sign of Safety, Regulation 24 and Connected Carers assessment, approval and legislation.

10.8   All new panel members have an induction which consists of a welcome pack, the opportunity to observe panel, and a mentor who is an experienced panel member

10.9   The Agency Decision Maker (ADM) is a nominated person within the Local Authority who has the legal responsibility to make an approval decision. The ADM's role is to consider the fostering panel's recommendation and to make the final decision. In most circumstances the ADM accepts the fostering panel's recommendation; the Panel Advisor offers advice and support to enable this process. The ADM for Sheffield City Fostering Service is Paul Dempsey, the Assistant Director, Provider Services.

11   Permanency Planning

11.1   The Service has also recently recruited a family finder for identifying permanence fostering placements for children who need them and has revised the process for formally placing and matching children within permanent family-based care. The worker who came to post in May 2019 has

quickly begun work on improving practice in this area, revising children and family profiles and introduced guidance on best practice in this area. Whilst outside this reporting year, a new role of fostering panel will be to consider permanence fostering matches for children and their carers, and make recommendations to the ADM. This is in line with best practice. Again it is acknowledgement that this will increase Panel business.

12   Temporary Approved and Connected Carers

12.1   Regulation 24 of the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 relates to the immediate placements of children with relatives and friends not previously approved as a foster carer. Where the local authority is satisfied that an immediate placement with a connected person is the most appropriate placement for the child even though they are not approved as foster carers, the carers can have temporary approval for a period of up to 16 weeks allowing time for an assessment of their suitability to take place. In exceptional circumstances an extension can be allowed of 8 weeks. Any placements outside of this timeframe are deemed to be unregulated.

12.2   In 2018, the Connected Carers team was established, whose key task was to undertaken Regulation 24, (temporary approval of foster carers) through to approval. Since this time there has been a greater management oversight on performance and timeliness. The Service work closely with colleagues in field work, and have provided training to workers across the Council to promote the process for these carers securing Special Guardianship Orders for the children they care for.

12.3   In 2018/19 18 families were fully approved as connected persons foster carers; many went on to secure an SGO arrangement providing permanency for these children outside care.

13   Developments in 2018/19

13.1   In summary developments in the year include:

- Increased fostering management capacity by one new post to increase capacity in managing fostering social workers who support foster carers. In 2019 we saw one Fostering Team Manager retire, and two new Team Managers join the service.

- Increased the fostering reviewing officer resource by 0.5 posts

- Introduced a fostering permanence family finder role to secure timely permanence in foster carer for those children that require this. In doing this, we have refreshed our fostering to permanency matching process in-line with best practice

- Increased social worker resource by one full time post in the recruitment team to prevent drift in progressing assessments

- Recruited a second fostering training lead to promote the understanding of the needs of our children in care.

- Restructured the service, creating a dedicated recruitment and assessment team and a team dedicated to connected persons foster carers, private fostering and special guardianship support.

- Worked in collaboration with residential providers in introducing Project Aspire. Recruited one foster carer household into the Aspire hub. (Project Aspire is a new initiative that seeks to link foster carers to residential homes in order to move children from residential to foster placements.)

- Provided bespoke fostering specific team training around best practice to promote the quality of service offered to carers with an overall aim of improving the carer experience and therefore retention of foster carers

14 Developments and Improvements for 19/20

14.1   The Service has the following development aims for 2019/20

- Increase our investment into fostering by £1.1 million to improve recruitment and retention of foster carers

- To recruit 40 new foster carers by end of reporting year and to achieve a net gain of at least 20 carers

- Improve retention of existing foster carers through continued improvement of the service and our overall support and supervision offer

- Maintain placement stability outcomes for looked after children. The Service have recently a introduced team around the placement process and revised the placement disruption process and these need embedding within the Service

- Improve emotional wellbeing of looked after children in foster care through the additional therapeutic resource and training offer

- Further embed the fostering permanence protocol in order to formally place children in foster care in permanence placements, where it is their plan, as swiftly as possible.

- Embed the new fostering review process and ensure timeliness of reviews in general, including first reviews being presented to fostering panel

- Improve educational engagement and progress

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- Increase the number and percentage of young people placed in foster care (as opposed to residential care) and in in city placements and in-house (as opposed to out of city) in line with best practice and children's bests interests.

15 Summary

15.1 In this reporting year, we have seen an increase of the number of new foster carers recruited to the service compared to the previous year and turned a net loss of 10 carers in 2017/18 into a net gain of plus 4 in the reporting year. The service was caring for 19 more children at the end of the year than the end of the previous year and we reduced our reliance on commissioned IFA provision, using 19 fewer of these placements. This means more of our children remain in Sheffield, the community they call home and identify with.

15.2 Children placed with our in-house foster carers tell us that they feel safe, are listened to and are given opportunities to enjoy and achieve. Sheffield City Council placements are stable and there is a low disruption rate ensuring that our children are given opportunities to develop lasting and meaningful relationships.

15.3 We realise there is still a lot to do. We need to further increase the numbers of foster carers approved by the service, and reduce reliance on commissioned IFA provision. We need to refresh our retention policy building on all that Sheffield has to offer including carer engagement, an attractive financial offer, and wrap around support and activities.

15.4 This year we will continue to focus on permanence and quality to ensure that the service to our foster carers and most importantly to our children is of a high standard. We will continue to embed best practice ways of working and collaborate with foster carers to ensure that their opinions are sought and listened to.

15.5 We will develop stronger links with field social workers teams and more importantly our looked after children's teams to ensure we are working

closely, for example through permanency matching and team around the placement meetings to ensure we are working together in the best interests of our children.

Anne-Marie Banks, Service Manager, Fostering

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Report to Children, Young People & Family Support Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee
Monday 14th October 2019

Report of: Policy and Improvement Officer

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Subject: Work Programme 2019/20: Children, Young People & Family Support Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

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Author of Report: Alice Nicholson, Policy and Improvement Officer
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The current work programme for 2019/20 is attached at Appendix 1 for the Committee's consideration and discussion. The work programme has been updated and items scheduled for some of the meetings. The work programme includes a list of and the Committee is asked to prioritise and agree remaining items to be scheduled in line with the sections of this report that refer to role of scrutiny, determining the work programme. Where an issue is not appropriate for inclusion on a meeting agenda, but there is significant interest from members, the Committee can choose to request a written briefing.

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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	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	
Other	X

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:
- Consider and discuss the committee's work programme for 2019/20
- Prioritise and agree remaining items to be scheduled

Background Papers: Sheffield Council Constitution
Category of Report: OPEN

Work Programme 2019/20: Children, Young People & Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee - Monday 14th October 2019

1.0 What is the role of Scrutiny?

1.1 Scrutiny Committees exist to hold decision makers to account, investigate issues of local concern, and make recommendations for improvement. The Centre for Public Scrutiny has identified that effective scrutiny:

- Provides 'Critical Friend' challenge to executive policy makers and decision makers
- Enables the voice and concern of the public and its communities
- Is carried out by independent minded governors who lead and own the scrutiny process
- Drives improvement in public services and finds efficiencies and new ways of delivering services

1.2 Scrutiny Committees can operate in a number of ways – through formal meetings with several agenda items, single item 'select committee' style meetings, task and finish groups, and informal visits and meetings to gather evidence to inform scrutiny work. Committees can hear from Council Officers, Cabinet Members, partner organisations, expert witnesses, members of the public. Scrutiny Committees are not decision making bodies, but can make recommendations to decision makers.

2.0 Determining the work programme

2.1 Attached to this report at Appendix 1 is current work programme 2019/20.

2.2 It is important the work programme reflects the principles of effective scrutiny, outlined above at 1.1, and so the Committee has a vital role in ensuring that the work programme is looking at issues that concern local people, and looking at issues where scrutiny can influence decision makers. The work programme remains a live document, and there will be an opportunity for the Committee to discuss it at every Committee meeting, this might include:

- Prioritising issues for inclusion on a meeting agenda
- Identifying new issues for scrutiny
- Determining the appropriate approach for an issue – e.g. select committee style single item agenda vs task and finish group
- Identifying appropriate witnesses and sources of evidence to inform scrutiny discussions
- Identifying key lines of enquiry and specific issues that should be addressed through scrutiny of any given issue.

2.3 Members of the Committee can also raise any issues for the work programme via the Chair or Policy and Improvement Officer at any time.

3.0 Meeting Dates 2019/20

3.1 Meetings have been scheduled for Mondays 10-12pm on the following dates:
- 4th November 2019
- 2nd December 2019
- 3rd February 2020
- 2nd March 2020

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

- Consider and discuss the committee's work programme for 2019/20
- Prioritise and agree remaining items to be scheduled in the work programme

Last updated: 6th September 2019

Please note: the work programme is a live document and so is subject to change.

Children, Young People & Family Support		Mondays 10am-12pm	
Topic	**Reasons for selecting topic**	**Lead Officer/s**	**Agenda Item/ Briefing Paper/Task Group**
Monday 15th July 2019 10am-12pm			
Draft Work Programme 2019/20	*Setting a work programme - priorities for inclusion in the work programme - informal session - statutory and good practice to scrutinise, SEND Action Plan, Adoption and Fostering, Task and Finish.*		Agenda Item
Monday 16th September 10am-12pm			
OFSTED report of Inspection of Sheffield children's social care services - July 2019	*Consider the report of this OFSTED inspection, judgement and what needs to improve (improvement journey)*	*Jackie Drayton, Cabinet Member for Children and Families; John Doyle, Director of Business Strategy*	
Home Schooling	*Hear an update on SCC submission to the national consultation and response, statutory responsibilities of an LA with regard home school children and what SCC do, future plans of the service provision*	*Cabinet Member for Education and Skills; Joel Hardwick and Andrew Jones, Commissioning, Inclusion and School Services*	

Inclusion Update	*Hear about the work towards an inclusion strategy*	*Cabinet Member for Education and Skills; Tim Armstrong, Head of SEN*	
Monday 14th October 10am-12pm			
Adoption Service - Annual Report	Holding to account – consider annual report; and how service works for 'keeping families together'	Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Carly Speechley and Paul Dempsey; Children's Care Council; Sheffield Care Leavers Union	Agenda Item
Post adoption monitoring	Follow up on specific ask when Committee considered the previous annual report	Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Carly Speechley and Paul Dempsey	Agenda Item
Progress with Regional Agency for adoptions	Follow up on specific ask when Committee considered the previous annual report	Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Carly Speechley and Paul Dempsey	Agenda Item
Fostering Service - Annual Report	Holding to account – consider annual report	Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Carly Speechley and Paul Dempsey; Children's Care Council; Sheffield Care Leavers Union	Agenda Item
Monday 4th November (10am-12pm)			
Pupil Performance/outcomes 2018/19 - city performance and review of the previous school improvement strategy leading in to the new strategy	Pupil Outcomes, City context and school performance	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills; SCC lead officer; Learn Sheffield	
Learn Sheffield - Primary School Locality Action Plans	A follow-on request of the Committee November 2018 and March 2019 - pupil outcomes 2018 reporting	Learn Sheffield	

Inclusion Strategy	Policy Development - early input to the strategy that should provide framework and direction for SEND, exclusions - all age (Cabinet Member for Children and Families)	Cabinet Member for Education and Skills; Dawn Walton, SCC; Stephen Betts, Learn Sheffield	
SEND Inspection - Action Plan Update	Monitoring of the SEND Action Plan in response to OFSTED & CQC inspection	Cabinet Members for Children and Families and for Education and Skills; Dawn Walton (Tim Armstrong & Joel Hardwick); CCG; Schools SEND (Learn Sheffield)	
Monday 4th November - **New date to be confirmed for separate meeting at 4:30 - 6:30**			
Make Your Mark - UK youth consultation - outcomes 2019		Youth Council/Cabinet;	
Monday 2nd December 10am-12pm			
Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report	Holding to account - consider Annual Report; and impact of new safeguarding policies and practices	Cabinet Member for Children and Families; Independent Chair of Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership - David Ashcroft; Lead Officer - Tina Gilbert; Young Advisors; Children's Care Council; Sheffield Care Leavers Union	Agenda Item
Sheffield Sexual Exploitation Service Annual Report		Independent Chair of Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership - David Ashcroft; Lead Officer - Tina Gilbert	Agenda Item

TBC - Children's Social Care Improvement and Recovery Plan Update			
Monday 3rd February 10am-12pm			
Pupil Performance/Outcomes 2018/19 - exception reporting			
Monday 2nd March 10am-12pm			
Children and Young People's Mental Health Transformation Programme	An update for the Committee 12 months after their consideration of the programme March 2019	Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Jackie Drayton; Dawn Walton (SCC); CCG; Sheffield Children's Hospital	
Items still to be prioritised and scheduled 2019/20			
Schools Funding Formula Impact - could add to Pupil Outcomes item	For this Committee impact on delivery and strategy, funding as a lens for all items; Schools Forum	Mark Sheikh	
Leader's Review of Young People's Services; and universal youth provision - including youth clubs;	Policy development - Update on Leader Review and an Integrated Approach to Supporting Young People; this links with commissioning and provision. Child Criminal Exploitation and work of Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee	Sam Martin	Briefing note; and follow on policy development agenda item

To scope requirement: Update on services and support, for Gypsy and Travelling, and Roma Families	Receive an update on services and data - a follow on from last year's report	Cabinet Members for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety, Education and Skills, Children and Families	
Outcomes of University graduates; post 16 in the city - 'A' level and degree apprenticeships	Want to understand if there is a gap across provisions in the city that impacts on outcomes - inequality; progress in university and job outcomes by characteristics, school type, place (Sheffield young people) - BME progress in university and job outcomes		to be scoped
MAST and Early Years	update on this multi-agency approach in Sheffield; and an update on Early Years Services/Family Centres/Great Start in Life; working with schools	Jackie Drayton, Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Carly Speechley, Director of Children and Families	
Other areas of work - not agenda items			
Voice and influence of Children and Young People	task and finish group of the committee, to work with young people on specific agenda issues and best way to involve	Cllrs Steinke (Task Group Chair), Chaplin, Grocutt, Ross, and Diocese Rep Sam Evans	Scrutiny Task and Finish Group
Gun and Knife Crime and young people - joint working with Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee	Chair of Children, Young People & Families Support Scrutiny Committee with Chair of Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee; role of Children's Social Care		To be scoped

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