



Meeting: **Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Date/Time: **Monday, 4 April 2016 at 1.30 pm**

Location: **Sparkenhoe Committee Room, County Hall, Glenfield**

Contact: **Miss. F. Gall (0116 305 3407)**

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Membership

Mr. L. Spence CC (Chairman)

Mrs. J. A. Dickinson CC	Mr. T. J. Pendleton CC
Mr. G. Hirst	Mr. J. Perry
Mr. J. Kaufman CC	Mrs. C. M. Radford CC
Mr. A. M. Kershaw CC	Mr. G. Welsh CC
Mrs. C. Lewis	Miss. H. Worman CC
Mr. L. J. P. O'Shea CC	

**Please note: this meeting will be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's web site at <http://www.leics.gov.uk/webcast>
– Notices will be on display at the meeting explaining the arrangements.**

AGENDA

<u>Item</u>	<u>Report by</u>
1. Minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2016.	(Pages 5 - 12)
2. Question Time.	
3. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).	
4. To advise of any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.	
5. Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.	



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| 6. | Declarations of the Party Whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16. | | |
| 7. | Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 36. | | |
| 8. | Commissioning Intentions. | Director of Children and Family Services | (Pages 13 - 46) |
| 9. | Quarter 3 Performance Report. | Chief Executive and Director of Children and Family Services | (Pages 47 - 64) |
| 10. | Fostering and Adoption Quarterly Performance Report. | Director of Children and Family Services | (Pages 65 - 78) |
| 11. | Leicestershire's Response to Child Sexual Exploitation | Director of Children and Family Services | (Pages 79 - 82) |
| 12. | School Funding and the responsibilities of the Local Authority. | Director of Children and Family Services | (Pages 83 - 88) |
| 13. | Date of next meeting. | | |

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled to take place on 13 June 2016, at 2.00pm.

14. Any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent.

QUESTIONING BY MEMBERS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Members serving on Overview and Scrutiny have a key role in providing constructive yet robust challenge to proposals put forward by the Cabinet and Officers. One of the most important skills is the ability to extract information by means of questions so that it can help inform comments and recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny bodies.

Members clearly cannot be expected to be experts in every topic under scrutiny and nor is there an expectation that they so be. Asking questions of 'experts' can be difficult and intimidating but often posing questions from a lay perspective would allow members to obtain a better perspective and understanding of the issue at hand.

Set out below are some key questions members may consider asking when considering reports on particular issues. The list of questions is not intended as a comprehensive list but as a general guide. Depending on the issue under consideration there may be specific questions members may wish to ask.

Key Questions:

- Why are we doing this?
- Why do we have to offer this service?
- How does this fit in with the Council's priorities?
- Which of our key partners are involved? Do they share the objectives and is the service to be joined up?
- Who is providing this service and why have we chosen this approach? What other options were considered and why were these discarded?
- Who has been consulted and what has the response been? How, if at all, have their views been taken into account in this proposal?

If it is a new service:

- Who are the main beneficiaries of the service? (could be a particular group or an area)
- What difference will providing this service make to them – What will be different and how will we know if we have succeeded?
- How much will it cost and how is it to be funded?
- What are the risks to the successful delivery of the service?

If it is a reduction in an existing service:

- Which groups are affected? Is the impact greater on any particular group and, if so, which group and what plans do you have to help mitigate the impact?
- When are the proposals to be implemented and do you have any transitional arrangements for those who will no longer receive the service?
- What savings do you expect to generate and what was expected in the budget? Are there any redundancies?
- What are the risks of not delivering as intended? If this happens, what contingency measures have you in place?

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Minutes of a meeting of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Monday, 18 January 2016.

PRESENT

Mr. L. Spence CC (in the Chair)

Mrs. J. A. Dickinson CC
 Mr. G. Hirst
 Mr. J. Kaufman CC
 Mr. A. M. Kershaw CC
 Mr. T. J. Pendleton CC

Mrs. C. M. Radford CC
 Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC
 Mr. G. Welsh CC
 Miss. H. Worman CC

41. Minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2015.

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2015 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

42. Question Time.

The following questions were put to the Chairman of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Question by Ms. Sue Whiting, resident:

“Could the chair please tell me what extra safeguarding measures have been put in place since 1st September 2014 (when the Children and families Act 2014 came into force) to ensure provisions recommended in EHCPs for Young Offenders are actually being provided?”

Reply by the Chairman:

“The Leicestershire youth offending service (YOS) case manages and supports young people on the cusp of offending who have not yet entered the criminal justice system, young people who have received community based sentences through the courts, and young offenders sentenced to custody. The new Special Education Needs and Disability codes (SEND) were introduced last year and the new regulations include a section on young people in custody in young offenders institutions (YOI’s).

The YOS has been under a duty to be the contact point between local authority education services, schools and YOI’s since 2009, in relation to young people receiving custodial sentences. The new Act is more prescriptive and requires the YOS to work closely with YOI’s, schools, the local authority, and parents and carers in relation to young people who already have identified special education needs. To meet this requirement and support the young person entering a YOI the YOS undertakes the following:

- i. On the day of sentence the YOS send a YOI the relevant information and assessment in relation to the young person's educational needs by electronic transfer;
- ii. It is a requirement that within 10 working days a joint planning meeting takes place between the YOS, and the YOI. This incorporates planning around the young person's education needs and will involve planning and discussion with the Leicestershire SEN team.

Very few young people enter custody in Leicestershire each year, normally around 5 or 6 young people. We are able to meet the requirements of the SEND codes to support young people in custody.

Over the last 2 or 3 years, many of the young people who enter custody frequently do so after a period of chaos and instability in their lives. This can often involve breakdown in relationships with parents or carers and long periods of poor school attendance. When a young person enters a YOI the young person will have many issues, but in many recent cases the education provision has been more stable in the institution than in the months leading up to the young person's sentence.

In relation to offenders we case manage on community sentences with special education needs, clearly the education provision is provided by the relevant school/institution. An internal education meeting is convened to have oversight of the education issues involving all young people case managed by the YOS. The major issue is not generally the support to young people on EHC plans but working with schools and other relevant agencies in identifying emerging special educational needs in young people (not currently on EHC plans) in main stream education, which maybe a contributory factor in their behaviour they are exhibiting."

Ms Whiting asked the following supplementary question:

"Could the Chair please confirm that the answer to my question means that no extra safeguarding measures have been put in place?"

The Director subsequently responded as follows:

"There are adequate safeguarding measures already in place and as a result there are no additional measures that need to be put in place."

43. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

44. To advise of any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

45. Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

Mr L. Spence CC indicated that, whilst this did not amount to an interest to be declared at this meeting, he felt it relevant to report that he sometimes worked for an academy within the County.

No further declarations were made.

46. Declarations of the Party Whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.

There were no declarations of the party whip.

47. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 36.

The Chief Executive reported that no petitions had been received under Standing Order 36.

48. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016/17 - 2019/20.

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director of Children and Family Services and the Director of Corporate Resources on the proposed Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the period 2016/16 to 2019/20 as it related to Children and Family Services. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 8" is filed with these minutes.

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting the Cabinet Lead Member for Children and Families, Mr I. D. Ould CC, and the Cabinet Support Member, Mr. G. A. Hart CC who were attending for this item.

In response to consideration of the issues and questions from the members of the Committee, the following points were noted:

Overall Context

The Director and Cabinet Lead Member in introducing the report drew attention to the extremely challenging financial position facing the County Council. Over the next four years the County Council would need to save £78million which was in addition to the £100million already saved since 2011.

To deliver the MTFS requirements it was imperative that the savings now identified were delivered, that there was close monitoring and control of demand led budgets and that services were reviewed and transformed to ensure value for money. Preventative services would also play a key role and in this regard the Cabinet Lead Member highlighted the work undertaken within the Department which had resulted in an increase of just 4% of children being admitted to the care system in Leicestershire as compared to 16% nationally.

Growth

(i) **Item G1 - Increased cost of Social Care Placements**

The amount requested as a growth bid was based on the actual level and type of demand in the last quarter of the previous financial year and the first quarter of the current financial year. It was difficult to give an indication of the number of placements this would cover as the cost of placements varied significantly depending on the needs of the individual.

With regard to monitoring and managing this budget the Committee was advised of the following measures being taken:-

- Working to the policy that the best care provided is within a family environment and developing family based services such as specialist foster care services;
- Increasing focus on preventative services to reduce the risk of care needs escalating to a point at which high cost specialist care was required;
- Working closely with NHS partners to ensure ongoing support.

Notwithstanding all of the above it was recognised that in some cases it would be necessary to place some children in residential care settings and that sometimes it was necessary for that to be out of county.

ii) Item G3 - Supporting Leicestershire Families (SLF) – Pooled Budget Contribution

The growth requested would be sufficient to meet the target of working with 3000 families over the next 4 years. The Committee was advised that with the exception of the NHS, all partner contributions had been agreed; the NHS contribution was due to be considered by the Clinical Commissioning Groups shortly. Members of the Committee commended the work of the SLF programme which had turned around a large number of families as well reducing future costs.

(ii) Item G4 - Legislative Changes

The growth was to meet costs being transferred from the criminal justice system to local authorities and would cover the existing level of remands which were at 4-5 young people per year.

Savings

(iii) Item CF1 - Remodelling in Early Help

£1m of the original £1.4m MTFs savings had been identified, and has been achieved through the decommissioning of certain services where interventions had proved less effective, through the change of commissioning arrangements to focus on central as opposed to locality arrangements, and by reducing the duplication of services.

To achieve the remaining savings the Department would bring together preventative services, the Supporting Leicestershire Families work and the Children's Social Care Teams to achieve closer working and greater continuity, ensuring a proper and proportionate response to need. It was recognised that to achieve savings, some universal services would be reduced. The Director indicated that she would provide case studies demonstrating how the changed commissioning arrangements impact on service users.

(iv) Item CF2 - Develop local, lower cost provision for complex social care placements

A new operating model would be introduced that would shift from existing arrangements. Whilst not introducing a commissioner / provider split, there was the

need for greater clarity as to why services were commissioned and from where. Internal provider units would have to demonstrate that they were cost effective.

(v) Item CF4 Reduce Cost and Demand for Social Care Placements

The work undertaken to date was welcomed by the Committee. Savings had been identified separately from the growth requirements in G1 as a means of demonstrating activity and initiatives underway to reduce costs and manage demand.

(vi) Item CF5 – Reduction in Educational Psychology Service

Members were reminded that the MTFs in 2015/16 included savings in this area of £380,000 which had been subsequently reduced to £150,000. Savings had subsequently been achieved by the Department charging schools for non-statutory activities. The Department was meeting all targets regarding statutory requirements in relation to the Education Psychology Service, and was generating significant new business from schools on non-statutory services which had resulted in two new members of staff employed in the service. The Director would circulate to members further information on non-statutory services.

(vii) Item CF6 - Increase in In House Foster Carers

Targets for the recruitment of Foster Carers in the current year was challenging, however the Department was on target to recruit 12 mainstream Foster Carers and two level 6 Foster Carers were currently being assessed. To achieve targets for 2017/18, the Department was working with Leicestershire County Council's communications team and others to develop initiatives to recruit and retain Foster Carers. Challenges in recruiting level 6 carers were not underestimated, and the Department recognised the need to ensure carers were fully trained and supported.

(viii) Item CF8 Reduction in Senior Management

The Committee was advised that reductions were necessary to ensure that frontline services were protected, recognising that there would be a reduction in leadership and management capacity.

(ix) Item CF10 - Establish Regional Adoption Agency

Eight East Midlands authorities and one voluntary sector provider were involved in discussions to establish a regional adoption agency. It was hoped that by coming together, economies of scale would be achieved on some aspects of adoption work. The Committee was advised that whilst more joined up working around adoption was welcomed, the Cabinet Lead Member was concerned about a national focus on the speed of adoption rather than permanence. A further concern was around the potential separation of fostering and adoption services and the interdependence between the two being lost.

Capital Programme

(x) School Place Planning

The Director advised that Leicestershire County Council's School Strategy, 'In the right place', set out the council's policy direction for school place planning. Plans

identified the need for 17 new schools in the next 15 years; 15 primary schools and two secondary schools were required.

The process for securing Section 106 developer contributions had been significantly improved and the Government had indicated that it would make available sufficient capital resource for new schools. The position of, and demand for, school places would be closely monitored.

(xi) Age Range Changes

The Committee was advised that academies making age range changes needed to demonstrate to the Education Funding Agency through their Business Plan how additional costs would be met. The provision within the capital programme was primarily to cover primary schools affected as a result of age-range change.

The Department worked with all schools proposing age range changes to ensure that a whole systems approach was adopted.

Members expressed concerns regarding the use of mobile classrooms, particularly those reaching the end of their useful life. The Committee also expressed concern over the number of planning authorities that had refused to extend temporary planning permissions for mobile classrooms. The Director indicated that she would produce a comprehensive report on this matter for consideration at a future meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report and information now provided be noted;
- (b) That the comments of the Committee be forwarded to the Scrutiny Commission for consideration at its meeting on 27 January 2016.

49. Placement Commissioning.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children and Family Services concerning the recent actions taken with regard to the commissioning of placements for children in the care of the County Council. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 9' is filed with these minutes.

The Director reported that the calendar year of 2015 had proved challenging in relation to the retention of in house foster carers due to the fact that many carers had retired. To address this, the Department had been working with the County Council's communications team and others to develop a comprehensive recruitment and retention plan. The support service offered to foster carers had also been strengthened, and plans were in place to develop a support service for level 6 carers also.

The Committee was supportive of the intention to recruit and train level 6 carers, and was advised that the aim was to have concluded the recruitment process by March 2016 and have children and young people placed with carers thereafter.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee welcomed the Department's approach and actions taken with regard to the commissioning of placements for children in the care of the County Council.

50. Proposed closure of Greengate Children's Home - Report on the Public Consultation

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children and Family Services seeking the views of the Committee on the proposed closure of Greengate Children's Home following the completion of a public consultation in December 2015. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10' is filed with these minutes.

It was reported that a typographical error had been made in paragraph 5 of the report. The forecasted overspend was £7.9m, as opposed to £5.9m as stated in the report.

In response to questions from Mr Kauffman, Members were advised that that:

- i. There were four placements at the remaining County Council's children's home, and further to this the County Council had a long term commissioning arrangement with the provider Horizon Care, which provided six further placements in local children's homes;
- ii. The overspend in 2014/15 was £3.4m against a budget of £17m, and the total placement budget for 2015/16 was £17.6m;
- iii. Children in Care, including those in residential care, from a number of local authorities including Leicestershire County Council, had contributed to the report of the Ofsted Children's Rights Officer 2013/14.

The Committee supported the closure of Greengate Children's Home as it was in line with the Council's placement and sufficiency strategy of encouraging and providing family-based care where possible. Members requested that the transition of the remaining resident in the home would need to be handled sensitively and the Director reported that on a recent visit, Ofsted had reported that they were supportive of the County Council's placement strategy and of the transition plans for the remaining resident.

Members were assured that across a range of services there was sufficient provision for emergency placements, and that the use of Children's Homes for emergency placements was not advocated due to the settled nature of residents.

The Committee acknowledged that foster placements were not always suitable for some children and young people and was assured that in these cases, there would be the opportunity for alternative placements to be commissioned that would meet the needs of the child or young person.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee support the proposed closure of Greengate Children's Home;
- (b) That the comments of the Committee be forwarded to the Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 5 February 2016.

51. Quarter 2 Performance Report.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children and Family Services concerning the performance of Children and Family Services at the end of quarter 2 2015/16. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 11' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:

- i. Members were advised that the impact of age-range changes on levels of attainment at KS3 was difficult to determine so soon after changes had been

implemented, and that analysis would prove more beneficial following a period of stabilisation when the data set covered a longer period;

- ii. A concern was expressed as to whether being taken into care could affect the immediate educational attainment of children and young people. A small cohort of five young people had been in the care of the County Council less than two years at the point of sitting GCSE's which could have reflected adversely in results data in the performance report.

RESOLVED:

That the Quarter 2 2015/2016 performance report be noted.

52. Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Board Draft Business Plan 2016/17.

The Committee considered a report of the Local Safeguarding Children Board outlining and seeking the views of the Committee on the draft Business Plan for 2016/17. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 12' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:

- i. The Committee welcomed the Safeguarding Children Board's collaborative work with the Safeguarding Adult Board, and the inclusion of shared priorities in business planning.
- ii. Concerns were expressed over how elements of the previous Business Plan that had no longer been identified as priorities for 2016/17 would be monitored. The Committee was advised that the Safeguarding Board had a robust performance management system in place, and a subgroup tasked with quality assuring and monitoring the safeguarding activities of partners received performance data and could challenge partners on any area causing concern.
- iii. It was felt that the format and priorities of the plan were clear, but outcomes and impacts needed further detail. The Committee was advised that the intention was for the final Business Plan to include SMART outcomes. Further consultation across the local safeguarding partnership would follow, and the comments of the Committee would be forwarded to the Safeguarding Board for consideration.

RESOLVED:

That the comments of the Committee be forwarded to the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Board for consideration at its meeting on 29 January 2015.

53. Date of next meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 4 April 2016 at 2.00pm.



**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 4 APRIL
2016**

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

COMMISSIONING INTENTIONS

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide the Committee with the opportunity to comment on the Commissioning Strategy for Children and Family Services, plus the 2016/17 commissioning intentions, prior to their presentation to the Cabinet on 19th April 2016.

Background

2. In February 2015, the Cabinet approved a four year strategy that set out a new approach to organisational commissioning. In April 2016, the Cabinet will be asked to approve the Council Plan of Commissioning Intentions. In support of this each Council department has produced a Commissioning Strategy and a 2016/17 set of commissioning intentions.
3. Each set of commissioning intentions is aligned to the four key themes contained within the Council Plan of Commissioning Intentions:
 - (a) Prevent need (for example, by providing information and advice) ;
 - (b) Reduce need (for example, by targeting families with time limited interventions to reduce their future level of need);
 - (c) Delay need (for example, preventing the need for statutory intervention);
 - (d) Meet need (ensuring that children have access to services when needed).
4. The commissioning intentions have been developed to meet the objectives set out in the Council's Strategic Plan:
 - Leadership and Transformation;
 - Enabling Economic Growth – A Thriving Leicester-shire Economy;
 - Better Care – Health and Social Care Integration;
 - Supporting Children and Families;
 - Safer Communities – A Better Environment/Place.

5. The Strategic Plan will be refreshed during 2016 to reflect the needs of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, and as such the commissioning intentions are currently for one year only.

Children and Family Services Commissioning Strategy

6. The Commissioning Strategy (Appendix A) sets out the department's vision, mission, and objectives. It reflects the statutory responsibilities that the Council is required to deliver, combined with principles that underpin the way in which services are organised and delivered.
7. The Commissioning Strategy uses performance data to inform planning, identifies evidence-based interventions that will best support children, young people and their families, and reviews performance through a quality assurance and improvement framework.
8. The existing performance monitoring and reporting framework, that is currently presented on a quarterly basis to the Committee, has been retained.

Children and Family Services Commissioning Intentions

9. There are 15 high level priorities and 36 commissioning intentions.
10. With regard to the Council's four key themes, the 36 commissioning intentions are categorised as follows:
 - Prevent: 5
 - Reduce: 9
 - Delay: 10
 - Meet: 12

The balance of services across the themes reflects that:

- (a) the department primarily works with the most vulnerable children and young people, needing to meet their needs, often as their corporate parents;
 - (b) previous actions have been taken to move a range of preventative, universal, services into other Council departments such as Public Health, and also to schools;
 - (c) the reduction in resource over the past few years has meant that a large number of services previously offered by the department have been removed.
11. Changes in commissioning choices over the past few years have led to highly effective and innovative service delivery, for example:

- (a) Closing the Connexions Service and instead externally procuring services from an independent company, Prospects, on a Payment by Results basis, has led to Leicestershire's performance for young people in employment, education and training being one of the best in the country;
- (b) Closing the Key Stage 3 and 4 Pupil Referral Unit and instead commissioning partnerships of schools to manage behaviour support services has significantly reduced the numbers of secondary school aged pupils that have been excluded between 2013 and 2015;
- (c) Creating a co-located, integrated team with the police to respond to child sexual exploitation has removed the need for complicated information sharing systems, has improved and increased the level of response, and has attracted additional external funding for 2 years;
- (d) Centralising the procurement of children's centres services and reducing contracts from more than 50 to 3 has significantly reduced the cost of administration and reduced bureaucracy

12. The department will continue to look for opportunities to improve services, manage demand, and reduce cost through innovative commissioning arrangements.

Resource Implications

13. Along with other County Council departments, the resources available to support the service delivery are diminishing and the need to ensure that the right services are commissioned from the best providers at the best price, and are available at the right time for the right children, young people and families is ever-more vital. As a result of the need to forward plan the next tranche of budget reductions, the departmental Commissioning Intentions are currently for 2016/17 only.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

Officers to Contact

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List of Appendices

Appendix A – Children and Family Services Commissioning Strategy 2015/19.

Appendix B – Children and Family Services Commissioning Intentions 2016/17.

Equality and Human Rights Implication

14. The majority of the department's work is around vulnerable children, young people and their families. As such, the department is reliant on other parts of the County Council, and relevant partner organisations, to commission universal prevention services.

Children & Family Services Commissioning Strategy 2015-2019

August 2015

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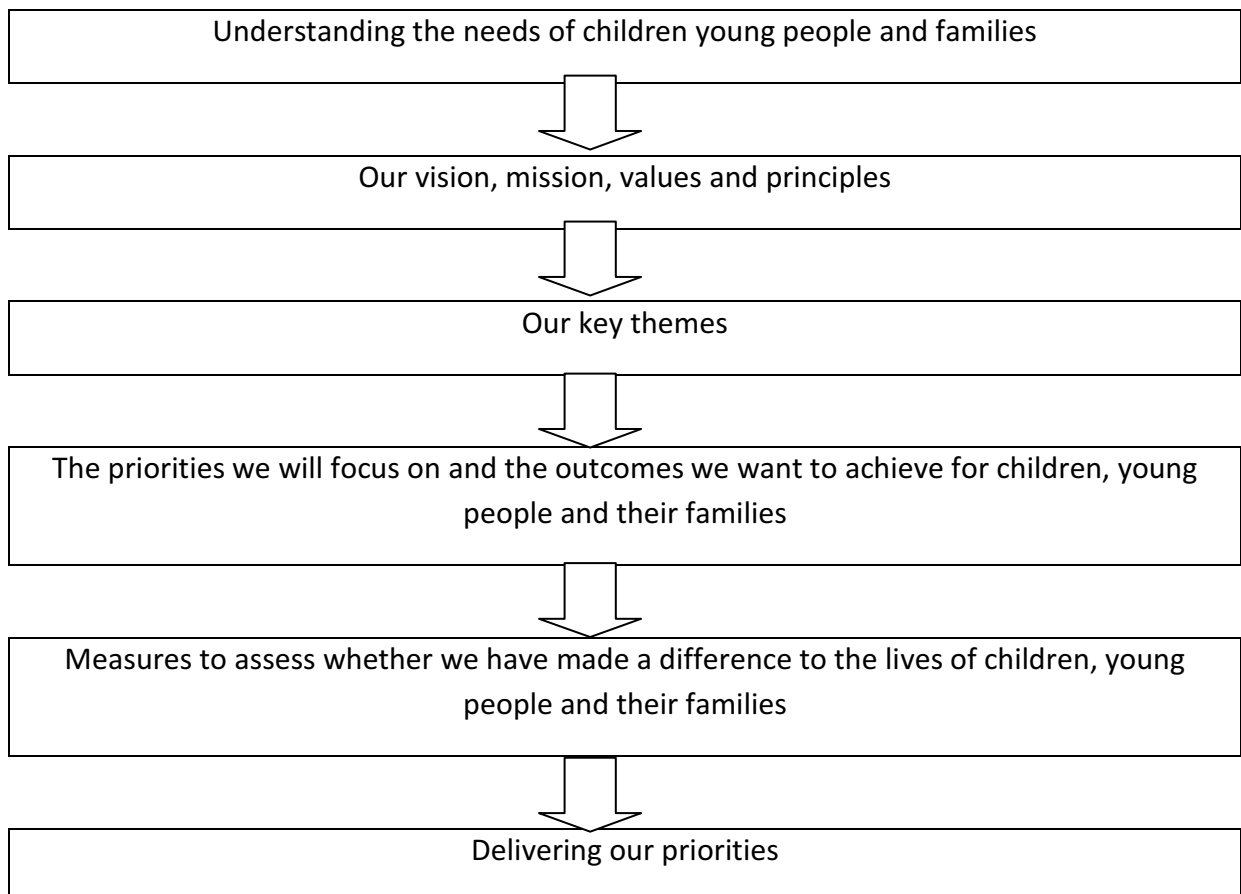
Introduction

The strategy is the high level strategic document that informs the commissioning decisions and work programme for Children & Family Services, setting out our intentions for improving the life chances of children, young people and families in Leicestershire over the next four years, from 2015 to 2019

The strategy has been developed using the following information sources:

- Understanding national and local drivers
- Needs assessment, including the latest Joint Strategic Needs Analysis and demographic data
- Consultation and engagement with children, young people and their families, staff, partner agencies and other key stakeholders
- Review of current performance in achieving key outcomes
- Recent inspection reports

The diagram below illustrates the approach to developing the CFS Commissioning Strategy:



Chapter 1 - National and local policy drivers

A new government was elected in May 2015 and the Children & Family Services departmental strategic planning will need to remain flexible and agile in order to respond to emerging national policy and strategic direction.

The Children Act 2004 amended the Children Act 1989, largely in consequence of the Victoria Climbié inquiry and brings all local government functions of children's welfare and education under the statutory authority of local Directors of Children's Services.

In addition to the Children Act 2004 the introduction of The Children and Young Person Act 2008 extended the existing framework of children in care in England and Wales to make sure the care they receive is well supported, of high quality and tailored to their needs.

The impact of the Academies Act 2010, the Education Act 2011 and the continuation of education reform will influence our relationship with schools and other education providers. We recognise the benefits of supporting a self-improving school system and welcome the engagement of education providers, particularly through the Leicestershire Educational Excellence Partnership (LEEP) in shaping and jointly commissioning universal and early intervention services.

The Children & Families Act 2014 and the Care Act 2015 provide key influences for our future work, in particular our responses to parent and young carers and to children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities.

The Children and Families Act has led to comprehensive review of the SEND Code of Practice and a much tighter definition of special educational needs. The Act, introduced requirements for Local Authorities and Health Services to commission education, health and social care services jointly and provide a more streamlined and co-ordinated assessment process.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) sets out the importance of early identification and response to issues of concern, particularly for vulnerable groups.

National child protection tragedies; government attention on adoption processes and outcomes and increased national awareness of Child Sexual Exploitation have all led to significant recent changes in the departments work and arrangements and will continue to be strong influences in the future. Additional resource has been made available to create an integrated, co-located team of CFS staff and police officers to prevent CSE, protect those subject to CSE and pursue perpetrators.

The international, national and local financial situation has led to a programme of austerity and deficit reduction and consequently we are operating within a context of significant funding reductions. The County Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015-19 sets out the funding that will be available to Children & Family Services to purchase and deliver

services for children, young people and their families within Leicestershire. It is clear that the range of services directly delivered by the county council or externally procured will decrease and some previously delivered work will end.

The increased expectation of seeing more integration between Health and Social Care applies to children's services as it does to adult services. We will actively explore all opportunities to commission and deliver more joined up services with partners in Health. The Leicestershire Health & Well-being Strategy and the local Better Care Together strategy are both overseen by the Health & Wellbeing Board which provides a mechanism for driving forward this integration.

The Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan 2014-18 provides the broader framework for the work of Children & Family Services. Other corporate strategies such as the council's Commissioning Strategy and the Community Strategy, with its focus on building on and growing community capacity will also influence the direction of our work.

There is a national and local focus on early intervention and prevention with a current review of services across the local authority which will inform a multi-agency Unified Prevention Strategy. We know that high quality interventions early on in life or at the emergence of a problem can lead to improved outcomes that are quicker and more cost effective. We will work with a range of partners in the voluntary and community sector, schools and other education providers, health commissioners and providers and District councils to shape a coordinated offer across the county.

The County Council is undergoing significant transformation and is redefining its role as a commissioning organisation. The Council's Transformation Plan and associated Target Operating Model will be reflected in the approach and organisation of Children & Family Services.

Chapter 2 - Our vision, mission, values and principles

VISION

Leicestershire is the best place for all children, young people and their families

This means that we will describe the outcomes we want to achieve for children, young people and their families and identify measures that can tell us how well we are achieving them in comparison with other English local authorities. We will aim to be the best performing local authority in the country against these measures, and where we are not yet there we will set stretching targets for annual improvement.

MISSION

Children and young people in Leicestershire are safe, and living in families where they can achieve their potential and have their health, wellbeing and life chances improved within thriving communities

Our values

- Being open, inclusive and accountable in our actions
- Valuing children and getting it right from early childhood and in adulthood
- Ensuring children, young people and families are central to decisions about them, and their voice and experiences are heard and responded to
- Planning and delivering the best services based on the voice of children, young people and their families and evidence of what works
- Creating a confident and effective workforce that improves outcomes for children, young people and families
- Supporting children, young people and families and their communities to be safe, independent and responsible for their own wellbeing
- Establishing meaningful, strong and effective partnership working to secure improved outcomes

The following **principles** are integral to the way we work

- a. Making commissioning choices that recognise and improve the journey of the child through services and life stages;
- b. Moving from control to influence and promoting independence (promoting, enabling and influencing more autonomous communities)
- c. Collaborating through partnerships;
- d. Maintaining commitment to early help services that divert need, providing the right support at the right time, and managing the demand to specialist services;
- e. Retaining what works locally and recognising where we need creative and new ways of working to improve outcomes;
- f. Integrating service planning and delivery to maximise impact;
- g. Listening and responding to the voice of the child and young person;
- h. Promote customer self-service by ensuring services are simplified, transparent and easily accessible.

Chapter 3 - Understanding the needs of children young people and families and demand modelling

The Commissioning Plans that sit beneath this strategy contain more specific needs analysis and identify current performance, trends and future targets. They are informed by a wide range of information, including both the 2012 and the 2015 Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA), demographic data, performance information and staff and service users' views. Anticipated future changes in demand for support are also considered.

Key findings

The vast majority of children and families in Leicestershire are safe and living in families where they can achieve their potential and have good health, wellbeing and improved life chances within thriving communities.

There are groups of more vulnerable children, young people and families for whom a range of outcomes are much poorer than the population as a whole. The work of the Children and Family Services department will focus on these groups.

Safe and living in families

The average looked after child rate in Leicestershire has continued to increase over the last four years but still remains significantly lower than those of our statistical neighbours.

Permanency for children in care has improved with significantly more children now being adopted, however, some outcomes for children who remain in local authority care are poorer than comparator authorities and placement instability is too high. Whilst changes in placement may be necessary and desirable in some cases there remain some groups, such as older children and those with complex behavioural needs where permanent placements are very hard to find.

Placement costs vary significantly within and between suppliers and our spend on externally commissioned placements has more than doubled since 2011.

Many of the most vulnerable children and young people have multiple risks of poorer outcomes. Of the statutory assessments to determine whether a child is in need that were completed in 2014, a quarter of children were deemed to require statutory social care services with the most common contributing factors being:

- Parents abusing alcohol or drugs
- Parental domestic abuse
- Parental mental health needs and/or
- Child mental health need, physical or learning disability.

Analysis of national and local research undertaken to better understand vulnerability and to guide our Early Help offer indicates that:

- Living in poverty has a pervasively negative influence on children's outcomes.
- Those caring for children with disabilities may need additional services.
- Having a depressed mother, having a father with limited literacy skills and being frequently disciplined are significant risk factors associated with lower KS1 scores.
- Teenage mothers are three times more likely to experience post natal depression and those who adopt children can also similarly suffer.
- Children who are carers very often fare less well than their peers (socially, academically and with their health).
- Domestic violence, abuse, and homelessness or coming into local authority care can impact significantly on the outcomes for older teenagers.

In line with managing risk well, child protection services are effective, with fewer child protection plans and longer-term plans than comparator authorities.

Children who remain in care highlight the importance of their relationships with family and siblings. They also describe their relationships with their teachers, foster carers, social

workers and their initial involvement in discussions and decisions about them as being key to their wellbeing.

Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE); trafficked children; children who go missing or run away from home or care; cases of non-recent non-familial child sexual abuse (CSA) and complex and organised abuse have been given national and local prominence following the Saville Inquiry and events in Rochdale, Oxfordshire and Rotherham. A number of high profile national reports have been published. The government has elevated the issues to the level of a national threat and set up a national inquiry. Locally this has necessitated an accelerated response and an equally determined focus at strategic and operational levels.

Achieving potential

Pupil achievement has improved in 2014 in all key stages and is either broadly in line with or above national outcomes. However here is a significant attainment gap between all learners and vulnerable learners such as children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability, Children in Care, Pupils Missing Education, young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) and children eligible for Free School Meals who tend to have attainment levels that are lower than the England average.

Our focus must be to improve attainment and progress in all key stages and to narrow the gap between vulnerable children and their peers.

The proportion of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability has increased over the last five years, and is forecast to continue to increase. In Early Years there is currently a gap in pre-school provision for children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability.

The overall rate of 16-19 year olds who are Not in Education, Employment or Training is consistently low and places Leicestershire in the top 25 of 150 local authorities. The NEET rate for young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability aged 16-19 is very low but the rates for Children in Care and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability aged 19-25 is much higher.

Attendance in Leicestershire is in line with the East Midlands Local Authorities and slightly above the national levels. The data analysis shows that outcomes for pupils with less than 90% attendance start to decline steeply. Attendance rates for children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability and disadvantaged pupils are up to three times lower than 'all pupils' rates but are showing signs of improvement.

Permanent exclusions rates are low in Leicestershire, especially at secondary level and Fixed Term exclusion rates are similar to national and regional comparators. Once again, children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability and disadvantaged pupils are over-represented in the figures.

Leicestershire has an increasing trend of good or outstanding child minder provision now above the national standards and the Private, Voluntary and Independent provision in Leicestershire is consistently above the national standards.

The percentage of schools, both primary and secondary, that are judged good or outstanding is above national standards and the percentage of pupils in good or outstanding schools is also above the national standards.

Health and wellbeing

Evidence shows that nationally the health, educational and social outcomes for children in care remain poor with a high rate of:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teenage pregnancies • Smoking • Substance misuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health problems • School dropout rates • Poor education attainment and • Criminality.
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The promotion of the health of children in care Leicestershire's has seen some improvement in the completion of health and dental checks and a significant improvement in the number of children with up to date immunisations although this will remain subject to close attention. There remains a gap in the availability of a wider range of health data for children in care e.g. obesity rates, tooth decay, hours of exercise/activity.

Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability, Children in Care, pupils missing education, young people who are NEET or children eligible for Free School Meals have a higher prevalence of Social Emotional Mental Health needs.

Identification of Social Emotional Mental Health issues and subsequent support tends to be at later ages and responses between services are too often disjointed. Communication difficulties, often a precursor to autism or Social Emotional Mental Health, are not used sufficiently well to intervene earlier and prevent more complex issues for older children. Identification of children and young adults with autism and/or severe learning difficulties has also increased in the previous 5 years.

The needs of residents were explored across Leicestershire in the 2012 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). This latest JSNA found that:

- There is a trend for increasing numbers of children and young people with complex health needs

- The prevalence of mental health problems in children and young people is increasing nationally.
- The diagnosis of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder has increased ten-fold in the last 10 years. For Leicestershire, one educational consequence is a significant increase in specialist placements for children and young people with autism.
- The number of children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties has also increased, many of whom are known to Children & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). This has implications beyond education services. For example, many of the families struggle to manage with the children at home, and seek additional support to care for the children.
- Excess weight in Reception and in Year 6 is significantly lower than the England and East Midlands averages.

Thriving communities

The local Prevent Delivery Plan for Leicestershire and Leicester which sets out how the city will address the risks of extremism, based on the national Prevent Strategy. The Prevent Coordinator is now working with public bodies and local communities in Leicester to implement the Prevent Delivery Plan.

The Youth Justice Board (YJB) has introduced **reducing re-offending** nationally as a priority within their 3 year business plan. National statistics indicate that while the number of first time entrants is falling, the offending rate of those young people who enter the criminal justice system has been steadily rising since 2000. The YJB acknowledge that the demographic of the offending cohort has changed considerably during this period. The cohort is now comprised of offenders with more complex needs and whose characteristics mean that they are more likely to re-offend than those in the 2000 cohort. The national picture is also reflected in Leicestershire where the number of young people in the cohort has fallen.

Research into the top 10 most prolific reoffenders in Leicestershire in both the 2013 and 2014 reoffending cohorts highlighted a number of common themes. Notably a significant percentage of the young people were or had been Looked After Children, had ongoing relationship problems with their family, had statements of special educational needs, were

NEET, and were actively misusing substances. Most of these themes reflected national issues and as a result of their complexity, the YOS is developing a series of responses to reoffending with both internal and external partners.

Over the last 2 years 42% of all victims have participated in the **restorative justice** process, which is well above the national average of 25% in relation to young people related crime.

Research undertaken by Leicestershire YOS in 2014 indicated that around 15% of the young people being worked with by the service were exhibiting behavior linked to child on parent violence. The relationship between family members and young people referred to the YOS often being an important element in reducing risk of reoffending and harm to others.

During 2014/15 there were significant developments in the delivery arrangements around YOS parenting provision. The YOS began the process of integrating its high end parenting provision with Supporting Leicestershire Families.

Chapter 4 - Our key themes, priorities and outcomes – delivering priorities

Our **key themes** are:

1. Children and young People are **safe** and living in families
2. Children and young people **achieve** their potential
3. Children and young people have their **health, wellbeing** and life chances improved
4. Children and young people and their families live within **thriving communities**

We want to improve outcomes for all children, young people and families and we will target our resources on reducing the identified gaps in outcomes for vulnerable groups. The **LCC priorities for children and young people**, drawn from the LCC Strategic Plan are listed below.

The Children & Family Services department is the lead agency for some of these and acts as an active partner or supportive ally when other agencies or multi-agency groups have the lead responsibility for strategic planning and reporting on progress.

Safe	Achieve	Health & Well-being	Thriving
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			Communities
Children and Young People are protected from harm – strong safeguarding practices and performance. (CFS lead)	Ensure Good Supply of High Quality School Places (CFS lead)	Integrated Care and Support for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. (CFS lead)	The needs of families identified as most troubled are addressed and outcomes improved. (CFS lead)
Effective Placement and Adoption approach (CFS lead)	Promote high standards of achievement in early years settings, primary and secondary education. (CFS lead)	Help to Children with Long Term Conditions and Disabilities.(CFS lead)	Support people into employment (CFS lead)
Good social care for Children in Care (CFS lead)	Good Early Years Provision – childcare (CFS lead)	Healthy Children in Care. (CFS lead)	Reduce first time entrants to the youth justice system (CFS lead)
Ensure vulnerable families, children and young people have access to effective early help to ensure problems do not escalate (CFS lead)	Increase Employability Skills and minimise NEET. (CFS lead)	Child Healthy Weight and Good Diet (CFS support with a Public Health lead)	Crime Minimisation (CFS support as part of Youth Justice Plan)
	Good attainment and high quality education provision for Care Leavers (CFS lead)	Breastfeeding and Maternity Support (CFS support with a Public Health lead)	Reduce youth reoffending (CFS support as part of Youth Justice Plan)
	Improved educational outcomes for vulnerable children and those missing education. (CFS lead)	Reduce the Harm of Substance Misuse – Drugs and Alcohol (CFS support with a Public Health lead)	Minimise use of custodial sentences for young people (CFS support as part of Youth Justice Plan)
		Improved Sexual Health and reduced teenage pregnancy (CFS support with a Public Health lead)	Reduce antisocial behaviour (CFS support as part of Community Safety plan)
		Earlier Detection/ Treatment of mental health problems in	Domestic abuse – prevention and recovery (CFS support as part of

		children (CFS support an Emotional Health & Wellbeing multi-agency plan) Active Young People (CFS support with a Public Health lead) Increase life expectancy (CFS support with a Public Health lead) Tobacco control & smoking cessation (CFS support with a Public Health lead)	Community Safety plan) Community Cohesion and Hate Incident Reduction (CFS support as part of Community Safety plan) Support people into employment (CFS lead)
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The **outcomes** we want to achieve for children, young people and their families and the **measures** we will regularly monitor at department and/or service level are more fully described in Appendix 1. We identify in more detail the outcomes we are working to achieve under our key themes. We will clarify the specific and cross-departmental reporting and accountability routes for all outcomes and measures relating to children and families.

The **children and young people considered most vulnerable** are those:

- Who are looked after
- Who are Children in Need (Section 17 of the Children's Act)
- Who have Child Protection Plans (Section 47 of the Children's Act)
- Eligible for the Pupil Premium / Eligible for Free School Meals
- Have Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability
- Excluded or at risk of exclusion from school
- From Gypsy, Roma and Traveller backgrounds
- Missing out on education
- Who have ill health, (including hospitalisation, affecting attendance and behaviour at school)
- Whose lives have been affected by domestic violence, drug or alcohol abuse
- Who are school age parents
- Who are young carers

- Who are offending or at risk of offending
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender pupils

Delivering our priorities

Sitting beneath this departmental Commissioning Strategy are three Commissioning Plans which outline our more specific commissioning intentions and required outcomes – Children’s Social Care; Early Help for children, young people and families and Education, Learning & Skills. These are supplemented by specific plans for internal delivery and external procurement agreed upon the principles of ‘outcomes based commissioning’ with options appraisals of whether to procure or deliver services.

All external procurement will be subject to the council’s required Contract Management arrangements. Where it is decided that services will be delivered by the Children & Family Services department then individual services will produce Delivery Plans with clear outcomes and specific targets monitored by Service managers.

The needs analysis work undertaken by the department, combined with the national evidence base suggests council resources should be focused on whole family support with an emphasis on key stages of the life cycle where early intervention can be most effective.

We will focus on those stages of early childhood and adolescence that are crucial to healthy development.

The departments Commissioning plans will aim to align our practices and commissioning activity across the Department in line with the significant ‘**ages and stages**’ milestones in a child and family’s life and will focus on the outcomes secured for children and young people. In this context the concept of ‘readiness’ is used to mean being ready and able to manage adversity, and to adapt and cope with challenges or difficulties in life.

We describe these key milestones as:

- Ready for school;

Children begin school as confident, capable and curious individuals, ready to learn and ready for school.

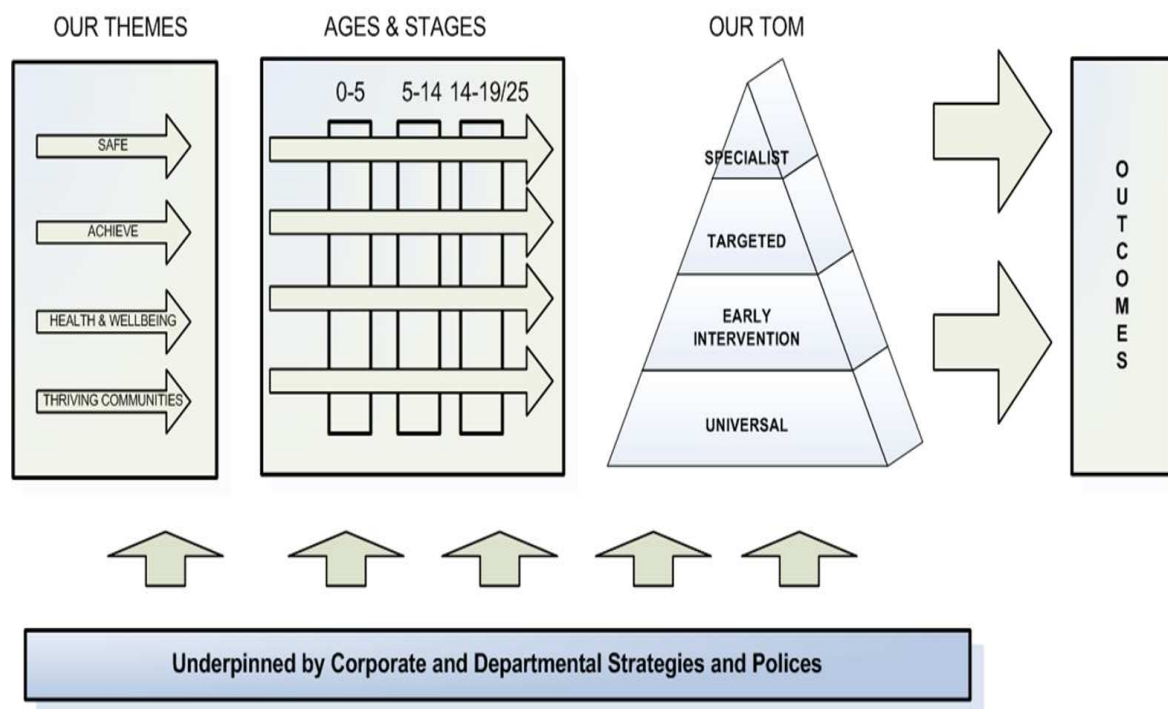
- Ready to choose

Children and young people enjoy engaging, relevant and memorable learning experiences which equip them with skills, knowledge, opportunities and attitudes to make a successful transition to adulthood.

- Ready for Adulthood

Young people reach the end of formal education as confident, aspirant and appropriately qualified individuals, ready for adulthood and ready for employment.

The council's target operating model is reflected in the departments planning with a clear intention to focus resources on prevention and early intervention as well as meeting our statutory duties.



The underpinning corporate and departmental strategies include: the County Council's Strategic Plan; the Joint Health & Well Being Strategy; the council's Community Strategy; 'In the Right Place' – our strategy for sufficient school and other educational places; 'Choices for Children & Young People' – the county's placement and sufficiency strategy; Community Safety Policy; Youth Justice Plan; SEND joint commissioning strategy; LCC Early Help Offer.

Alongside the departments focus on early intervention with vulnerable groups there are a range of **universal services** that will continue to be offered. These include:

- The council will ensure the promotion of diversity, parental choice, and high quality educational standards, to ensure fair access to educational opportunity, and to help fulfil every child's educational potential.

- The council will ensure that the right number of places is available to meet pupil needs, at the time they are required, in the right schools/educational settings, and it will develop a capital programme to fund the changes necessary.
- The council will secure sufficient childcare so far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0-14 (or up to 18 for disabled children).

Chapter 5 Ways of working

The department operates on the principles agreed by the County Council's Cabinet in its stated role as an organisation committed to outcomes based commissioning.

http://www.leics.gov.uk/n0735_community_strategy_consultation_consultation_v3_webaw_101214.pdf

Whilst the County Council will always have a role with the most vulnerable families there needs to be deliberate policy and practice which ensures that, for the majority of families, they can resolve their issues without our involvement.

The council wide strategic approach to communities work outlined in the Community Strategy signals the Council's commitment to working with residents to create increased autonomy and independence. Children and Family Services will work with partners to ensure that an asset based approach is undertaken in developing communities and services. Appropriate, accurate information and advice will be available to parents and carers through simplified systems and processes. We will build on what works and seek co-production with individuals and local communities.

The department's Growing Safety strategy will guide the use of tools and approaches that staff will use to better engage, assess and plan with children and families.

Children and families will have access to different levels of county council support and service provision based on the severity and complexity of their needs. This is illustrated in the diagram below.



The Children & Family Services department will prioritise support for certain vulnerable groups of children who we know are more susceptible to a range of poor outcomes. The departments Early Help offer to families provides different levels of prevention— moving across levels of need in order to improve outcomes for families.

Systems leadership

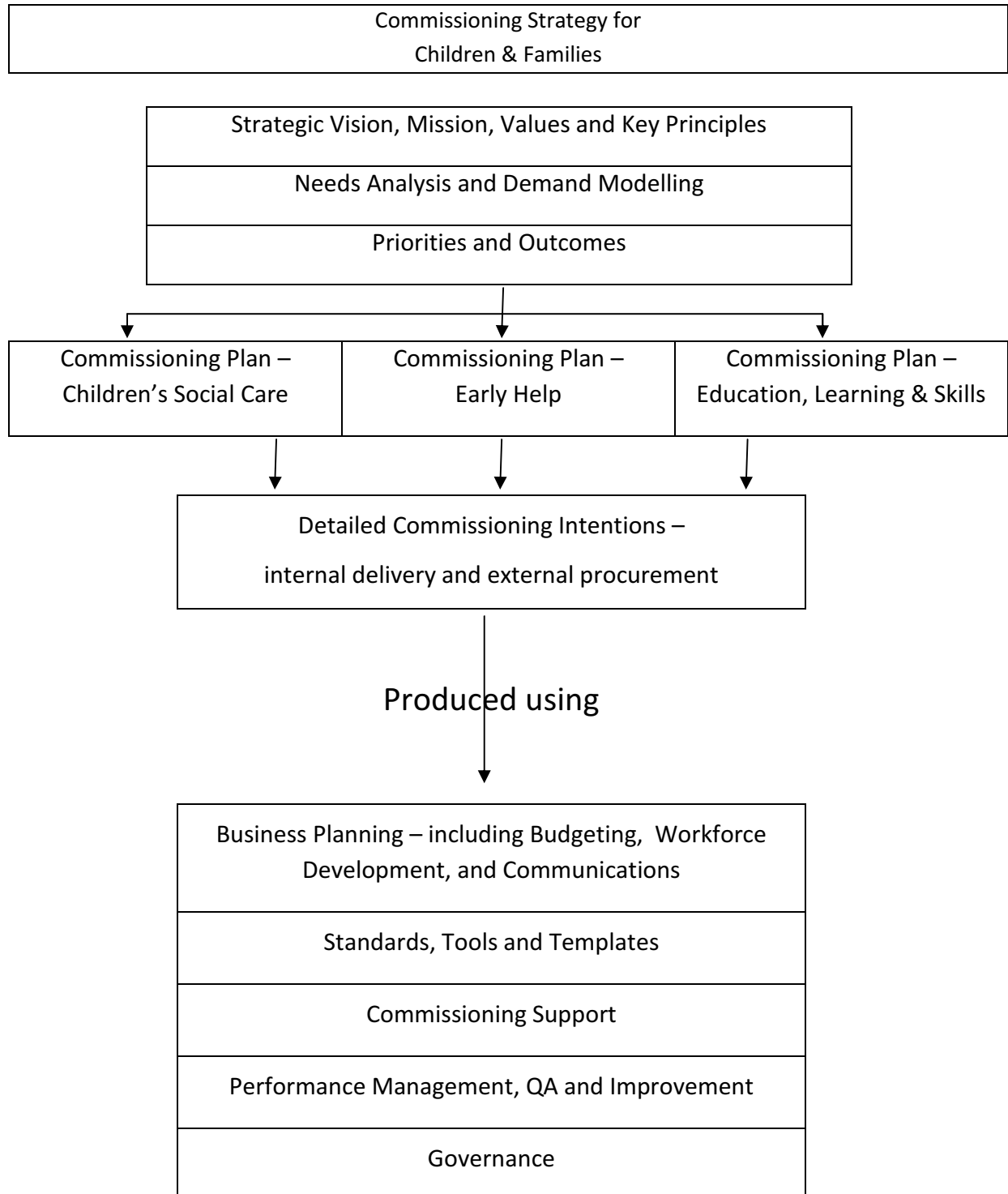
We know that improved outcomes for children young people and families cannot be secured by the County Council alone. We are part of a wider network on interlinked partner agencies and we will use our influence to provide leadership across the whole system to build on strengths and drive improvement in outcomes. We see good progress in this approach within education and will seek to use our learning from this in other areas of work.

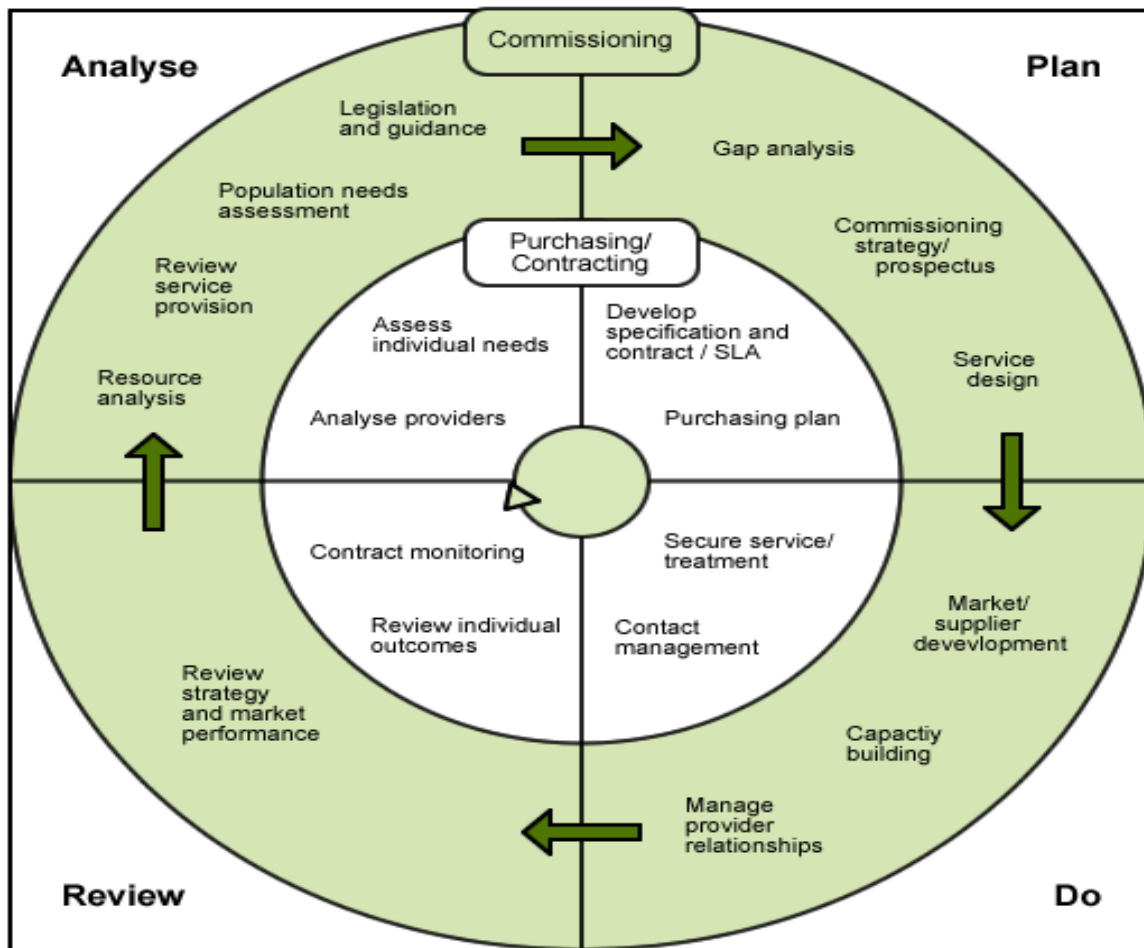
Closer working with health partners, including the development of 'co-commissioning' are led through the Better Care Together programme and reported to the Health & well Being Board

The commissioning framework and commissioning cycle diagrams below illustrates how the department undertakes outcomes based commissioning:

Families, staff and partners should be clear that commissioning does not necessarily mean outsourcing all services. We will continue to commission some services to be provided by in-house teams and others will continue to be provided by external bodies.

We will make sound decisions based on the principles of outcomes based commissioning to determine where we spend our resources. This will include options appraisals of different delivery models that take into account factors including: effectiveness in achieving outcomes, quality of service delivery, safeguarding risk, financial risk, reputational risk, value for money and sustainability.





Our approach

The Children and Family Services department has a number of roles. It;

- **Provides** key services
- Takes a lead in the **commissioning** and delivery of services, and
- It is a **partner** working collaboratively and cooperatively within a system of services from the statutory, voluntary and community sector, and
- It is also a **facilitator** - helping to strengthen the Children and Family Partnership and build capacity across other partnerships.

We will make clear when we are working either as:

- **Direct deliverers** – using council resources to directly provide or externally procure services. Decisions about delivering internally or procuring externally will be based on corporate tools for options appraisals that consider, amongst other things, safeguarding assurance, quality, effectiveness in delivering outcomes and value for money.

- **Joint commissioners** - In our role as Children's Champion we will work in partnerships to jointly commission services when this is in the best interest of families and specifically we will develop a joint commissioning strategy through the Better Care Together agenda to improve health outcomes.
- **Influencers** – where we are not a direct provider of services and where there are responsibilities or opportunities for others to provide we will use our influence with partners, including local communities, to ensure the best possible outcomes.

We will adopt a **whole life approach** when planning services. For example the emerging County Council Whole Life Disability agenda will specifically look to ensure that early help is an offer to children, young people and families that promotes independence, recognises and builds on strengths, has a personalised approach, not a one size fits all and develops systems that can deliver personal budgets for those people that are eligible for services.

Practitioner across the department will increasingly use the approaches described in Growing Safety and Appreciative Inquiry. We will adopt a whole family approach that builds on the capacity of families and communities and we will use the best evidence practice whenever possible.

Business Planning,

The department will apply a consistent approach to Business Planning. Directly delivered Services will produce annual Delivery Plans that describe their actions to deliver agreed outcomes and highlight improvement areas. These plans will be subject to regular monitoring and review.

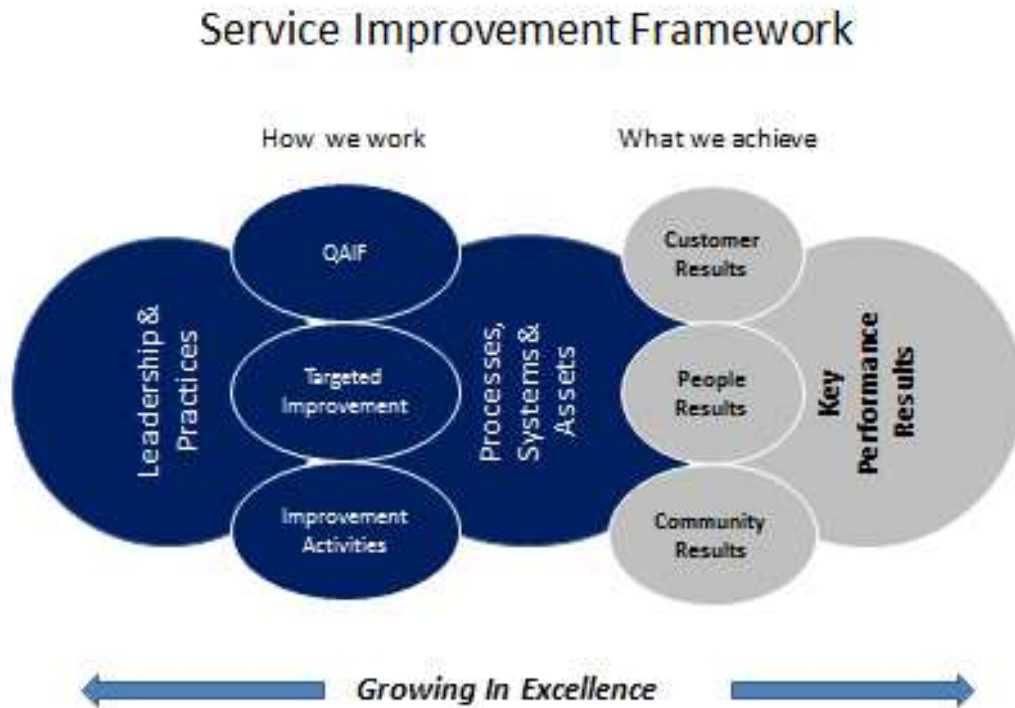
Performance Management

Our Performance Framework supports our aspirations by adopting a model that scrutinises performance along the whole 'golden thread', from staff performance up to impacting on the lives of children and families. Our performance reporting and monitoring arrangements allow us to quickly see where we could be doing better at both a population level and across themes.

Where services are procured externally there will be clearly defined outcomes required of a contract and a consistent system of contract management. We will expect to see increasing similarity in the way internal and external service providers are held accountable for outcomes.

Quality Assurance and Improvement Framework (QAIF)

Our Quality Assurance and Improvement Framework is overseen by an Improvement Board that makes sure we are securing continuous improvements across our services. We use a range of methods to check that the services we deliver and commission are having the right impact and identify where improvements can be made if this is not the case.



Chapter 6 – Resources

The total **revenue budget** for the department in 2015-16 is £55,235,090. Our current departmental savings targets are outlined in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) are:

2015/16 £000	2016/17 £000	2017/18 £000	2018/19 £000
-7,520	-11,360	-12,220	-13,380

In light of the MTFS the department will need to make difficult decisions about ceasing some services previously delivered, finding alternative ways to provide support and carefully targeting resources to create most impact on outcomes.

Given the national financial situation and the financial pressure on local government it is likely that additional savings will be needed.

We have a **workforce** of approximately 1,228 excluding casual staff & schools. The departmental Workforce Strategy and action plan describe the steps we are taking to develop the knowledge and skills of our staff to meet the challenges of new ways of working. In particular we are training staff across all parts of the department to apply the principles and tools of Growing Safety. Our reshaped Children’s Social Care and Early Help teams enable us to provide more consistent and integrated support across the various tiers of intervention.

Our options appraisals on modes of service delivery and any subsequent external procurement need to be based on a good understanding of the local markets of providers. The departments own staff together with the corporate teams for Commissioning Support and Data and Business Intelligence will work together to improve our understanding and explore opportunities for **developing new or expanded markets**.

A key resource for providing prevention and early intervention at the lower tiers need will be local communities. The department will work closely with Public Health and Chief Executives departments in building on **community strengths and capacity** when shaping and supporting the council’s Prevention offer and the Community Strategy. This will include exploring how to make best use of county council buildings to enable delivery of services by community groups.

Chapter 7 – Governance

The Children & Family Services department reports regularly to elected members through the Cabinet, the Children & Families Scrutiny Committee and the Social Care Panel. In addition the Lead Member for Children & Families has a statutory, nationally defined role and meets regularly with children and young people, the Director and senior officers.

The measures we have identified to demonstrate progress in achieving outcomes are monitored regularly by elected members, senior officers across the Council and the departments senior managers. A core set of key measures are monitored quarterly by the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Corporate Management Team and the Department Management Team. Additional measures are monitored at a service and Assistant Director level and are reported to the Department Management Team if and when exceptions arise.

The County Council has a range of statutory duties in relation to safeguarding and social care. These interventions are at the top end of the triangle shown in the council's target operating model. Our performance against these duties is frequently monitored and reported to elected members. We also report to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and are subject to external inspection by OFSTED.

The local authority responsibilities for the education, health and care of children in care are overseen by the Corporate Parenting Board which has a membership comprised of young people, elected members, council officers and partner agencies.

The Council's **partnership work** is focussed on the eight priority partnerships listed below, the first four of which are statutory:

The partnerships that are statutory are the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Local Enterprise Partnership, the Safeguarding Children Board and the Safeguarding Adults Board and have the following function:

The **Health and Well Being Board (HWBB)** and its associated sub-groups have an essential role to play in overseeing the integration of Health and Social Care Services in line with the Better Care Plan.

The **Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP)** works with the private sector to secure millions of pounds of national and European funding to support increasing employment and economic growth.

The **Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)** has a specific responsibility to ensure effective working across agencies. It is externally regulated by Ofsted and has a number of

sub-groups. It is a Leicestershire and Rutland partnership but has aligned a number of groups with the Leicester City LSCB.

From April 2015 multi-agency **Safeguarding Adults Boards (SABs)** will become statutory, as outlined in the Care Act. The current Leicestershire SAB is closely aligned to the Safeguarding Children Board, and also has a number of shared sub-groups both for the county and for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

The non-statutory partnerships have functions as follows:

The Children & Family Partnership: Since the removal of the statutory requirement for a Children's Trust, discussion has taken place with partners to identify the most appropriate structure(s) to oversee strategic arrangements for Children and Families.

Most of the strategic oversight previously carried out by the Children and Young People's Commissioning Board is now subsumed into other priority partnerships. There is, however, a commitment from partners to continue to work together to achieve a whole view of service planning and provision for children, young people and families. This will take place through a series of 'summit' events throughout the year, open to all partners and focused on active engagement and actions. This approach will inform the work of the LSCB, the LLEP and Health and Wellbeing Board, and will be informed by the work of the Leicestershire Educational Excellence Partnership.

The **Leicestershire Safer Communities Strategy Board** oversees the statutory Community Safety Agreement and has an important role in setting strategic direction and supporting collaboration in Safer Communities work across the County.

Leicester-Shire and Rutland Sport aims to make Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland the most sporting and physically active place in England by 2025.

The **Leicestershire Rural Partnership** co-ordinates and helps deliver the LLEP's ambitions in rural Leicestershire and maintains a focus on the needs of rural communities.

Leicestershire Youth Offending Service (YOS) is located within Leicestershire County Council's Children and Family Services Department and is overseen by a multi-agency Management Board.

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Outcomes/Strategic Plan Priorities	Council's Strategic Plan					Intentions	Rationale
	Leadership & Transformation	Enabling Economic Growth – A thriving Leicester shire Economy	Better Care – Health and Social Care Integration	Supporting Children and Families	Safer Communities – A Better Environment/Place		
A. Those families identified as most troubled are supported to become self-sufficient and resilient.				✓		1. Offer the right, proportionate help to families at the right time with a focus on children with developmental delay/additional needs 2. Deliver a targeted youth offer focussed on vulnerable groups 3. Provide a clear family support 'offer' to address the needs of the most vulnerable cohorts based on 'what works'	Reduce Reduce Delay
B. Children and young people who are, or are likely to be, at risk of harm are identified, protected from further harm and helped to recover from previous harm.				✓		1. Provide one 'front door' for children's social care referrals and early help requests for services in order to provide the right help at the right time.	Meet
C. Children and young people will grow up in their own families when it is safe to do so				✓		1. Ensure that all services are focussed on supporting families to remain or become successful 2. Where necessary, provide support that prevents children leaving their family and coming into care 3. Where a child does come into care steps will be made promptly to re-unify the child with their family, unless it is demonstrably harmful to do this 4. Offer respite care for families for children with complex emotional and behavioural needs. 5. Extend use of education provision as an alternative to coming into care where appropriate	Prevent Delay Delay Delay Reduce

Outcomes/Strategic Plan Priorities	Council's Strategic Plan					Intentions	Rationale
	Leadership & Transformation	Enabling Economic Growth – A thriving Leicester shire Economy	Better Care – Health and Social Care Integration	Supporting Children and Families	Safer Communities – A Better Environment/Place		
D. If children and young people cannot stay with their families then they live in stable, productive placements so that they become socially and economically independent adults				✓		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seek to find alternative family based care from within the child's kinship group or an alternative family setting 2. Increase placement choice through increased in-house foster carers. 3. Provide support to these family placements to ensure their success 4. Make available specialist placement options for our most vulnerable children 5. In a small number of placements (8-10% of children in care) provide a high quality residential setting. 	<p>Meet</p> <p>Meet</p> <p>Meet</p> <p>Meet</p> <p>Meet</p>
E. Children in Care live in stable placements so they experience a loving and nurturing home environment.				✓		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Foster carers and adoptive carers are carefully assessed, approved and matched with children to ensure the best chance of success in placements 2. Support is provided to carers of children in care to ensure they are assisted to be successful 3. Where difficulties occur in a child in care placement, flexible and practical help is offered to overcome these 	<p>Meet</p> <p>Meet</p> <p>Delay</p>
F. Adopted children are able to develop safe and secure relationships with their adoptive family that aid their recovery from past trauma and prepares them for independent adulthood.				✓		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appropriate and proportionate support is offered after an adoption placement to maximise success 	<p>Delay</p>

Outcomes/ Strategic Plan Priorities	Council's Strategic Plan					Intentions	Rationale
	Leadership & Transformation	Enabling Economic Growth – A thriving Leicester shire Economy	Better Care – Health and Social Care Integration	Supporting Children and Families	Safer Communities – A Better Environment/Place		
G. Young people leaving care make a successful transition to independent adulthood including access to education, employment or training and safe housing.				✓		1. Sufficient CFS staff and resources are dedicated to ensure young people in care can make a successful transition to independent adulthood including access to education, employment or training and safe housing 2. Planning and commissioning for 16+ supported living options	Delay Delay
H. All children and young people have fair access to a good supply of high quality childcare and school places	✓ ✓ ✓	✓		✓ ✓ ✓		1. Ensure all schools in Leicestershire are active members of school-to-school support networks. 2. In our role as strategic commissioners, deliver an effective process for schools seeking academy conversion, including sponsorship. 3. Ensure fair access for a sufficient supply of high quality school places and early years and childcare provisions.	Prevent Prevent Prevent
I. Children and young people in Leicestershire experience improved educational outcomes that are above national averages across all key stages				✓		1. Identify maintained schools and early years' settings and providers requiring intensive, targeted and collaborative support	Reduce
J. Vulnerable children and young people, and those missing education, experience improved educational outcomes so that the attainment gap to 'all children' is removed.	✓			✓ ✓ ✓		1. Investigate reasons for underachievement of vulnerable groups across all stages and create capacity within mainstream and special school sector to meet the needs of their vulnerable learners 2. Re-commission pathways of alternate provision initiatives for pupils outside mainstream education 3. Ensure that children missing education are identified early, offered the right support and that their progress is tracked	Reduce Reduce Reduce

Outcomes/ Strategic Plan Priorities	Council's Strategic Plan					Intentions	Rationale
	Leadership & Transformation	Enabling Economic Growth – A thriving Leicester shire Economy	Better Care – Health and Social Care Integration	Supporting Children and Families	Safer Communities – A Better Environment/Place		
K. Support people into employment Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities receive personalised integrated care and support to become increasingly independent			✓	✓		1. Ensure compliance with statutory assessment processes to enable identify and assess children and young people with SEND and to guide the access to or provision of appropriate support	Meet
			✓	✓		2. Jointly across CFS and NHS commission targeted and specialist in-house and external SEND services to families and schools	Meet
				✓		3. Work with parents and carers to support more effective commissioning of SEND services and provide access to a SEND Local Offer	Reduce
L. Children in Care experience good physical and mental health			✓	✓		1. Ensure close working with NHS commissioners and providers to ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> all children coming into care receive an initial health assessment with 28 days all children in care take part in the SDQ process routine immunisations, health screening, dental checks, review health assessments take place 	Meet
M. Families live in communities where crime and disorder is minimised and they report feeling safe				✓	✓	1. Ensure effective participation in MARAC and MAPPA, PREVENT processes	Meet
N. Vulnerable communities are protected and supported to be safe				✓	✓	1. Manage and develop Keep Safe Places 2. Raise awareness of Hate incidents and ensure consistent response to ASB	Prevent Reduce
O. Families are free from domestic violence and abuse, are assisted to recover from violent and abusive episodes and further violence and abuse is prevented.				✓	✓	1. Manage joint commissioned support services for adult and 13+ primary victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence.	Delay
						2. Respond to and embed support for child secondary victims of domestic abuse within children's services.	Delay

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
- 4 APRIL 2016

**REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN
AND FAMILIES**

QUARTER 3 2015/16 PERFORMANCE REPORT

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to present the Committee with an update of the Children and Families Service performance at the end of quarter 3 of 2015/16.

Background

2. The report is based on the set of performance measures aligned with the Council Corporate Strategy to 2017/18. The overall performance dashboard is attached as Appendix A. Appendix B supports the indicator 'Feedback from families and evaluation provides evidence of positive impact'. Appendix C contains a summary of the National Childhood Measurement Programme (NCMP) data for Leicestershire.

Report Changes

3. There are now two indicators for Child Protection Plans lasting 2 years or more. Both are national indicators:
 - i. Child Protection Plans lasting 2 years or more that cease during the year
 - ii. Child Protection Plans lasting 2 years or more open at the end of the quarter
4. Education data for pupils where English is an Additional Language (EAL) is referenced as the group is included in Ofsted's East Midlands Challenge.

Overview

5. From 28 measures that have new data available: 16 have improved; 6 show no significant change, 4 have declined and 2 have no comparison.
6. From 31 measures that have a national benchmark: 8 are in the top quartile, 6 are in the second quartile, 9 are in the third quartile and 8 are in the fourth quartile.
7. From 39 indicators that have a statistical neighbour benchmark, 19 are better than the statistical neighbour average, 15 are below and 5 are at a similar level.

Children and Young People are Safe

8. The number of 'Child Protection cases reviewed within timescales' was 98.7%, slightly above the quarter 2 percentage of 97.4%.

9. The percentage of Child Protection plans lasting 2 years or more that were open at the end of quarter 3 was 0.58% (2 cases). This is top quartile performance by available comparisons. The percentage of plans lasting 2 years or more that closed during the quarter was 5% (5 cases). This is slightly higher than comparators but does involve small numbers.
10. The percentage of 'Children becoming subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time' decreased again (improved) to 28.95%. However, this would still place Leicestershire in the fourth quartile of local authorities.
11. The 'percentage of children with 3 or more placements during the year' was 12.55%. This is similar to quarter 2 and would place Leicestershire in the third quartile nationally. The 'percentage of children in the same placement for 2+ years or placed for adoption' improved to 67.41% and would now be in the second quartile by national levels and above statistical neighbour levels.
12. Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation was 66.7%, an improvement on quarter 2 (53.9%) but still fourth quartile by comparison. Care Leavers Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) was 35.9%, second quartile by comparison. Both figures are still affected by a high number of 'unknown' young people (those without a confirmed contact) although the prevalence of this is lower than quarter 2 (unconfirmed cases in Q2 was approximately a third of the total but is now closer to a quarter).

Children and Young People Achieve their Potential

Early Years Foundation Stage

13. The percentage of Childminders rated as Good or Outstanding fell by 2.8% to 79.2% whilst the percentage of Private Voluntary and Independent (PVI) providers rated as Good or Outstanding increased by 1.2%. The two figures contributed to 'All childcare' figure of 83.7% which was slightly lower than quarter 2 (85%) but still above the most recent statistical neighbour figure.
14. The number of eligible families taking up Free Early Education Entitlement for 2 year olds increased again, rising by 7.2% to 79.2%, this follows a 5.9% rise in quarter 2. Take up for eligible 3 year olds was 100%. This figure has changed criteria from quarter 2 and now includes all children in Leicestershire provision (regardless of residence).

Education attainment

15. Confirmed Key Stage Four results have been released, which take account of appeal outcomes (i.e. re-marks) and exclude pupils who have recently arrived in the country. Leicestershire's confirmed figure for 5 GCSEs (A*-C including English and Maths) is 56.8%. This is 0.7% above the previously available provisional figure. The national figure was 57.3%, 0.5% higher than Leicestershire, compared to 0.3% higher in 2014.
16. Progress between Key stages 2 to 4 was mixed in Leicestershire: progress in Mathematics is now 1.8% above national levels after a 3.9% improvement; whilst progress in English fell by 0.8% and is now 4.4% below national levels.

Vulnerable groups**Key Stage Two**

17. The performance of pupils eligible for Free School Meals at Key Stage Two for Reading, Writing and Mathematics was 60% compared to the national level of 66%. This places Leicestershire in the bottom quartile of all local authorities. Performance was closer to statistical neighbour average of 60.4%
18. The percentage of pupils achieving level 4 for Reading, Writing and Maths (RWM) for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL) was slightly above national levels (80% Leicestershire, 79% England). The percentage of Leicestershire pupils with a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), who achieved level 4 RWM was 14% (26 of 180 pupils) compared with 16% nationally.

Key Stage Four

19. Attainment of pupils eligible for Free School Meals rose by 0.7% to 29% for attainment of 5 GCSEs (A*-C including English and Maths). This is third quartile by national standards. The gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils is 2.2% wider in Leicestershire than nationally (30.1% gap in Leicestershire, 27.9% nationally). This is an improvement on 2014.
20. The performance of EAL pupils was very good in Leicestershire with an attainment level of 65.7% compared to 56.5% for the same group nationally. There are 434 eligible pupils in this category.
21. Pupils with a statement of SEN achieved above national levels as a group – 9.2% in Leicestershire (of 240 eligible pupils), 8.8% nationally.

Ofsted outcomes

22. The percentage of Leicestershire schools rated as Good or Outstanding and pupils in Good or Outstanding schools both saw a small rise and remain above national averages and in the second quartile of local authorities. The current figures stand at 86.6% and 83.9% respectively. The percentage of good or outstanding Special Schools remained at 100%.

Economy/Employment and Skills

23. The latest data from Prospects is for the end of November 2015 and shows a Leicestershire NEET figure of 3.0% (623 young people) for young people aged 16-18. This is similar to the quarter 2 figure of 3.1%.
24. Prospects have also provided data for participation in education and learning for year 12 aged young people (the first year after leaving school). This is currently 96.6%. The Leicestershire level has been around 96% over the past year.

Children and Young People have their Health and Wellbeing and Life Chances Improved

25. Breast feeding at 6-8 weeks prevalence is 46.64% for Leicestershire. This is similar to the final 2014/15 figure and an increase compared to quarter 2.

26. New data has been released for the National Child Measurement Programme. Leicestershire once again compares well to national comparators. 20.2% of reception children in Leicestershire are obese or overweight – statistically significantly lower than the England and East Midlands averages (21.9% and 21.7% respectively); and 29.9% of Year 6 children are overweight or obese, significantly lower than the England and East Midlands averages (33.2% and 32.3% respectively).
27. Although both figures are better than available comparators, this still equates to approximately 1554 overweight or obese reception aged children in Leicestershire and 2155 obese or overweight Year 6 children.
28. Further details, including District figures, are available in Appendix C.

Thriving Communities

29. Appendix B contains comments from users of the SLF service in relation to the indicator 'Feedback from families and evaluation provides evidence of positive impact'.
30. The number of assessments conducted by the new SLF service during quarter 3 was 2476. This is a large rise compared to quarter 2 when 1877 assessments took place. This is influenced by the service stabilising after the restructure earlier in the year and staff consolidating in new roles.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

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List of Appendices

Appendix A - Children and Families Department performance dashboard for quarter 3, 2015/16

Appendix B supports the indicator 'Feedback from families and evaluation provides evidence of positive impact'

Appendix C – NCMP report: Prevalence of overweight, underweight and obese children in Leicestershire 2014/15

Equality and Human Rights Implications

31. Addressing equalities issues is supported by this report. The corporate dashboard highlights a number of elements of performance on equalities issues. The education of pupils eligible for the Pupil Premium is recorded in this report with other pupil groups reported on directly to the relevant Heads of Strategy.

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Children and Families Performance FY2015/16 Q3										
Outcome	Supporting Indicator	Updated	Latest update	Current Performance	Better or worse than previous data point ^A	Trend Charts	Status RAG	* East Midlands not SN National benchmark (quartile 1 = top)	Statistical Neighbour benchmark	2017/18 target
Children and Young People are Safe	% child protection cases which were reviewed within timescales	Y	Q3	98.7%	Better		A	3	96.9%	100%
	% children with 3 or more placements during the year	Y	Q3	12.55%	Same		A	3	11.8%	<9%
	% children in same placement for 2+ years or placed for adoption	Y	Q3	67.4%	Better		A	2	64.2%	70%
	% children who wait less than 20 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family	N	2015	60%	Worse		G	1	52%	65%
	Care leavers in suitable accommodation	Y	Q3	66.7%	Better		R	4	74.1%	Top quartile
	Care leavers NOT in education, employment or training	Y	Q3	35.9%	Worse		A	2	39.3%	Top quartile
	Child Protection plans lasting 2 years or more open at end of quarter	Y	Q3	0.59% (2)	Similar		G	1	2.4%	n/a
	Child Protection plans lasting 2 years or more that cease during quarter	Y	Q3	5% (5)	Similar/worse		A	3	3.5%	n/a
	Children becoming subject to a child protection plan for second or subsequent time	Y	Q3	28.9%	Better		R	4	16.8%	n/a
Children and Young People Achieve their Potential	% eligible 2 year olds taking up FEEE	Y	Q3	79.20%	Better		A	n/a	n/a	n/a
	% eligible 3 year olds taking up FEEE	Y	Q3	100%	Better		G	n/a	n/a	n/a
	% of reception pupils reaching a Good Level of Development	N	2015	63.7%	Better		A	3	63.60%	60%
	% inequality gap in achievement across all early learning goals	N	2015	30.3%	Better		A	n/a	n/a	Top 20%
	Childminders rated as Good or Outstanding	Y	Q3	80.0%	Worse		G	n/a	79.9%	n/a
	PVI rated as Good or Outstanding	Y	Q3	92.2%	Better		G	n/a	84.3%	n/a
	All childcare	Y	Q3	83.7%	Worse		G	n/a	82.3%	n/a
	% KS2 pupils achieving L4 in Reading, Writing and Maths	N	2015	80.3%	Better		A	3	79.6%	85%
	% pupils progressing by 2 levels in Maths between KS1 and KS2	N	2015	87.4%	Worse		R	4	87.7%	Above national average
	% pupils progressing by 2 levels in Reading between KS1 and KS2	N	2015	89.0%	Worse		R	4	90.4%	Above national average
	% pupils progressing by 2 levels in Writing between KS1 and KS2	N	2015	92.8%	Better		R	4	93.4%	Above national average
	% pupils eligible for FSM achieving L4 in Reading, Writing and Maths	N	2015	60.0%	Better		R	4	60.4%	Above national average
	% pupils achieving 5+ A*-C GCSEs (inc. Eng and Maths)	Y	2015	56.8%	Better		A	3	57.5%	70%
	% pupils making expected progress from Key Stage 2 to 4 in English	Y	2015	68.1%	Worse		R	4	70.7%	Above national average
	% pupils making expected progress from Key Stage 2 to 4 in Maths	Y	2015	70.0%	Better		G	2	68.3	Above national average
	% pupils eligible for FSM achieving 5+ GCSE A*-C (inc. Eng and Maths)	Y	2015	29.0%	Better		A	3	29.62	Above national average
	Secondary School persistent absence rate	N	2015	5.9%	Better		A	3	5.25%	6.4%
	A Level - average points per entry	N	2015	208	Worse		A	3	210.1	215
	17 year old participation	Y	Q3	96.6%	Same		G	1	88.58%	97%
	NEET 16-18	Y	Dec-15	3.0%	Better		G	1	3.80%	Below 4%
	% L2 by age 19	N	2014	85%	Same		A	2	85%	88%
	% Children in Care achieving L4 in Reading, Writing and Maths at KS2	N	2015	55.6%	Same		n/a	n/a	42.6%	-
	% Children in Care achieving 5+ A*-C GCSE (inc. Eng and Maths)	N	2015	7.7%	Same		n/a	n/a	12.20%	-
	% Schools assessed as Good or Outstanding	Y	Nov-15	86.6%	Better		G	2	85.7%	>84%
	% Pupils in Good or Outstanding schools	Y	Nov-15	83.9%	Better		G	2	83.9%	-
	% Special schools assessed as Good or Outstanding	Y	Nov-15	100.0%	Same		G	1	94.8%	100%
% of pupils offered first choice primary school	N	2015	88.7%	Worse		G	n/a	n/a	90%	
% of pupils offered first choice secondary school	N	2015	96.2%	Worse		G	n/a	n/a	98%	
Children and Young People have their Health and Wellbeing and Life Chances Improved	Under 18 conception data	N	2013	20.9	n/a		G	Better	21.2	-
	% women smoking at time of delivery	N	2014/15	10.30%	Better		G	Better	13.70%	10.80%
	Emotional well-being of looked after children	N	2013/14	-	-		-	-	15.2	<15
	Waiting times for assessment by CAMHS	N	-	n/a	-		-	-	-	Reduce
	Number of looked after children having health checks	N	2015	86.0%	Better		n/a	n/a	n/a	Increase
	Number of looked after children having dental checks	N	2015	78.2%	Better		n/a	n/a	n/a	Increase
	Number of looked after children with up to date immunisations	N	2015	87.9%	Better		n/a	n/a	n/a	Increase
	% children with excess weight 4-5 year olds	Y	2015	20.2%	Better		G	1	22.1%*	<20%
	% children excess weight 10-11 year olds	Y	2015	29.9%	Better		G	1	32.3%*	Top quartile
	% children aged 3 with one or more decayed, missing or filled teeth	N	2015	18.6%	-		R	Worse	16%	Reduce
% mothers breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks	Y	Q3	46.6%	Better		R	n/a	47.20%	Increase	
Thriving Communities	Reduced youth re-offending	N	Year end 2014/15	1.25	Worse		A	n/a	n/a	Top quartile
	Reduced first time entrants to the youth justice system	N	Q2	168	Better		G	n/a	n/a	Top quartile
	Minimal use of custodial sentences for young people	Y	Q1	2%	-		G	n/a	n/a	<5%
	Reduce % people reporting they have been a victim of ASB	N	Year end 2014/15	5.3%	Better		G	n/a	n/a	Reduce
	Numbers of families supported through SLF service (no. of assessments). This figure uses new criteria from April 2015.	Y	Q3	2476	Better		n/a	n/a	n/a	480
	Number of SLF Payment By Results (PBR) families claimed for	N	Q2	97	-		G	n/a	n/a	-
Feedback from families and evaluation provides evidence of positive impact (average satisfaction across services)	Y	Q3	-	-		G	n/a	n/a	-	

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Appendix B

Appendix B – Feedback from Children and Families about their involvement in SLF

Quotes from parents/carers

"We had no support before SLF. [Child's name] has been accused of two serious assaults and it was difficult for us in the community and as a family to deal with. SLF were supportive and helped my family through a very difficult time. Now we are able to move on with our lives."

"I've not been in this position before. I would not have been able to make any changes without the worker, we would have just carried on until I couldn't take the pressure anymore, then I don't know what would have happened."

"He helped me reach goals I didn't know I needed to reach. Helped me with new skills, new access to healthy living and exercise and being a better parent."

"Our whole (extended) family have seen an improvement in our family."

"The calendar was a big help, as J always knew what was going on and I didn't, now we both know what is happening, we are more organised and less stressed. We have a new way of dealing with [child's name] behaviour, counting down from 5 and being continuous with how to deal with it."

"Your service has been an incredible help and support to us as a family. I am very grateful to all the parties involved. The relevant help and support finally arrived with your involvement. Prior to that I would not even know what support existed."

Child

"You are the best family worker ever."

"We made play-doh 'worry monsters'. I can squish them if I want to or talk to a grown up."

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Prevalence of underweight, overweight and obese children in Leicestershire,
2014/15

The below tables show the prevalence of underweight, healthy weight, overweight and obese children, with associated 95% confidence intervals, for England, the East Midlands, Local Authorities and the districts within, based on the postcode of the school. This is the data that is published on the HSCIC website. However, PHOF indicators are based on the proportion of children obese or overweight. This indicator is the main focus of this report.

The confidence intervals should be taken into account when making direct comparisons of two different prevalence figures. Throughout this report, the proportions for local areas are compared with single value point estimates (average) for England and the East Midlands, rather than to confidence intervals for England and the East Midlands. If the England or East Midlands average are within the confidence intervals for the local area the difference is not statistically significant.

Table 1a- Prevalence of underweight by region and local authority (based on the postcode of the school) 2014/15

Region and Local Authority	Underweight					
	Reception			Year 6		
	Prevalence	Lower CI	Upper CI	Prevalence	Lower CI	Upper CI
ENGLAND	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.4	1.4	1.5
EAST MIDLANDS	0.9	0.8	1.0	1.6	1.5	1.7
Leicestershire	0.9	0.7	1.2	1.9	1.6	2.3
Blaby	0.9	0.5	1.7	2.7	1.9	3.8
Charnwood	0.8	0.5	1.3	1.5	1.0	2.2
Harborough	x	x	x	2.1	1.3	3.3
Hinckley and Bosworth	0.6	0.3	1.3	1.2	0.7	2.1
Melton	x	x	x	1.5	0.7	3.1
North West Leicestershire	0.9	0.5	1.6	2.1	1.4	3.2
Oadby and Wigston	2.9	1.9	4.5	2.8	1.8	4.2
Rutland	x	x	x	x	x	x

Table 1b- Prevalence of healthy weight by region and local authority (based on the postcode of the school) 2014/15

Region and Local Authority	Healthy weight					
	Reception			Year 6		
	Prevalence	Lower CI	Upper CI	Prevalence	Lower CI	Upper CI
ENGLAND	77.2	77.0	77.3	65.3	65.2	65.5
EAST MIDLANDS	77.4	77.0	77.8	66.1	65.7	66.5
Leicestershire	78.9	77.9	79.8	68.2	67.0	69.3
Blaby	78.7	76.1	81.1	70.0	67.1	72.7
Charnwood	76.8	74.8	78.7	66.3	64.0	68.5
Harborough	x	x	x	71.7	68.6	74.7
Hinckley and Bosworth	80.0	77.5	82.3	68.4	65.6	71.2
Melton	x	x	x	71.6	67.3	75.6
North West Leicestershire	81.0	78.5	83.2	67.2	64.2	70.1
Oadby and Wigston	78.3	75.0	81.3	64.5	61.1	67.8
Rutland	x	x	x	x	x	x

Table 1c- Prevalence of overweight by region and local authority (based on the postcode of the school) 2014/15

Region and Local Authority	Overweight					
	Reception			Year 6		
	Prevalence	Lower CI	Upper CI	Prevalence	Lower CI	Upper CI
ENGLAND	12.8	12.7	12.9	14.2	14.1	14.3
EAST MIDLANDS	13.1	12.8	13.4	13.8	13.5	14.2
Leicestershire	12.7	11.9	13.5	13.4	12.6	14.2
Blaby	13.4	11.5	15.6	12.0	10.2	14.1
Charnwood	13.4	11.9	15.1	14.0	12.4	15.8
Harborough	11.7	9.8	13.9	12.4	10.3	14.9
Hinckley and Bosworth	13.1	11.3	15.2	13.3	11.4	15.5
Melton	13.8	11.1	17.2	11.4	8.8	14.6
North West Leicestershire	11.0	9.3	13.1	14.3	12.2	16.7
Oadby and Wigston	11.7	9.5	14.4	15.4	13.0	18.1
Rutland	16.0	12.7	20.1	11.8	8.8	15.7

Table 1d- Prevalence of obese children by region and local authority (based on the postcode of the school) 2014/15

Region and Local Authority	Obese					
	Reception			Year 6		
	Prevalence	Lower CI	Upper CI	Prevalence	Lower CI	Upper CI
ENGLAND	9.1	9.0	9.2	19.1	19.0	19.2
EAST MIDLANDS	8.6	8.3	8.8	18.5	18.1	18.9
Leicestershire	7.5	6.9	8.2	16.5	15.6	17.4
Blaby	6.9	5.5	8.6	15.3	13.3	17.7
Charnwood	9.0	7.8	10.4	18.2	16.4	20.1
Harborough	6.9	5.5	8.7	13.8	11.6	16.3
Hinckley and Bosworth	6.2	5.0	7.8	17.0	14.9	19.4
Melton	8.6	6.6	11.6	15.5	12.5	19.1
North West Leicestershire	7.1	5.7	8.8	16.4	14.2	18.9
Oadby and Wigston	7.1	5.4	9.4	17.3	14.8	20.2
Rutland	6.4	4.3	9.4	12.7	9.6	16.8

Table 1e- Prevalence of overweight and obese combined by region and local authority (based on the postcode of the school) 2014/15

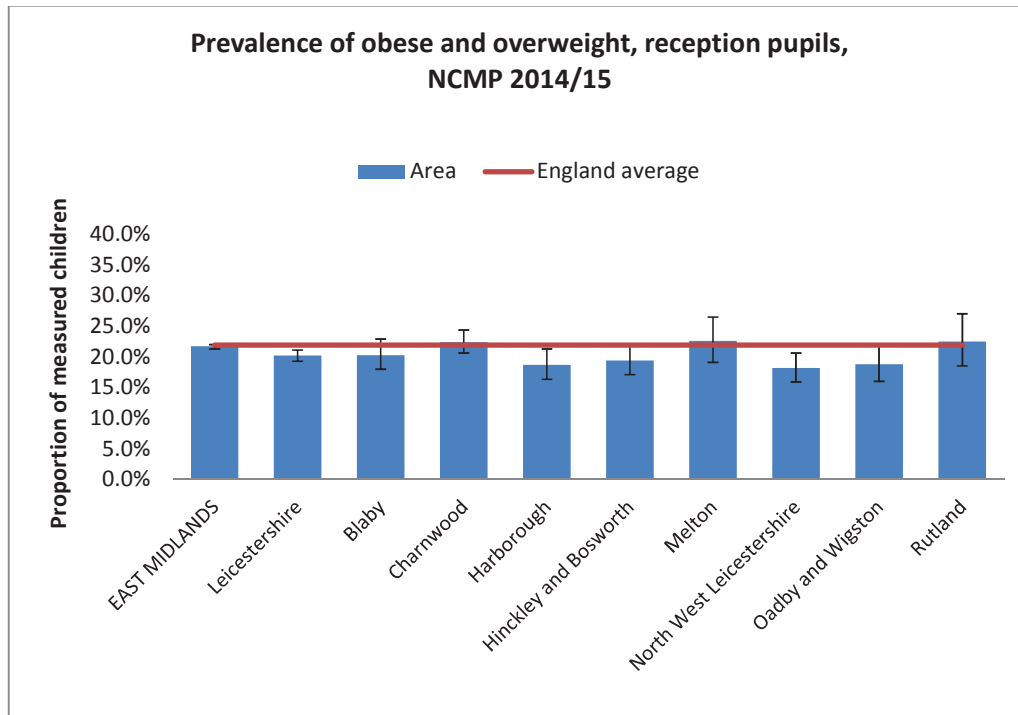
Region and Local Authority	Overweight and obese combined					
	Reception			Year 6		
	Prevalence	Lower CI	Upper CI	Prevalence	Lower CI	Upper CI
ENGLAND	21.9	21.8	22.0	33.2	33.1	33.4
EAST MIDLANDS	21.7	21.3	22.0	32.3	31.9	32.8
Leicestershire	20.2	19.3	21.1	29.9	28.8	31.0
Blaby	20.3	18.0	22.9	27.4	24.7	30.1
Charnwood	22.4	20.6	24.4	32.2	30.0	34.5
Harborough	18.7	16.3	21.3	26.2	23.3	29.3
Hinckley and Bosworth	19.4	17.1	21.8	30.3	27.6	33.2
Melton	22.6	19.1	26.5	26.9	23.0	31.1
North West Leicestershire	18.2	15.9	20.6	30.7	27.9	33.7
Oadby and Wigston	18.8	16.0	22.0	32.7	29.5	36.1
Rutland	22.5	18.5	27.0	24.5	20.2	29.5

Reception Year

Obese and overweight in Reception

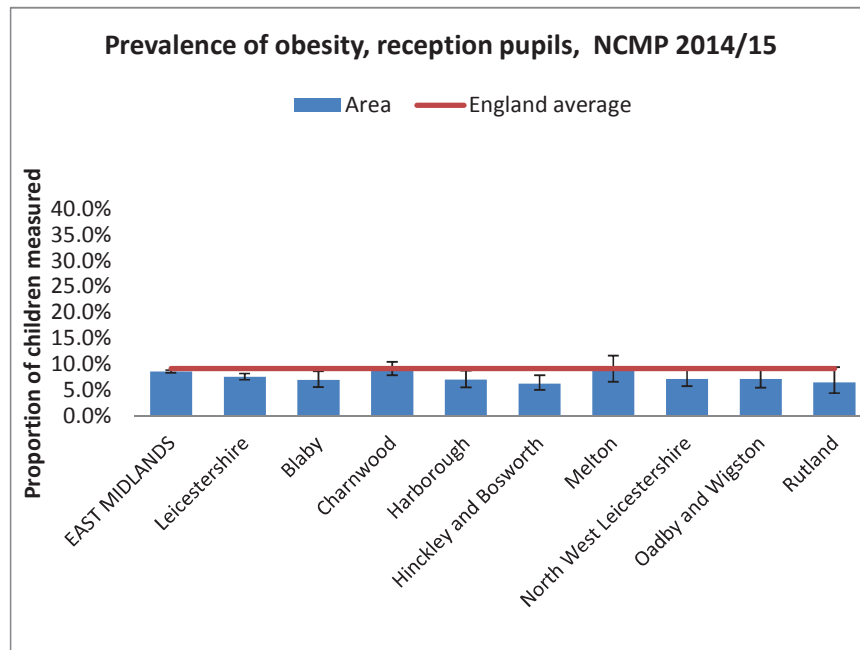
This is the figure which is used by the Public Health Outcomes Framework, based on the postcode of the child's school.

- Overall, Leicestershire has a prevalence of overweight or obese in Reception of 20.2%, significantly lower than the England and East Midlands averages (21.9% and 21.7% respectively)
- In 2013/14, the figure for Leicestershire was 20.8%.
- Harborough, Hinckley & Bosworth and North West Leicestershire districts have levels of overweight and obese children in Reception significantly lower than the England average.
- Over a fifth (21.9%) of the children measured were either overweight or obese in England. This was lower than in 2013/14 (22.5%) and 2006/07 (22.9%)



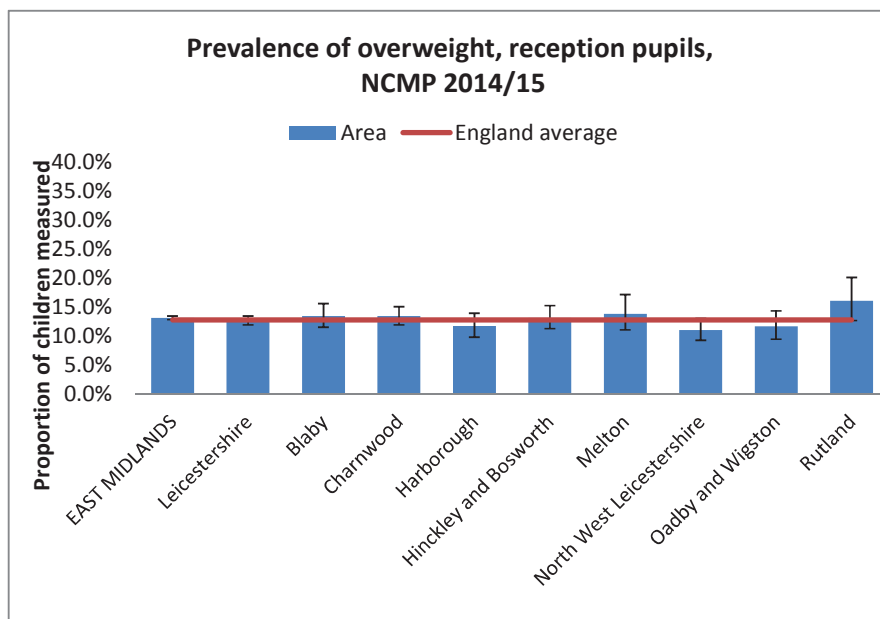
Obesity in Reception

- Overall Leicestershire has a prevalence of obesity in Reception of 7.5%, significantly lower than the England and East Midlands averages (9.1% and 8.6% respectively)
- The prevalence in Blaby, Harborough, Hinckley & Bosworth and North West Leicestershire are also significantly lower than the England average.



Overweight in Reception

- Leicestershire has a prevalence of overweight (12.7%) similar to the England average (12.8%) and East Midlands average (13.1%).
- All the districts have prevalences similar to the England average.

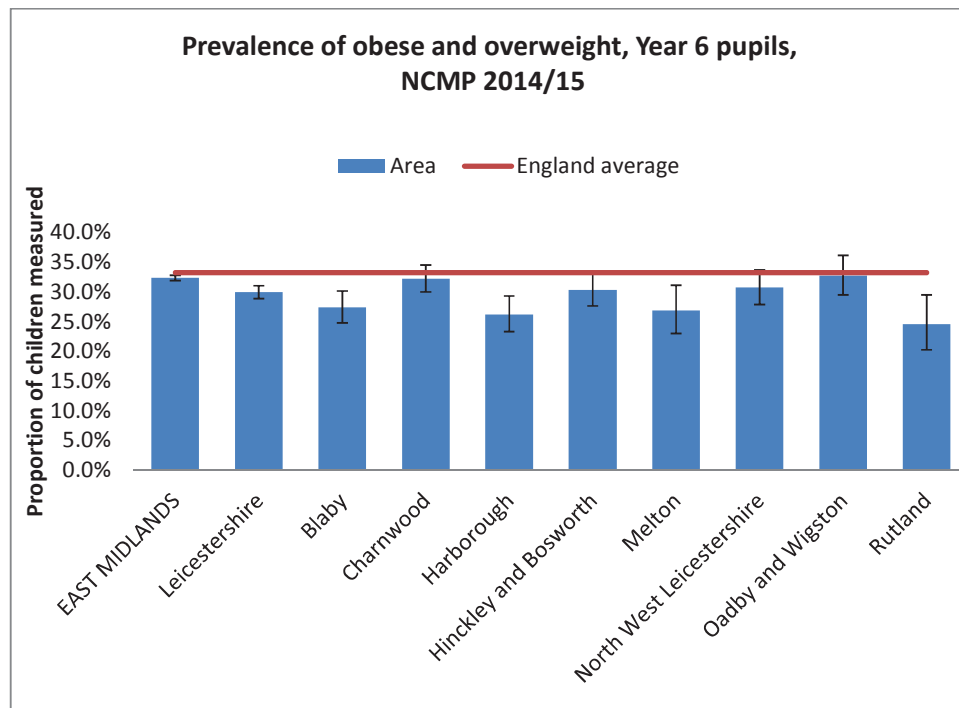


Year 6

Obese and overweight in Year 6

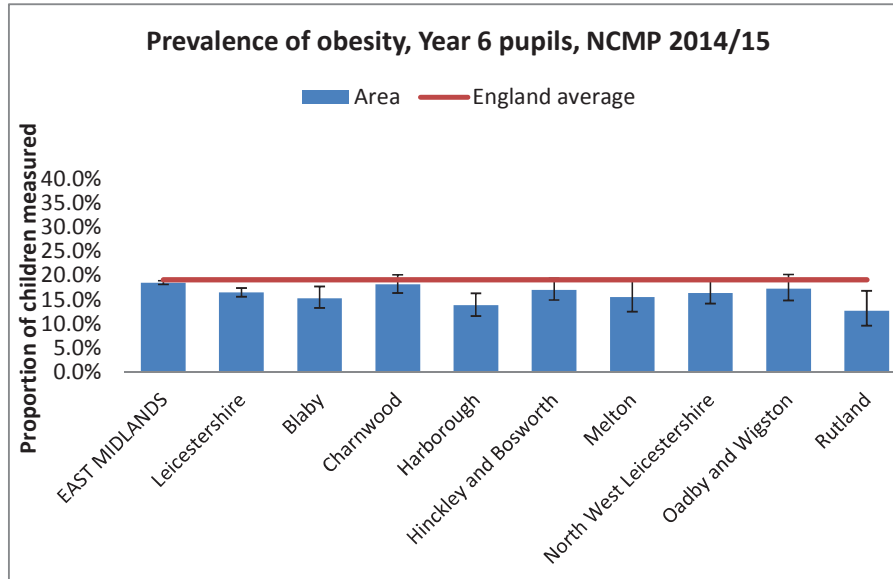
This is the figure which is used by the Public Health Outcomes Framework, based on the postcode of the child's school.

- Overall, Leicestershire has a prevalence of overweight or obese in Year 6 of 29.9%, significantly lower than the England and East Midlands averages (33.2% and 32.3% respectively)
- In 2013/14, the figure for Leicestershire was 30.1%.
- Blaby, Harborough and Melton have levels of overweight and obese children in Year 6 significantly lower than the England average.
- The remaining districts in Leicestershire have levels similar to the England average.
- Around a third (33.2%) of the children measured in England were either classified as overweight or obese. This was lower than 2013/14 (33.5%) but higher than in 2006/07 (31.6%).



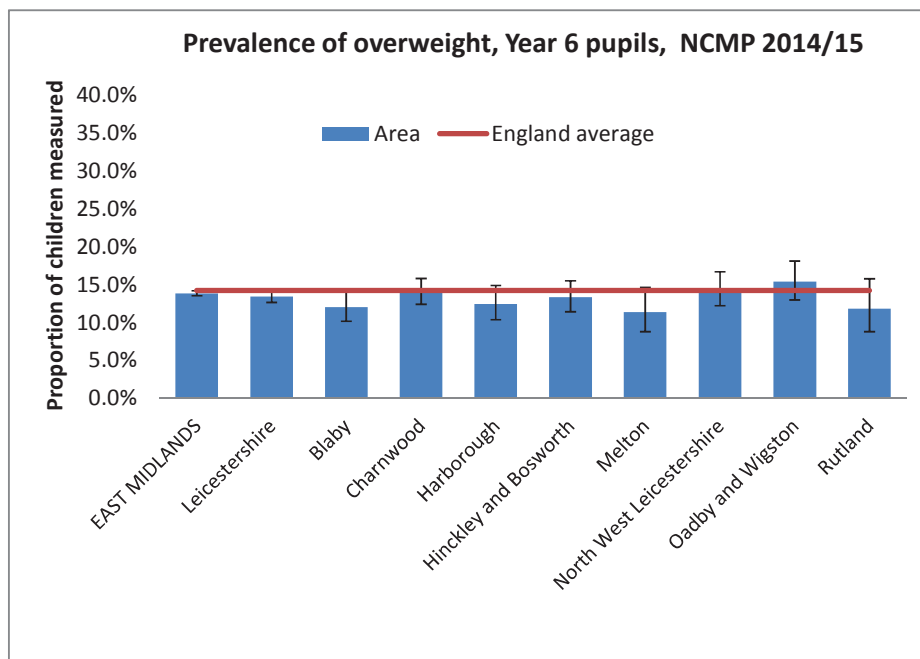
Obesity in Year 6

- Overall Leicestershire has a prevalence of obesity in Year 6 of 16.5%. This is significantly lower than the England and East Midlands averages (19.1% and 18.5% respectively)
- The prevalence of obesity is significantly lower than the England average in Blaby, Harborough, North West Leicestershire.



Overweight in Year 6

- Overall Leicestershire has a prevalence of overweight in Year 6 of 13.4% which is similar to the England and East Midlands averages (14.2% and 13.8% respectively)
- All districts have similar prevalence of overweight in Year 6 compared to the England average



Key figures for Leicestershire

- 20.2% of reception children obese or overweight – significantly lower than the England and East Midlands averages (21.9% and 21.7% respectively)
 - 7.5% of reception children obese – significantly lower than the England and East Midlands averages (9.1% and 8.6% respectively)
 - 12.7% of reception children overweight – similar to the England average (12.8%) and East Midlands average (13.1%).
-
- Prevalence of overweight or obese in Year 6 of 29.9%, significantly lower than the England and East Midlands averages (33.2% and 32.3% respectively)
 - 16.5% of year 6 children obese – significantly lower than England and East Midlands averages (19.1% and 18.5% respectively)
 - 13.4% of year 6 children overweight – similar to the England and East Midlands averages (14.2% and 13.8% respectively)

Rocio Rodriguez

Data & Business Intelligence Team

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30th November 2015

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CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 4 APRIL 2016

LEICESTERSHIRE FOSTERING AGENCY
QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT
FOR THE PERIOD 1 OCTOBER TO 31ST DECEMBER 2015

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF
CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Purpose of report

1. To note the report and the activity of the Fostering Agency.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The Overview and Scrutiny receives quarterly reports from the Fostering Agency.

Background

3. Leicestershire County Council is responsible for a Local Authority Fostering Agency. It undertakes statutory responsibilities relating to Fostering. This report is from the Leicestershire County Council Fostering Agency.
4. Under the National Minimum Standards (NMS), (25.7) all Fostering agencies are required to provide a half year report to the Executive¹ regarding the activity and work of the Fostering Agency and Fostering Panel. This report provides an update on recent developments and challenges within the Fostering Service for the period 1st October – 31st December 2015.

Performance

5. As of Sept 30th 2015 there were 481 children in our care.
 6. This is a year on year increase of 18 children for the same period in 2013 and 2014 (children in care numbers of 463 in both years).
 7. The Fostering Service has 190 mainstream and connected carers approved (some connected carers are temporarily approved as set out later in this report for breakdown).
-

8. In this period there were 173 children placed with in-house mainstream, and 85 children placed with kinship carers.
9. 111 children were placed in Independent Fostering Agency placements (IFA's). In house placements are currently full to capacity; all carers require monthly supervision, whereby each child is discussed in detail by the Fostering Supervising Social Workers to ensure that the foster carer is supported to meet that child's needs. Where a child is placed in an IFA placement, this work is carried out by the IFA's own social workers.
10. In this period 5 young people were living in Leicestershire's two residential homes.
11. In this period 41 children were living in independent children's homes.
12. In this period 22 young people aged 16+ were living in supported lodgings.
13. In this period 23 children were in adoption placements.
14. In this period 18 young people were placed with parents.
15. In this period 9 young people were placed under Staying Put arrangements.
16. A planned formal restructure of the Fostering Service was implemented in April 2015 and enabled the services to respond more flexibly to recruitment and to targets to meet increase in-house provision to meet the expected increased number of children and young people who need to be in local authority care.
17. The National Minimum Standards for Fostering (2011) give a six month time scale for a fostering assessment to be completed from application to presentation at panel. In the period April 1st to September 30th 2015, 10 mainstream assessments were undertaken and all were completed within the 6 month time scale; 3 assessments with applicants who have either been counselled out due to new information coming to light or left for personal reasons; 2 private fostering assessments and 2 change of circumstance assessments for current carers who have had a change in their personal situation; commenced 2 assessments who withdrew within the first few weeks of the process.
18. In the same period, there were 22 new 'connected carer' placements and 6 panel approvals.
19. In 2014 two independent assessors were commissioned to meet statutory deadlines and the ongoing sufficiency needs of the service in relation to increasing foster carer provision. Since then Leicestershire County Council social workers have been trained and are used to undertake assessment on a peripatetic basis.

Foster Carer Recruitment

21. Our recruitment strategy for new fostering households continues in earnest and we are currently on target to recruit 12 new households (net). We are likely to lose 15 households. 13 to retirement from fostering, and 2 deregistered due to concerns on the level of care offered.

Foster Carer and Fostering Profile

22. In February 2015 a Business Analyst worked with the Fostering Service to bring together a range of information to better understand the profile of placements and foster carers. The key findings from these reports are listed below:
- i. The majority of foster carers work at skill level 3;
 - ii. A third of foster carers are aged 61 and over;
 - iii. A third of foster carers are either above the default retirement age or within five years of this, however a third of foster carers are more than 15 years from the default retirement age;
 - iv. The majority of LAC placements are male (57%) against female (43%);
 - v. A fifth of LAC are within 2 years of turning 18;
 - vi. The majority of LAC placements (85%) are from one ethnicity of "White/British";
 - vii. Almost three quarters of external commission placements are classified as "agency fostering" (73%) ;
 - viii. The majority placements (70%) are made with a group of eight suppliers and the majority of spend (80%) are made with a group of eighteen suppliers;
 - ix. Contract management has increased by 255% from 38 placements to 135 placements within four years with a value of £8.7m in 2014.
23. Over the summer of 2015 a consultation and development company called iMPower worked with the Fostering Service to better understand the priority commissioning areas. The following is a summary of their findings and 'outputs':
- i. The analysis identified an imperative and opportunity to arrest the decline in in-house fostering capacity, increase placement share and achieve better use of resources
 - ii. Doing so will require an investment in the service, and a concerted and coordinated
 - iii. effort to deliver focussed changes
 - iv. With the support of the LCC team and foster carers, agreement was been achieved on the priority development areas and detailed plans have been drawn up, including resource inputs
24. The reforms proposed are centred on the needs of carers and those who may become carers. The diagram below provides an overview of the findings:

Carer engagement – headline findings (see full report for more details)



Connected Persons

25. Family and Friends foster care is a formal arrangement where the child is looked after by the Local Authority and placed with a relative, friend or connected person. 'Relative of Friend' is defined as a: grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of the full blood or by marriage), step-parent, or friend of the child.
26. A 'Connected Person' is anyone who has a pre-existing connection to a child through their extended network. This may be someone who knows the child in a more professional capacity such as a child-minder, a teacher, a youth worker, although these are not exclusive categories (National Minimum Standards and Fostering Regulations 2013).
27. This case law led to an increase in the formality of assessment of a large group of carers in Leicestershire and subsequent directives from the family courts to complete assessments in shrinking timescales has had a significant impact on assessment and supervisory capacity in the Fostering Service.
28. To address this capacity issue, a dedicated 'Connected Persons' unit called the Kinship Team was created and sits within the Fostering, Adoption and Placements Service. This team aims to provide a more focused service in a more timely and consistent manner.
29. Issues relating to Leicestershire family court expectations regarding completion of assessments in shrinking timescales will be raised at the Family Justice Board.

Emotional Permanence

30. Special Guardianship was introduced as a new permanence option for children in December 2005. It provides a legally secure foundation for building a permanent relationship between the child and their special guardian, while preserving the legal link between the child and their birth family.
31. 'Choices for children and Young People' is Leicestershire's placement 'and sufficiency strategy for children and young people in care (2013-2015) and is supplemented/updated by the Market position statement for 2015-16. This strategy sets out Leicestershire County Council's ambition to secure emotional attachment, physical stability and long term commitment for the children and young people that come into our care. Central to this vision is exploring all options to keep children and young people within their family networks through support arrangements and formal care proceedings where order options include Special Guardianship or Residence Orders. We continue to explore this as a possibility in all cases, and can find creative ways to support this move into permanence for our looked after children. However, a financial risk analysis of the growing cohort of special guardians is required in order to understand the future draw on the authority's limited resources.

Development and Training

32. Staff development and their engagement in the development of fostering services is a key priority and will help to deliver improved outcomes for children. In order to ensure the Fostering Service is working consistently with the Locality Teams the Growing Safety methodology is undertaken in all of the work we do.
33. The Head of Service and Service Manager have scheduled an audit of foster carer supervision records to determine the baseline of use of Signs of Safety by the supervising social workers. The outcome of the audit will be to determine what developmental activity/training is needed to ensure Signs of Safety is used meaningfully to inform the support and training needs of foster carers to best meet the outcomes of children and young people in care. The actions arising from this audit and other activity e.g. foster carer feedback will be used to update the Personal Training and Developmental Plan for 2016-17. This work is led by the Fostering Adoption and Placement's Training Coordinator who was introduced to the service as part of the remodelling in April 2015.
34. The foster carers, kinship and short breaks Personal Training and Developmental Plan was recently updated and can be found online at: <http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2016/1/19/FOSTER%20CARER%20TRAINING.pdf>
35. There continues to be support to the Placement Commissioning unit within FAP from the Commissioning Support Team, with a renewed focus on commissioning planning for cohorts of children e.g. 16+ young people,

contract management and use of contract and contract management specialists to inform practice.

36. There is also a Transition Plan to support the implementation of the Regional Framework that includes the publishing of the 'Plan on a Page' guidance (see below) and the use of floorwalkers to support the brokers' use of the Framework.

Proposal On A Page: **Regional Framework** | v1.0_20160211

<p>Ambition: To implement the East Midlands Regional framework and enable Leicestershire County Council to source agency placements within procurement regulations</p>	<p>Proposal Description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The East Midlands Regional Framework has been running for the past four years with five local authorities, Leicestershire County Council joined the framework this year and now is a partner with the eight East Midland local authorities All placements that require agency provision will be sourced from the East Midlands Regional Framework, where Leicestershire will follow a process of mini competition to achieve the best match for our children and young people and a cost effective price Where placements are identified as matching the outcomes, and where a shortlist of more than one provider is available, the decision on which placement within the shortlist will be with the child's Social Worker Where a placement match cannot be identified within the East Midlands Regional Framework, the Family Placement Commissioning Team will identify a match "off frame work" and undertake a direct award on behalf of the child's Social Worker
<p>Key Proposal Outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency placements are sourced on the framework Where more than one match is identified, child Social Worker to decide within shortlisted match provision Direct Awards are only made if no suitable provision is available within the framework Matched framework provision cannot be refused as direct awards are only to be used as an exception 	<p>Benefits to be achieved are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with procurement rules and regulations Improved outcomes for our looked after children and young people Improved matched provision within agency placements Improved value for money with agencies Improved supplier management Improved recording and reporting of agency placements and needs of our looked after children Greater market management and greater placement choice in time
<p>Role & Functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placement Commissioning Team to source provision within the Framework based on placement outcomes Child's Social Worker to identify preference where more than two shortlisted provisions are available Mini Competitions and Direct Awards to be reviewed monthly by Placement Commissioning Team Manager 	
<p>Strategic Alignment & Interdependencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Commissioning strategy Partnership with Regional Framework local authorities 	
<p>Strategic Governance: <i>Stakeholders:</i> Nicci Collins, Andrew Logie, Liz Perfect, Chris Nerini, Sarah Wilson, Maria Hunt <i>Proposal Sponsor:</i> Walter McCulloch, Neil Hanney</p>	

Development of the Service

37. Priorities for the last quarter have included:

- The implementation of the new structure
- Recruitment to vacancies following the restructure
- Management cover during this period
- Improving contract management
- Improving and implementing contract negotiation
- Recruitment and assessment
- Preparing for the implementation of the Regional Framework

Resource Implications

38. Consideration of the MTFs is incorporated in the annual budget setting exercise whereby the authority's plan to meet its sufficiency duty is financed.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None

Officer(s) to Contact

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Equality and Human Rights Implications

39. The Leicestershire and Rutland Adoption Agency has been recently commended by Stonewall for its inclusive recruitment stance, particularly with regard to same sex adopters.

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**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 4 APRIL 2016**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY
SERVICES**

**LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND ADOPTION AGENCY
QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT
1ST OCTOBER – 31ST DECEMBER 2015**

Purpose of Report

1. To note the report and the activity of the Adoption Agency for the period 1st October – 31st December 2015..

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives quarterly reports from the Adoption Agency.

Background

3. Leicestershire County Council is responsible for a Local Authority Adoption Agency. It undertakes statutory responsibilities relating to adoption and has a Service Level Agreement with Rutland County Council. This report is therefore from the Leicestershire & Rutland Adoption Agency.
4. Under the 2011 National Minimum Standards (25.6) all Adoption Agencies are required to provide a six monthly report to the Executive¹ regarding the activity and work of the Adoption Agency and Adoption Panel. The next edition of this report will be the full year version in April 2016. In the interim, this Q3 report provides an update on performance and developments.

Performance

Adoption Plans

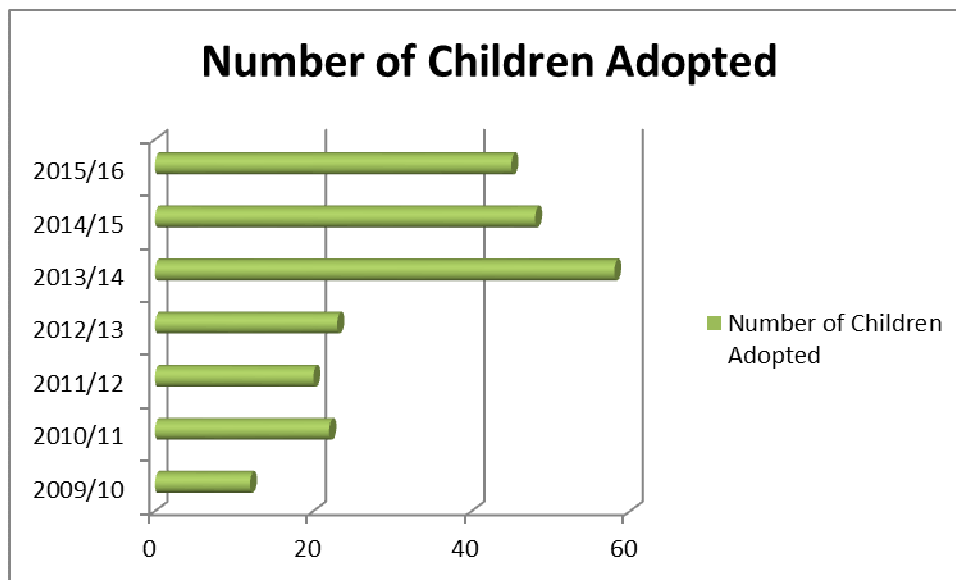
5. Five adoption panels were held during this period. 10 Leicestershire children were presented to the Agency Decision Maker (ADM) for an adoption plan. Of the 10 children considered by the Agency Decision Maker, 85% met the National Minimum Standard timescale of coming to panel within two months of adoption being agreed as the plan.
-

6. 10 adopters were approved in this period. All are white British.7. The requirements of the Restrictions on the Preparation of Adoption Reports Regulations 2005 were fully met.

Children Placed and Adopted

8. 14 children have been placed with their prospective adopters during this period; all of the prospective adopters were approved by this Agency.
9. At the current rate of progress, it is anticipated that 45 children will be adopted by the end of Q4. This is directly related to the reduction in the number of children's adoption plans being commenced by the locality.
10. Chart one shows the annual decline in children adopted from the 13/14 peak of 58.

Chart 1 - Year on year comparison of number of children placed for adoption.



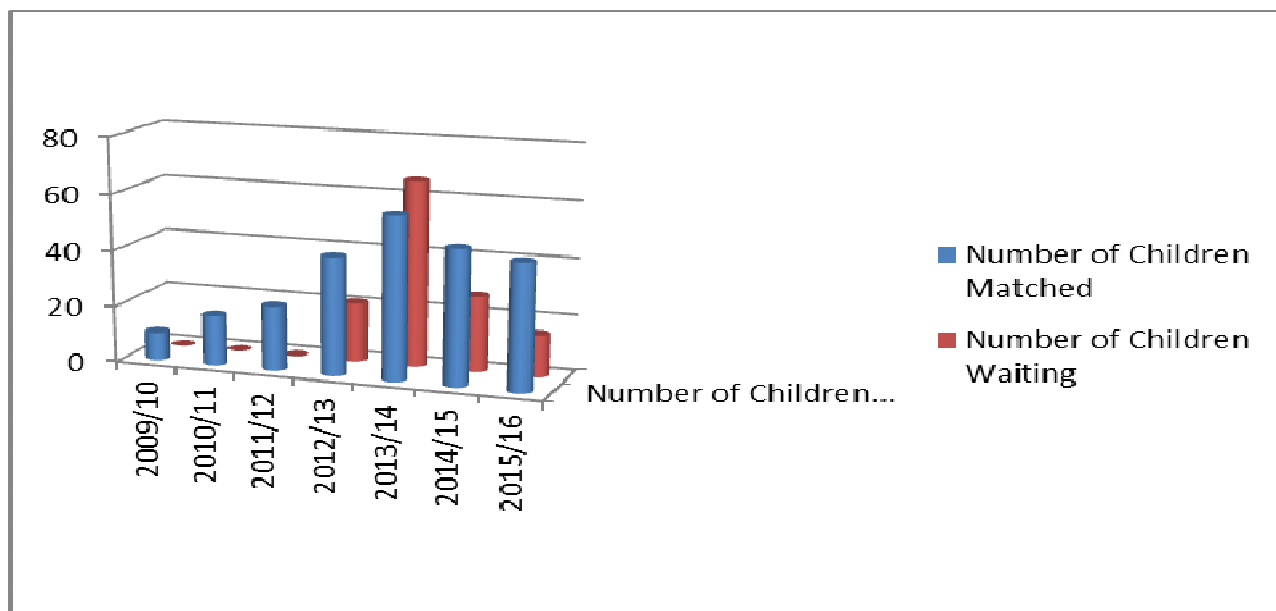
Quality of Reports

11. 10 child permanence reports were considered by the Agency Decision Maker during this period. The quality of the reports was 'good' as advised by the Agency Decision Maker.
12. 10 Prospective Adopters Reports were presented to the Adoption Panel during this period. Panel felt they were all good and raised only minor issues.

Children Waiting for Adoption

13. At the 31st December 2015 there were 12 children awaiting an adoption placement. One of these children has been matched to a prospective adopter, and active family finding is underway for the remaining 11.
14. It is projected that by the end of Q4, 45 children will have been matched with adopters.
15. The average time between a child entering care and being placed with a family is down from 15.9 months in Q2 to 9.8 months in Q3.
16. The average time taken for granting a placement order to matching a child with a prospective adopter is down from 6.3 months in Q2 to 3.03 months in Q3.
17. A comparison of numbers and time waiting over the past 7 years is set out in Chart 2 below.

Chart 2 – Year on Year comparison between children matched, and those waiting for a match.



Recruitment of Adopters

18. During Q3 there was a hold on recruiting prospective adopters in all but the most hard to place children's cases. This will continue into Q4 as we have 36 households waiting for a placement and a significant slowdown in the number of placement orders granted (see above).

Adoption Disruptions

19. There have been no adoption disruptions during this period (i.e. the breakdown of a placement before an Adoption Order is made).

Post Adoption Support

20. Pre and post adoption support is provided in a number of ways within LCC. The adoption team will support up to three years post adoption order, especially in cases where adoption breakdown or disruption is threatening.
21. After this 3 year period, locality led support is available to families at risk of adoption breakdown – this includes active intervention; signposting to support networks and providers; respite; and, accommodation of the child or children in the most extreme cases.
22. The team is actively working with applicants to the adoption support fund (ASF). Our full year projections are 25 applications, which will be the largest in the East Midlands. To date LCC has drawn down over £100,000 of support from this fund for adoptive families in the county.

The Regionalisation of Adoption Agencies

23. The government has indicated the need for regional adoption agencies by the end of the current parliament. Most of the local authorities with membership of the East Midlands Adoption Consortium have agreed to be an 'early adopter' of this proposed legislative intention.
24. A scoping exercise is underway among those involved to understand how a regional agency might work, what it would achieve, and the impact on service users.

Statement by Helen Gronhaug, Agency Decision Maker (ADM)

25. The ADM role has now been in place as a stand-alone post since August 2014. The time elapsed has given the opportunity to see how this role functions independently of case management hierarchy. Issues have arisen that would have been otherwise unlikely had the ADM role sat with a more senior manager such as Head of Service or Assistant Director as has previously been the case. Particular challenges have been highlighted in terms of accountability and governance of the ADM decision making. This has been particularly apparent where the ADM is considering children's care plans for adoption. Adoption Guidance 2013 requires the Local Authority to hold an urgent care-planning meeting if an adoption plan has not been agreed by the ADM. An ADM can require further work and clarification in order to make such a decision. However, there have been occasions where this work has not been completed as requested. There is a need for clarity about the status of work required by the ADM when such decisions are being given. This is therefore now under review.
26. The independent position of the ADM allows a valuable opportunity to gain an overview of children's care planning and outcomes through oversight of adoption and fostering panels; children's adoption plans as well as foster carer reviews. This allows for the identification of practice and policy themes. Work is underway to ensure such themes are harvested and fed into the Continuous Improvement Action Plan such that the 'learning loop' is completed. A system to escalate and track individual children's cases is also needed where the ADM

highlights practice/ process issues. ADM involvement in the newly proposed permanence panel will promote this.

Resource Implications

27. Consideration of the MTFS is incorporated in the annual budget setting exercise whereby the authority's plan to meet its sufficiency duty is financed.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

29. None.

Officer(s) to Contact

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Equality and Human Rights Implications

30. The Leicestershire and Rutland Adoption Agency has been recently commended by Stonewall for its inclusive recruitment stance, particularly with regard to same sex adopters.

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**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 4 APRIL 2016**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF
CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

**LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE
TO CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

Purpose of Report

1. This is the third in a series of reports that brief the Committee on the County Council's work to address Child Sexual Exploitation. This report focuses on the deployment of resources to address the continually emerging challenge of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). The report sets out the action taken to put in place a new operational team of specialist staff, deployed alongside police colleagues and based with the police. The report also comments on the volume of work currently being done with young people at risk of, or suffering, sexual exploitation and outlines the intended next steps.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. In February 2015, the County Council approved growth of £560k to the budget for Children and Family Services in order to address the emerging challenge of Child Sexual Exploitation.
3. This step had been taken to begin to address local incidents of CSE and to take account of the growing national concern of the role played by councils and other public bodies following criminal cases in Rochdale, Oxfordshire and Rotherham.

Background

4. Recruitment to the specialist CSE team has been underway since April 2015, with considerable care being taken to ensure that skilled and resilient individuals are recruited. The team is led by the Children and Family Services department's Strategic Lead for CSE and Complex Abuse and currently comprises an operational lead, two senior social work practitioners, four CSE Officers (two social workers, a therapist and a support worker) and an Administrative Officer.
5. The purpose of the team is to identify and take action to safeguard and protect children at risk of CSE, or who are being sexually exploited (online or in the real world), trafficked or have gone missing or run away. The team

provides a victim centred approach combining criminal investigation, safeguarding and educational programmes.

How the team works

6. Concerns and referrals in relation to CSE are jointly triaged with the police to agree appropriate safeguarding action whether the child or young person is at risk of CSE and/or has gone missing. The team undertake specialist assessments and lead on the development of risk management plans in relation to children at risk of and victims of CSE. The team monitor and track cases where there are concerns about CSE and/or where children have been reported missing. The majority of cases are co-worked with existing early help or social care team workers with the CSE Team having a clear role to provide specialist direct intervention in relation to CSE. Occasionally the team will get involved with children or young people not known to current services.
7. CSE Officers have a low case load which enables the team to deliver intensive and focused direct work and respond quickly to incidents involving children and young people. A strong focus is on developing, planning and delivering disruption activity with the police and other partners and achieving successful prosecutions as a key way to safeguard and protect children. The team coordinates the response to missing children ensuring return interviews are conducted and information from return interviews centrally collated to help build intelligence in relation to trends, hotspots and potential perpetrators. This has resulted in a more targeted response to missing children and supported investigations into CSE.
8. Individual members of the team have nominated localities to ensure links are made with local schools, independent children's homes, neighbourhood police areas, community safety partnerships and joint action groups (JAGs). This enables the monitoring of concerns and two way flow of sharing information and intelligence. For example the CSE Team, Youth Offending Service, East Midlands Serious and Organised Crime Unit and a county JAG collaborated together, and with a range of agencies and local businesses, to successfully disrupt a situation where a number of children and young people in a locality were involved in criminality, anti-social behaviour and drug taking; some were frequently going missing and at risk of CSE.
9. Co-location with Leicestershire Police has led to much better information sharing and more effective action in a greater number of CSE related cases. Working in a more joined up way has allowed the sharing of relevant intelligence and improved coordination of responses. This has already resulted in an improved ability to disrupt and prosecute perpetrators and provide early intervention to reduce harm and promote wellbeing. In addition it is clear that co-location has improved the timeliness of joint decision-making about cases of concern, it has assisted in a greater understanding of the respective roles played by the County Council's staff and police staff, and it has significantly assisted in the development of the collective understanding of those at risk of CSE. Earlier intervention in relation to concerns has

resulted in the profile of the cases in relation to the level of harm dealt with by the team changing since its inception.

Data and performance information

10. The numbers of CSE referrals continues to rise. Between Q1 and Q3 (April to December) 2015, a total of 214 referrals were received by the specialist CSE Team, compared to 184 referrals during the whole of 2014-15. The increase highlights greater professional and public awareness following national media attention and success of the local 'Spot the Signs' awareness raising campaign. This has translated into an increasing number of joint investigations and operations with the police. The team continues to coordinate the response to a number of high profile and cross boundary investigations.
11. In addition to directly dealing with 68 open cases, the CSE Team is currently coordinating the Council's response to 8 police operations, including complex operations spanning local, regional and national areas, collaborating with a number of police forces. One operation has involved working closely with West Midlands Police – the investigation has culminated in a current court case. The team has collaborated with Staffordshire Police in relation to an operation with national links. There are also 4 ongoing local investigations that haven't reached the police threshold to become an operation. Joint investigations are increasingly resulting in successful disruption activity and prosecution being achieved where the specialist work by the CSE Team with children and young people is resulting in earlier disclosure.

Next Steps

12. There are still two vacant posts in the team, and completion of the recruitment to all posts is a priority. This process has taken longer than anticipated because it has been necessary to adopt the same levels of background checks and clearance for employment as colleagues in the police side of the team. Addressing those issues and ensuring the best possible appointments are equally important.
13. The intention is that in addition to the County Council and Police contributions to the team, others will join from Leicester City Council and from the NHS to ensure that the team has a Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland wide approach.
14. Earlier this year, the Police and Crime Commissioner agreed a grant £1.3m to support various projects that will be carried out through the team over the next two years. The first project was the launch of CEASE – the Campaign to Eradicate Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of children and young people.
15. Raising the profile of the work of the team continues to be a priority so that Leicestershire residents and bodies such as schools can continue to 'spot the signs' and make referrals if they have concerns. There has been overwhelming support by local and regional media and in the next few months

the team will be shadowed by local press as part of the County Council's media strategy: 'keepingchildrensafe'.

Resource Implications

16. The resource provided by the County Council to establish the specialist team has been deployed innovatively and thus far, successfully. However these resources do not address the pressure that is evident in placement costs when some of the young people known to Children and Family Services need to be brought into care as a direct result of actual or imminent CSE. In particular the costs of such placements are significant because of the complex and demanding challenges faced by those young people.

Background Papers

18. Reports to Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 2nd November 2015, 'Leicestershire's Response to CSE' - <http://10.0.64.13/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1043&MId=4208&Ver=4>

Circulation under local issues alert procedure

None

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Equal Opportunities Implications

17. Children and Young People who are at risk of, or suffering Child Sexual Exploitation come from families across the demographic profile of the County. The insidious nature of this abuse means that those children and young people are very likely to need a timely response from the County Council and the Police. In addition, national and local research indicates that concerns about boys and young men are less frequently coming to light that might be expected. Similarly, children and young people from Black and Minority Ethnic communities are less frequently identified. Both of these important areas are addressed in the strategic approach guiding the work of the team.



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE - 4 APRIL 2016

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY
SERVICES

SCHOOL FUNDING AND THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOCAL
AUTHORITY

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a position statement with regard to school revenue funding and information about proposed national changes and the potential impact in Leicestershire.

Background

2. Education funding is provided to Local Authorities (LAs) by the government through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). It is organised into three separate blocks of funding: the Schools Block; the High Needs Block; and the Early Years Block. The detail of the 2016/17 funding arrangements was reported to the Committee on 18th January 2016.
3. In 2015/16, the Schools Block was increased by £20m in response to the national pressure for fairer funding. The distribution of the funding is agreed at a local level through a formula agreed by the Schools Forum. Academies receive their funding directly from the Education Funding Agency (EFA), rather than through the LA-held DSG, but the level of funding replicates the distribution formula agreed at local level.
4. A national consultation has been launched regarding a new national funding formula for schools and the details of this are set out below at paragraphs 14-20. The consultation also includes proposals about the Education Services Grant. This grant provides LAs with funding to:
 - a) provide strategic services to the education system, e.g. school place planning and school admissions;
 - b) provide maintained schools with services such as HR, ICT infrastructure, and finance.

For academies, the funding for HR, etc., is provided directly by the EFA.

5. Consultation is expected for the Early Years element later in the year. It is anticipated that there will be a national formula, similar to the arrangements for the Schools Block.

Current financial pressures

Schools Block

6. The School Block Unit of Funding is the 10th lowest funded of all 151 LAs. Schools manage their resources well and this contributes to good performance across the county.
7. Recently, a large number of Leicestershire's secondary schools are experiencing significant financial pressure. These pressures have come about as a result of surplus capacity in school places available, whilst waiting for the current population 'bulge' in primary places to work through the system by 2020. This has been exacerbated in some areas by age-range changes, and also the introduction of additional places in Studio Schools, FE colleges, and Free Schools.
8. This position will be further aggravated in the 2016/17 as a result of the necessary movement of funding between the Schools Block and the High Needs Block, meaning that all schools budgets will be reduced by 1%. This is due to an over spend on High Needs because of the increase in placements required for pupils with Special Educational Needs.
9. All but two of these secondary schools are academies and funded by the EFA. There is currently no flexibility in those funding arrangements to offer academies deficit recovery planning facilities, as is the case for maintained schools with financial difficulties but good long-term financial plans. A meeting has been arranged to include schools and the LA with the EFA and the Regional Schools Commissioner to discuss this situation and look for medium term solutions.

High Needs Block

10. This element of the Grant has seen no increase since 2013 but the demand for education services for vulnerable children and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities has increased. The 2015/16 over spend has been funded from the DSG reserve. The 2016/17 projected over spend will be funded from the transfer from the Schools Block described in paragraph 8 above.
11. There is considerable challenge in meeting the needs of children with high needs from the grant funding available. The settlement is not based on pupil numbers of type of need. Leicestershire is the 17th lowest funded. This position may not necessarily improve as a result of the changes set out in the current consultation as described in paragraphs 21-24 below.

12. As part of the Children and Family Services new Transformation Programme, there is work stream focused on reducing demand and cost, and the potential to create new models of local delivery. Leicestershire schools are active partners in this plan for change.

Early Years Block

13. This settlement funds the Free Entitlement to Early Education (FEEE) for all 3 and 4 years olds, and those 2 year olds identified as disadvantaged. For 3 and 4 years olds, Leicestershire is the 10th lowest funded and for 2 year olds is one of 52 LAs funded at the lowest rate. The introduction of the National Living Wage will have a significant impact on the early learning and childcare sector and could mean that some providers become unviable. It remains the statutory duty of the LA to ensure that there is sufficient provision for all children that require it.

Consultation on a National Funding Formula for schools

14. The consultation attached at Appendix A is the first of two planned consultations about school funding. At this stage it is seeking views on:
- (a) the principles that underpin the formula;
 - (b) the pupil characteristics and school factors proposed for inclusion in the formula;
 - (c) the overall funding system, in particular on proposals to:
 - i. introduce a school-level national funding formula where the funding each pupil attracts to their school is determined nationally;
 - ii. implement the formula from 2017-18, allocating funding to local authorities to distribute for the first 2 years, and then to schools directly from 2019-20;
 - iii. create a central schools block for local authorities' ongoing duties;
 - iv. ensure stability for schools through the minimum funding guarantee and by providing practical help, including a restructuring fund.
15. The consultation timetable is short – with submissions required by 17th April. In parallel there is a consultation on proposals to introduce a high needs formula for children and young people with special educational needs. Leicestershire Schools Forum will be meeting to consider the proposals in the consultation document and formulate a response.
16. Following consultation, the new formula would be quickly applied, albeit through a phased introduction. The amount that each local authority will receive in 2017-18 will be an aggregate of the notional funding of all the schools in their area, once the national minimum funding guarantee and cap on gains have been applied, plus funding for growth, premises and the other factors at the 2016/17 spend levels.

School Funding

17. The National Formula, as set out in the consultation, will result in pupils with the same characteristics being funded at the same rate irrespective of the LA in which they are educated, with a basic rate for each pupil and funding for deprivation, low prior attainment, English as an additional language plus an element relating to school specific costs.
18. The second stage of consultation will set out the values and weightings to be used within the formula. It will not be until this further information is released that the impact for Leicestershire and its schools can be assessed, including whether the changes bring an overall improvement in its financial position. The consultation is clear however, that there will remain differences in overall funding levels between LAs because of differing levels of deprivation, prior attainment and English as an additional language - more need will attract more funding per pupil.
19. The consultation document sets out a number of data collection exercises in the coming weeks and further consultations, including the role of the local authority in school improvement. Transition will be key and the impact of the Minimum Funding Guarantee and caps on schools that gain on the national funding formula should not be underestimated.
20. Whilst it has been widely reported that this removes the role of the local authority from school funding, local authorities will continue to set local formulae for 2017/18 and 2018/19 and will remain accountable for passporting and recording funding to LA schools. As it will no longer be possible to move funding across the three current Blocks of funding, it will be vital to look at the impact on the funding that will continue to be the responsibility of the LA: namely High Needs and Early Years, as well as the impact on individual schools.

High Needs

21. The consultation document states that “the current funding distribution is not fair to children and young people with high needs across the country, because it directs money to the local authorities with the highest spending, not the highest needs.” It is therefore proposed to introduce a national funding formula for high needs from 2017-18 that will:
 - (a) Use factors in the formula including health and disability;
 - (b) Allocate funding to local authorities on a formula basis;
 - (c) Retain a significant element of funding based on what local authorities are currently spending, and capping the gains and losses of local authorities each year;
 - (d) Provide financial and practical help to authorities to assist them in reshaping their provision, including capital funding for new specialist places and new special free schools.

22. Finally there would be elements of the formula that reflect that local authorities are not only responsible for funding pupils resident in their area, but also provide the core funding for special schools in their area.
23. It is proposed that for the first 5 years the formula should contain a significant element of funding based on what each LA is currently spending on high needs. This would not only allow time for local authorities to make the adjustments that are needed for the future, whilst protecting the special provision for those children and young people already settled in schools and colleges; but it will also allow the Department for Education to undertake further research and evaluation before taking a decision on whether and how to progress further with formulaic distribution.
24. LAs will be encouraged to work together in regional and sub-regional groups, where commissioning of specialist provision makes sense at that level.

Central Schools Block

25. Following the removal of the Education Services Grant (see paragraph 4 above) in September 2017, there will be created a new Central Schools Block. This will fund retained LA duties such as admissions, school place planning, and pupil welfare. This will be distributed on a per pupil formula. The consultation recognizes that LAs will need to find alternative funding sources for some of its statutory duties. Until the remainder of Leicestershire schools convert to academies through Multi-Academy Trusts, the need for continued support to maintained schools for HR, legal services, etc., will need to move to a fully traded model.

Background Papers

26. Report to Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee: 18th January 2016: Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016/17 to 2019/20.

<http://cexmodgov1/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1043&MId=4485&Ver=4>

Report to Schools Forum: 22nd February 2016: 2016/17 Schools Budget.

<http://cexmodgov1/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1018&MId=4457&Ver=4>

Relevant Consultation Documents

Schools National Funding Formula consultation

https://consult.education.gov.uk/funding-policy-unit/schools-national-funding-formula/supporting_documents/Schools_NFF_consultation.pdf

High Needs Funding Reform

https://consult.education.gov.uk/funding-policy-unit/high-needs-funding-reform/supporting_documents/HighNeedsFundingReform_Consultation.pdf

Circulation under Local Issues Alert Procedure

27. None.

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Equality and Human Rights Implications

28. It is the intention of the consultation to ensure that the new national funding system more adequately reflects the needs of vulnerable children and young people.