

## **AGENDA ITEM**

### **REPORT TO CYP SELECT COMMITTEE**

**30 MARCH 2016**

### **REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

## **FRONT LINE VISITS – FOLLOW UP**

### **Purpose**

1. This report summarises the main feedback from the recent series of front line visits, outlines actions taken or proposed as a result, and reports on the way any key messages and outcomes are being taken forward.

### **Recommendations**

2. The Committee is asked to
  - a. note the report
  - b. Comment further on any key messages and outcomes.

### **Background**

3. Front line visits by members form part of the performance management framework for Children's services.
4. They provide an opportunity for members to understand front line practice and pressures, as well as to identify areas for potential improvement

### **The visits**

5. The schedule of visits is detailed overleaf along with detailed comments and responses.

### **Summary of key messages and outcomes**

6. Members and teams have benefitted from the visits. Members have seen at first hand the work done by teams, and their decision making processes often in the face of increasing demand.
7. Teams have commented that they have benefitted from the visits, as it not only provides them with the chance to showcase their work, but that they are valued by the Council.
8. The visits have identified a number of common issues:

- c. The roll out of additional technology to support more flexible working and greater efficiency. These issues are being taken forward as part of Big Ticket reviews across Children's services;
- d. The opportunity for earlier intervention in some areas such as around autism / complex needs.

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Team / Service	Cllrs	Date	Summary	Key recommendations	Progress update
Early Help Service	Watson and Walmsley	10/12/15	<p>Visit to CAF Team, Family Support, available courses, private fostering and First Contact.</p> <p>Of 711 contacts into First Contact team, 68-70% were signposted to early help</p> <p>All contacts are logged and patterns analysed.</p> <p>Family Support Teams outlined the basis of their work with families</p>	To follow up at a future visit to identify if any signs of reduced demand are visible in social care	Future visit to be scheduled in late 2016.
Fostering scrutiny and resource panel	Proud	12/01/16	<p>Panel worked well, everyone knew what they were talking about and were well prepared.</p> <p>Social workers were asked questions and the quality assurance was good.</p> <p>Panel discussed/ summarised issues and either agreed to asked social workers to come back with more information.</p> <p>Clear guidance to social workers information and next steps and what to do.</p>	The panel provides effective support to social workers and supports their work	Retain the focus on quality assurance and checking of practice.
Permanence Teams	Watson	14/01/16	<p>Teams deal with long term care of children and young people in foster care/residential care/special guardians/ looked after in remand.</p> <p>Teams felt well supported but closer working with care leavers and child placement would be welcomed</p> <p>Support is given when dealing with unaccompanied children with regard to cultural needs/interpreter.</p> <p>CYP were also supported by the virtual school/nurses/CAMHS/lifeline.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use of technology would speed up processes</li> <li>2. Capacity to support out of area placements</li> <li>3. Access to therapeutic support</li> <li>4. The motivational impact of awards events</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We are currently exploring IT solutions to supporting Social Workers and will be looking at the possibility of tablets as part of this. The teams have recently been provided with laptops and CISCO boxes available to them to in order to support working from home.</li> <li>2. The impact of out of area placements on individual workloads is monitored by the Team Manager and this is taken into account when</li> </ol>

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					<p>allocating new cases where children are placed out of the borough.</p> <p>The Children's Programme Board are continuing to explore strategic initiatives to return looked after children to the borough wherever this is in their best interests.</p> <p>3. The CAMHS LAC contract is currently under review.</p> <p>4. We are proud to celebrate the achievements of our looked after children and care leavers and will continue to do this. Any member of CYP Select Committee wishing to attend one of the future events is welcome to do so.</p>
Assessment and Fieldwork	Hampton	15/12/15	<p>There was a very positive atmosphere in the teams. From Service Managers up to the Director, senior management was seen as being very supportive, accessible and open to suggestions from staff.</p> <p>The importance of the support given to newly qualified Social Workers (there are 3 at present). The system in place, Assessed Support Years Employment (ASYE), ensures that caseloads are monitored with no Child Protection cases but possibly some joint working with</p>	<p>There is no provision in Billingham to access Section 17 payments or any other financial transactions related to the team and service users.</p> <p>Explore option for a Billingham service</p>	<p>From 02/04/16 arrangements will be available at Billingham Library &amp; Customer Service Centre for the payment of section 17 payments up to £100 between the hours of 12 and 3pm.</p>

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			<p>experienced workers nearer to the end of the year. This was very much appreciated.</p> <p>There are regular audits of cases undertaken by Senior Management &amp; Team Managers and these can be random or themed.</p> <p>Supervision takes place on a monthly basis, including Team Managers. This includes case and personal supervision. Those being supervised can consult managers as necessary between form sessions</p> <p>Unallocated cases are visited by duty social workers with Team Manager oversight until allocated. There were no unallocated cases at the time of my visit.</p> <p>Vulnerable Exploited Missing and Trafficked Children (VEMT) are subject to a Risk Management Plan. Social workers are required to produce a report for the VEMT meeting which takes place every 4 to 6 weeks and is attended by the police.</p> <p>Quality of supervision and training.</p>		
High Flyers Children's Centre	Walmsley	16/02/16	<p>The full extent of services on offer was explained including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach Workers who support parents in their own home</li> <li>• Toy Libraries – free toys loaned for 2 weeks at a time giving children a great variety &amp; helping with dexterity etc</li> <li>• Range of activities: play, grandparents, cooking, family learning, midwife clinics, breastfeeding, debt management</li> <li>• Thirteen Community Drop In sessions for help and advice with housing issues</li> <li>• Community Café open to the public and also cooking on the premises for delivery to other centres</li> </ul>	<p>The role of Outreach is also vital and offers help and support at home but also encouragement to attend the centre to access further services.</p> <p>The centre is a vibrant and exciting place to visit; the dedication and enthusiasm of the staff was apparent throughout. They face enormous challenges but continue to be cheerful and welcoming to service users. They constantly</p>	Build into the future review of children's centres

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			<p>Each year they hold a celebration of achievement award day where certificates and small prizes are handed out so that everyone helps and encourages one another.</p> <p>It is apparent that all the multi-agency teams help and support each other and that communication flows freely between them (where appropriate). This also ensures that they reach vulnerable parents and children much quicker than previously.</p> <p>This multi-agency approach is vital to the continued success of Children's Centres and must not be diluted in any future reviews or re-structuring.</p>	<p>encourage and support parents to deliver the best possible outcomes for children and take genuine pleasure in their achievements.</p>	
Review Unit	Hampton	19/01/16	<p>Recruitment has been difficult due to the poor quality of applicants. Caseloads for an Independent Reviewing Officer nationally are 50 to 70. In Stockton, in the summer of 2015, caseloads were 90. However two new IROs have been appointed which has enabled the caseloads to be reduced to 70.</p> <p>The number of Looked After Children in Stockton is high in relation to regional and national figures. In the last 2 years there has been an influx of teenagers but the highest percentage is in the 0 to 5 age range.</p> <p>Child Protection Plans have reduced over the last year but are still higher than the national average. Second and subsequent plans are quite high. The national measure for these is those families who are back on a CP Plan within a 2 year period. There could be various reasons for this and analysing these is important in order to learn lessons in respect of future practice.</p> <p>The Children's Rights Participation Officer's role is to engage with young people in order to elicit their views and ideas to feed into consultation documents e.g. conferences and reviews. This is done in a number of ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Let's Take Action Group for Looked After Children.</li> <li>▪ Involvement in general activities in Stockton.</li> </ul>	<p>Independent Reviewing Officers do not have a work phone. The department is looking at ICT to enhance contact with young people and possibly Facetime for young people placed out of county.</p>	<p>Introduce new technology as part of roll out of new approaches including smart phones, tablets and apps</p>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Involvement in interviewing staff /candidates.</li> <li>▪ Involvement in a regional forum involving a residential stay.</li> </ul> <p>There is the possibility of a pilot for a restricted Facebook for Children Looked After.</p> <p>There is currently a vacancy for an IRO to look at plans for care leavers aged between 18 and 25 years. This would include evidence if a young person is doing OK and does not want further involvement.</p>		
YOT	Hampton and Proud	26/01/16	<p>The Youth Offending Team was created 15 years ago as a one stop shop for young people who offend between the ages of 10 to 18 years. The majority are males on a ratio of 4/5 to 1. The team works with all criminal activity from shoplifting to murder. There 7 young people charged with murder being supervised by the team at the present time, however, the norm is theft and violence.</p> <p>This is a multi-agency service including social workers, a police officer, mental health nurse, speech and language, and very early health intervention. Funding is by the Youth Justice Board, Local Authority, Probation, Police and Crime Commissioner, and Health.</p> <p>Staff workloads depend on the level of risk and offences so can vary. Plans are reviewed, in conjunction with other agencies, every 3 months but would be reviewed immediately if there is a new offence or a change in circumstances.</p> <p>Restorative Justice Work is undertaken in respect of all types of crimes but assessments are undertaken in order to establish the level of risk. Contact is made with 100% of victims and this is a very successful form of intervention.</p> <p>The Youth Offending Team has recruited and trained 15 community volunteers of both genders with a good range of backgrounds. These volunteers work with young</p>	<p>For the second time running it is considered to be one of the best in the country.</p> <p>I can only commend the management and staff for the excellent work undertaken on behalf of the young people referred to this service by the police and the courts.</p>	<p>YOT will be included in current work on review of services and support for young people.</p> <p>National review underway which is likely to lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More devolved approach;</li> <li>• Changes to the secure estate with a bigger focus on educationally led provision</li> <li>• Reduced funding</li> </ul>

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			<p>people and parents on specific issues, programmes and behavioural contracts.</p> <p>The Youth Offending Team has responsibility for managing young people in Secure Accommodation. The local accommodation is Aycliffe and Wetherby but young people are placed all over the country wherever there is accommodation available.</p> <p>Stockton Youth Offending Management Board, includes all agencies, and is chaired by the Chief Executive Officer; this ensures that all agencies are functioning appropriately.</p> <p>The manager of the Youth Offending Team is a Peer Reviewer, visiting other Youth offending Teams throughout the country. She has been trained by the Local Government Association and the Youth Justice Board.</p>		
LADO	Watson and Walmsley	28/01/16	<p>There were 108 recorded referrals last year. 11 resulted in dismissal.</p> <p>After investigation the following possible outcomes are reached:- No Further Action/Not proven/Advice &amp; Guidance needed or Dismissal and possibly prosecution. A majority of investigations are completed within one month and result in Advice &amp; Guidance needed.</p> <p>Outcomes are aimed to be completed within a month. He has a legal obligation to report dismissals for gross misconduct or criminal offence.</p> <p>Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference is national and chaired by the police. Attendees from housing, health, social workers and children`s services (LADO)</p> <p>Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements is national and probation led. It concerns are domestic abuse and high risk sexual offenders who are a danger to the public.</p>	<p>Raising awareness of the role with faith groups, frontline police and the voluntary sector. 30-40% of his referrals come from education but health referrals have been low and there are no referrals from ethnic groups, which is worrying.</p> <p>Share information regionally, cross border work and home. Work is being progressed resulting in a move to Hartlepool.</p>	<p>Continued focus on awareness raising.</p> <p>LADO role transfers into Children`s Hub 1 June 2016</p>



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Complex Needs	Walmsley	03/03/16	<p>The key workers deal with children below “child in need status” and try to engage children with less severe difficulties on an early intervention basis and look after about 70 children.</p> <p>The social workers deal with those children with more complex severe learning disabilities and complex needs and look after about 175 children.</p> <p>They all have a holistic approach which encompasses the entire family including parents and siblings of the child. Wherever possible each child’s unique needs are met so that they have the same opportunities as their peers.</p> <p>We were told about the “Short Breaks Grant” available to children aged between 3 &amp; 17. This can be either taken as a one-off holiday (to pay for the additional support necessary) or broken down into weekly activities i.e. swimming, horse riding, dance classes, soft play, etc. This enables the child to enjoy quality, fun activities either independently or with their families.</p> <p>We were told about their links into other teams such as CAMHS and how important the multi-agency approach is. They also link with bodies such as Eastern Ravens, Daisy Chain, Rainbow Trust &amp; Newman Holiday Trust to offer additional support.</p>	<p>The teams felt that there was under provision for children with Autism due to the vast array of challenges and disabilities this group presents and the growing numbers of children being diagnosed. At present they are signposted to Daisy Chain, but Daisy Chain has to be quite restrictive in those they consider. There is a distinct lack of Parenting Groups or courses on offer for this group. It was felt that more early intervention &amp; support would be beneficial.</p> <p>The dedication and enthusiasm of the team was apparent throughout especially given the enormous pressures they face.</p>	Consider autism pathway as part of wider planned work on SEND provision and High Needs Block.
Let’s Take Action Group	Walmsley	07/03/16	<p>Attended one of the fortnightly meetings held by the Let’s Take Action Group, a forum for looked after children to come together for support and to discuss their care and make suggestions for improvements.</p> <p>The group are very pro-active, they meet every fortnight and have guest speakers and a peer mentoring programme. They are actively seeking engagement with corporate parents among others and are in the process of developing a Corporate Parents Event to be held at Wynyard Hall on 23/05/2016. They are hoping that 20</p>	<p>They felt that more could/should be done for care leavers upon leaving care. They feel that they face additional pressures both emotional and financial that their peers not in the care system do not have to face. Suggestion was that even an additional voucher for</p>	<p>To be referred to Leaving Care Team as part of overall approach.</p> <p>The issues about the ‘label’ is currently being addressed as part of the refresh of the LAC and Care Leavers Strategy</p>

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			<p>corporate parents will attend along with management representatives. They are also organising a Consultation Café for all care leavers and corporate parents to drop in to their regular session from 4.30 – 7.30 on 21/03/2016. Main topic to be covered is ongoing support for looked after children when they leave care.</p> <p>The group are very interactive and vibrant, they are eager to engage with their peers and to give their point of view.</p>	<p>food (say £10) would be extremely helpful.</p> <p>There was a lot of discussion regarding the term “Looked After Children” and that in their opinion it is a very negative. They feel the abbreviation “LAC” is unhelpful as it implies that they lack something. They are in the process of coming up with a new acronym with a more positive message which will be communicated to the Council in due course. This could of course have huge financial implications if all documentation and policies require alterations.</p>	<p>being led by the Multi Agency Looked After Partnership</p>
Youth Direction	Watson	25/02/16	<p>RONI (Risk Of NEET Indicator) data systems, used to fulfil legal requirement in preventing children becoming NEET. Approx 1/5<sup>th</sup> of targeted children become NEET. Youth Direction has an influence on post 16 children through a co-ordinated approach. They support behavioural issues for post 16 with SEN.</p> <p>The careers team are contracted out to all but one of our schools providing support to make transitions into good career choices.</p> <p>NEET and Progression Team support post 16 at colleges or in apprenticeships. There has been a 20% reduction in children becoming NEET in the last 12 months.</p> <p>KiT (Keeping in Touch) Team support NEET children who have become hostile, disengaged or Not Known. Out of 6700 16-19 yr olds in the Borough the team have only</p>	<p>Maintain and increase the focus on targeting through eg RONI</p>	<p>To be considered as part of current review of support for young people</p>

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			<p>lost touch with 12 (0.3%), they have the 2<sup>nd</sup> best result in England.</p> <p>Vulnerable Groups Team support children in Special Schools, out of area children and LAC in conjunction with the virtual schools team. There are 10-20 children in each year group with both SEN and behavioural issues</p> <p>Targeted Youth Support Team target neighbourhood needs though intelligence gathered through JAG, ASB and local partners.</p> <p>Youth Offending Team cover safeguarding, reoffending, victims, parental responsibility. They encourage POSBO's Positive Behaviour Order. In TAF meetings families are involved and parental responsibility is highlighted.</p> <p>The open access Youth Provision team co-ordinate Youth Clubs. About half of the Young People who attend have no issues and the other half need support and guidance.</p>		