



FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Thursday, 14 April 2016 at 1.30 pm in the Bridges Room - Civic Centre

From the Chief Executive, Jane Robinson

Item	Business
1.	Apologies for absence
2.	Minutes of last meeting (Pages 3 - 8) The Committee is asked to approve as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting held on 3 March 2016.
3.	Review of Child Protection in Gateshead - Final Report (Pages 9 - 24) Report of Interim Strategic Director, Care Wellbeing and Learning
4.	Monitoring Report - Review of Role of the Council in Supporting Educational Outcomes (Pages 25 - 30) Report of Interim Strategic Director, Care Wellbeing and Learning
5.	Closing the Gap Annual Report (Pages 31 - 38) Report of Interim Strategic Director, Care Wellbeing and Learning
6.	Inspection of Services for Children in Need of Help and Protection, Children Looked After and Care Leavers (Pages 39 - 74) Report of Interim Strategic Director, Care Wellbeing and Learning
7.	Review of Test of Assurance (Pages 75 - 112) Report of Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance
8.	Work Programme Report (Pages 113 - 120) Joint Report of the Chief Executive and Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance

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GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, 3 March 2016

- PRESENT:** Councillor M Brain (Chair)
- Councillors: L Caffrey, B Clelland, S Craig, S Hawkins,
K McCartney, D Robson and J Turnbull
- CO-OPTED:** John Wilkinson, Jill Steer, Sasha Ban
- APOLOGIES:** Councillors B Oliphant and P McNally

F35 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

RESOLVED - The minutes of the last meeting held on 21 January 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

F36 REVIEW OF CHILD PROTECTION IN GATESHEAD - EVIDENCE GATHERING

The Committee took part in the fourth evidence gathering session which provided an overview report and DVD presentations of how multi agency decisions are made regarding whether a child needs to become subject to a child protection plan and under what category. The session considered decision making during Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC) and how these decisions are reviewed at subsequent Review Child Protection Conferences (RCPC).

The Committee were also advised on the purpose of an Initial Child Protection Conference and the conference responsibilities and decision making process.

The Committee received the definitions of categories of significant harm taken from 'Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015' as being:-

Physical Abuse – a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse – the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or making fun of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse – involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the Internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect – the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

The Committee were advised about the Core Group and also about the purpose of the Child Protection Review Conferences (RCPCs) as well as a breakdown of performance data from April 2014-January 2016.

Gateshead continues to have high numbers of children with child protection plans. The majority of those children continue to be registered under the category of neglect.

100% of child protection plans are distributed within 1 day of the ICPC and during the last 12 months significant work has been undertaken to ensure that Chair's reports following conference have been distributed within the required timescale of 20 days. Since February 2015 we have been able to demonstrate 100% compliance with timescales.

Ensuring the right people are represented at the conference has also been subject

to performance improvement during the last 12 months. Specifically, ensuring that GP information and police information is available to the conference to ensure decisions can be made with a complete picture of the circumstances surrounding the child.

Concerns were expressed about the availability of GP reports at both ICPC's and RCPC's. Despite an improvement in reports being shared when practices were reminded these improvements were not able to be sustained. In order to support Health to meet statutory performance targets and improve practice work was undertaken with the named GP visiting a range of GP Practices, and holding sessions with both GP and Practice Managers to review administrative processes and organisational issues and the key lessons learnt for both Health and the Safeguarding Children's Unit from the Baby T SCR. As a result there has been a significant improvement in communication and an improvement from 22% of conferences having GP reports to 71% of conferences having GP reports.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the Committee welcomed the report findings.
 - (ii) That the Committee agreed to receive further updates in due course.
 - (iii) That a letter of thanks be sent to all those who took part in the preparation of the DVD presented to Committee

F37 ANNUAL CONVERSATION WITH HEADTEACHERS OF SPECIAL SCHOOLS

The Committee received an update relating to the changes and developments to special school provision. This is following on from last year's review that an annual conversation be held with special schools.

There are 6 special schools in Gateshead, Dryden and Hill Top as a hard federation and the Executive Headteacher is Jane Bryant. Furrowfield and Eslington are a soft federation and the Executive Headteacher is Michelle Richards and is an academy.

All of the schools have been rated by Ofsted as at least good with Dryden, Eslington and Gibside schools outstanding schools. This supports the view that Gateshead has high quality special school provision in place.

The SEN Strategy group are currently working on a new vision to give a context to future developments for schools including special schools and the future SEN provision for the local authority. The vision ensures that health and social care providers with other service users are in partnership to deliver high quality provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Comparing the 2015 and 2016 data in relation to special schools shows that:

- The numbers of pupils with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) has significantly increased in 2016. This has particularly impacted on Gibside school and is about 60% of the school population. The Cedars also has greater numbers of ASD than previous years.

- Pupils with Social, Emotional, Mental Health needs (SEMH) is also increasing which is adding pressure to the numbers for both Eslington and Furrowfield schools.
- Speech, Language and Communications Needs (SLCN) is also increasing on the previous year. While Profound, Multiple, Learning Difficulty (PMLD) has stayed about the same.

The Committee were advised that Gibside school, from early years information, is predicting the need to expand further. It currently has a base of two classrooms in Blaydon Children's centre to accommodate previously required additional numbers. However, new information will require more classroom space for September 2016. The local authority is checking recent data and the governing body of the school are in discussions with the local authority on how it could increase numbers and find more classroom space to be prepared for September 2016.

Committee were reminded that a report to Cabinet on 24 February 2015 outlined proposed new developments for Eslington Primary school for an extra 30 places to make 68 places in total (including 8 additionally resourced places) and to extend the intake age range from 5-11 to 2 -11 year olds with effect from 1 September 2015. The report also requested that the council convert the Redheugh block at Tyne View Children's Centre to create a split site school.

This proposal was because it had been identified that the number of children with Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEMH) needs requiring specialist educational support was rising and it is anticipated this will continue to increase in the future. A number of pupils were placed in mainstream schools due to a lack of place in specialist provision like Eslington which was deemed the best place to meet their needs.

The new facility at Tyne View opened in September 2015 and 4 classrooms (accommodating 7 pupils in each, allowing for 30 pupils in total) are in place. The cost of Tyne block conversion fit out was met from the Council's capital programme on the basis that the project will generate revenue savings for the Council.

Eslington Primary School currently admits children from 5 to 11 years of age. The early education and intervention for two year olds and reception aged children, in response to views received during the informal consultation exercise carried out. This will increase the number of specialist placements available for 2 year olds which will assist in meeting the objectives of the government's initiative to provide 2 year olds with free education if they meet certain criteria, including if they have a current statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. However, places at the moment have been taken over by 5 year old pupils.

The Committee were also advised that a nurse was appointed for the Gateshead Special Schools, in September 2015. Her post is described as a Registered Child's Nurse for special schools. She is working with the Children's Disability Nursing Team and is line managed by them. The post is based at Low Fell Clinic though the schools had preferred it would be in one of the schools. The reason given for this that it had not been possible as the nurse needed a computer linked to the NHS

system. However, though the nurse was given a computer by Gibside school the nurse does not yet have access to the NHS system unless she is at the clinic. This, therefore, means that much needed time in schools is lost because twice daily the nurse goes to the clinic to check emails and collect information.

Hopefully this is a temporary situation but the schools are concerned that the amount of time they had expected to have is not in place. However, the support given, for example, such as feeding clinics, has been helpful. The nurse is also wiring or updating the health care plans in line with the single plan reviews, though this happens away from the schools as they are written at the clinic and opportunities are missed for the staff to share information. The nurse then has to print out information and can only amend on return to the clinic.

The special schools have recognised that they need to track and clarify the work of the nurse with the Children's Disability team whether it is training, for example, around gastro feeds and toileting of Education Health Care Plans so that all managers' expectations are met particularly for this specific role of the nurse. They hope, therefore, to achieve more consistency and liaison to move this opportunity further to meet school needs.

RESOLVED -

- (i) That the information be noted.
- (ii) That the OSC continue to receive an annual report on Special schools and provision.
- (iii) That the nurse appointed for the Gateshead Special Schools be given every assistance in gaining access to the NHS IT system as a matter of urgency

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TITLE OF REPORT:	Review of Child Protection in Gateshead– Final Report
REPORT OF:	Alison Elliott, Interim Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing and Learning

SUMMARY

The scope and aims of the review were agreed by the Committee at its meeting on 18th June 2015. It was proposed that the focus of the review would be on the specific aspects of the system that are concerned with child protection. The review has followed the potential steps for a child who becomes subject to a child protection plan. The key issues that the review has addressed are:

1. An understanding of the child protection system, the policy context and clarity on roles and responsibilities
2. The opportunity for improvement of systems, the policy context and clarity on roles and responsibilities.
3. The effectiveness of multi-agency working, especially around communication and information sharing.
4. The ways in which views of children, young people and their families are used.

This report outlines the evidence considered by the Committee to date. It highlights some areas that could form the basis for recommendations to improve child protection and help to improve children's outcomes.

1. This report sets out the findings of the Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the review of Child Protection in Gateshead. It sets out the findings of the review and identifies recommendations for implementation.

Scope and Aims of this review

2. The review will provide Committee with an overview of
 - how the child protection process works in Gateshead
 - provide examples of how the children's social work service in Gateshead operates in conjunction with partners to ensure children's safety.

3. The focus, in particular, has been on the ways in which services operate collectively. The Committee was provided with the opportunity to review the evidence and contribute to the future development and delivery of child protection within Children's Social Care Services.
4. The recommendations of the review will inform the work of the LSCB in terms of how it oversees the whole system.

How the review was carried out – Methodology

5. The review consisted of four evidence gathering sessions. During these sessions the Committee examined each stage of the process and explored the way decisions are taken, risks are managed, and the involvement of partners. The sessions also explored how Gateshead undertakes its safeguarding responsibilities in conjunction with partners, within the policy context and legal frameworks for Child Protection.

Evidence Gathering Session 1

Policy Context

6. The first evidence gathering session on 10th September 2015 provided the committee with an overview of the policy and legal framework of the child protection system and the statutory guidance which informs practice. It also set the scene for how the child protection system is organised and delivered in Gateshead.

Legislative Framework and Statutory Guidance

7. The Department for Education is responsible for child protection in England and sets out the policy, legislation and statutory guidance on how the child protection system works. The Children Act 1989 currently provides the legislative framework for child protection in England; the key principles established by the Act include
 - The paramount nature of the child'[s] welfare
 - The expectations and requirements around duties of care to childrenThe Children's Act 2004 strengthens the 1989 Act by encouraging partnerships between agencies and creating more accountability.
8. Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance (2013) provides statutory guidance for interagency working to safeguard and to promote the welfare of children. The guidance took on the recommendations of the Munro Review to focus more on the individual needs of the child and clarified the procedure for a single assessment to replace the two stage initial assessment, with a 45 day deadline for timely assessment reports and decisions about future actions. The guidance was updated in 2015 and includes referral of allegations to the LADO and emphasises the multi-agency nature of safeguarding, reasserting the principles of a child centred approach.

9. **Definitions** – under the Children Act 1989 a child in need is defined as: a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable level of health or development, or whose health and development is likely to be significantly or further impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. Children in need may be assessed under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989.
10. Where the local authority's social care services receives a referral in relation to maltreatment, or where there are concerns during the course of providing services to a family, the service must initiate enquiries to find out what is happening to the child and whether protective action is required. This enquiry is made under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, to determine whether action should be taken to safeguard the child and promote the child's welfare.

The child protection process

11. The Referral and Assessment Team decides within one day how any referral to the service will be handled, whether immediate protection is needed, whether the child is in need and should be assessed under section 17; or whether there is cause to suspect the child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm and should be assessed under section 47 of the children act 1989. The team would also assess the need for any services and further specialist assessments.
12. Where there is risk to the life of a child or a likelihood of serious immediate harm, social workers, the police or NSPCC would use their statutory powers to act immediately to secure the safety of the child, including the use of emergency powers to remove a child, in exceptional circumstances when the issue is critical.
13. Where there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm there should be a **Strategy Discussion** involving children's social care, the police, health and other relevant bodies. This might take the form of a meeting or phone calls, and will determine the child's welfare and plan rapid future action. It ensures that information is shared; agrees the conduct and timing of any criminal investigation and decides whether enquiries under section 47 should be undertaken.
14. Local authority social workers have a statutory duty to lead enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989, with other agencies helping them; namely the police, health professionals and teachers. The views of the family will be taken into consideration. The outcome of the enquiry determines the next steps. Should the concerns be substantiated, an **Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC)** is convened within 15 working days of the strategy meeting. This is chaired by a Conference Chair (in Gateshead an Independent Reviewing Officer – IRO), and brings together professionals and the family, to make decisions about the child's future safety and development. The conference decides whether the threshold has been

met for the child to become subject to a child protection plan and under which category; physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect.

15. If this is the case, immediately following the ICPC, an outline child protection plan is put in place, with clear actions and timescales. A social worker is designated to be lead professional for the case in meeting his/her statutory responsibility for the child's welfare. A review child protection conference is held 3 months later and then six monthly thereafter.

Local and national data within the child protection system

16. The national and local data was provided to the Committee, covering the period 2013/14 which were the most recently published figures. It was noted that from April 2013 Gateshead had experienced a marked increase in the number of children becoming the subject of a child protection plan. The rise corresponds with changes in practice, such as the single assessment framework, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013) and (2015) Guidance.
17. The higher number of unborn babies being subject to a child protection plan was noted, and highlighted as an area of good practice, as it gives more time for social workers to support families prior to birth, and prepare parents, resulting in more children being able to live safely at home. The low numbers of children becoming subject to plans for a second time indicates that the right investigations are being undertaken and the right cases are going on to conference, where there is multi-agency agreement that a child protection plan is the most appropriate way to progress these cases.

Scrutiny

18. Auditing and monitoring of children's social care is an ongoing activity with specific dip sample audits undertaken as an additional safeguard to ensure best practice. Ofsted provides external scrutiny of child protection activity within their Single Inspection Framework, which has been in operation since November 2013 and will cover all local authorities by March 2017.
19. In 2013, Gateshead's was inspected under the previous Ofsted framework which focused on the Local Authority arrangements for the Protection of Childre. The inspection took place between February and March 2013. The inspection considered key aspects of the child's journey through the child protection system, focusing on the experiences of the child and the effectiveness of the help and protection that they are offered from early help through to statutory social work intervention. The inspection judgement was that the **overall effectiveness in Gateshead's arrangements for the protection of children was good.**

Evidence Gathering Session 2

20. The second evidence gathering session on 22nd October 2015 provided the committee with an overview of how children and young people are referred into children's social care, the thresholds that govern at what level the child and family should be assessed, and how the level of support is determined to meet their needs. The session enabled the committee to follow the journey of a child and his/her family, to illustrate the steps and considerations social workers make when delivering their service from the point of referral through to the end of the **Child in Need (CIN)** assessment.

Referral and Assessment

21. Working Together Guidance (2013) provides the framework for interagency working and sets out specific arrangements for how children should be referred and assessed within the arena of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
22. Where the criteria for a Child in Need (as defined by the Children Act 1989) are thought to be met, a referral should be made to the local Children's Social Care Team, (the Referral and Assessment Team), which will consider the need to undertake a statutory assessment. Where this is deemed appropriate, a social worker will complete this assessment within 45 working days.
23. Local authority children's social care has the responsibility for clarifying the process for referrals. Referrals may come from: children themselves, teachers, a GP, the police, health visitors, family members and members of the public. Contact details should be signposted clearly so that potential referrers are aware of who they can contact if they need advice and/or support.
24. Feedback should be given by local authority children's social care to the referrer on any decisions made and where appropriate, the reasons why a case may not meet the statutory threshold to be considered by local authority children's social care for assessment and suggestions for other support.
25. The core business of the Referral and Assessment Team (R&A) is to ensure the statutory duties and responsibilities of the Council are discharged in respect of safeguarding children. The R&A team provides advice and support to signpost families to appropriate services. The team begins the initial planning process by providing timely assessments such as; Child in Need Assessments, Domestic Violence Assessments, Private Fostering Assessments, Prison Visit Assessments and Children in Hospital Assessments.
26. In Gateshead both contacts and referrals are recorded on CareFirst. During the last four years, Gateshead experienced an unprecedented

number of child referrals peaking at 2434 by the end of March 2014. In the following year, referrals decreased to a level more in line with figures pre 2012. By the end of year 2014/15, there were 1720 referrals of which 93.7% went on to a Child in Need assessment. In the first 2 quarters of 2015/16, there has been a slight increase to 900 referrals, 886 which went on to a CIN assessment (98.4%). This represents a 10% increase so far this year.

27. In terms of the national and regional picture for referrals in 2013/14, there were 573 per 10K nationally, 659.8 per 10K in the North East and 604.1 per 10K in Gateshead. Referral figures fell across the region by 12% during 2014/15, compared to the previous 12 months, with a more significant fall of 29% in Gateshead, although the current picture as outlined above is showing a moderate increase.
28. Over the last five years, the proportion of referrals from various sources has remained fairly consistent with the majority coming from police/probation/courts.

Assessment Framework

29. In 2013 a regional assessment framework was developed to ensure that assessments across the region were compatible in terms of quality standards, style, content and timescale, in order to facilitate the transfer of cases across boundaries. The work was commissioned by the regional Vulnerable Children's Safeguarding Network.
30. While **Working Together** Guidance restated the traditional 3 domains of assessment, child development, family environment and parenting capacity, the regional framework added the additional domain of "risk".

The regional guidance describes assessment as the:
"methodical collation of information which allows the practitioner to identify, through analysis and evaluation, the risks to, and the needs of, the child(ren) and family. Crucially the assessment should provide the practitioner with a level of understanding about the child and the family context to enable an appropriate plan to be formulated which builds on child and family strengths and addresses the areas requiring change in order to improve the child's outcomes and keep them safe. Through this process the practitioner will develop an understanding of those factors and indicators which denote the likelihood of success within a timescale appropriate for the child. The assessment process and consideration of such factors and indicators will also provide the practitioner with an indication of which services are the most appropriate to be involved with the child and family to meet the identified needs".

31. In order to ensure that assessment is completed in a timely fashion and that there are clear opportunities for management oversight clear check points have been established, at the 10 day point, 28 day point and 40 day point.

32. In Gateshead the majority of assessments are undertaken by the Referral and Assessment Team (82%), unless the support is ongoing and there is a need to re-assess. Between April 2014 and March 2015, 2010 CIN assessments were completed. Of these 1961 (97.7%) were within timescale. The national figure for completion within timescale stands at 82.2% (CIN Census 2013/14).
33. Between April and September 2015, a total of 1007 CIN assessments were completed. Of these, 964 (95.7%) were completed within timescale. At October 2015 there were 322 open CIN assessments.

Thresholds

34. Our multi-agency thresholds document (Indicators of Need) provides guidance for professionals and service users, to clarify the circumstances in which to refer a child to a specific agency to address and individual need, to carry out a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) or to refer to Children's Social Services. The Indicators of Need document describes the criteria for access to Children's Social Services/Care in Gateshead and how that fits within the wider context of multi-agency services and a range of needs. It is intended as a guide to assist practitioners in deciding, either at the initial screening stage or following an assessment, whether a child has additional needs and at what level or by what agency those needs could best be met.
- Level 1 – Baseline = Universal services
 - Level 2 – moderate = Targeted services
 - Level 3 – High = Specialist Social Services

External Scrutiny

35. In 2013 Ofsted undertook inspection of the local **authority's arrangements for child protection**. Ofsted considered key aspects of a child's journey through the child protection system, focusing on the experiences of the child and the effectiveness of the help and protection offered. Gateshead's overall effectiveness was judged to be good. In relation to referrals, they judged that:

"Partners agencies in Gateshead understand thresholds well and apply them consistently when making appropriate referrals to children's social care" and also that

"Historical information is effectively analysed and documented well within the contact and referral record and this informs sound decision making.

In relation to assessment they reported that:

"Assessments are timely; child focused and routinely consider historical information, clearly identifying risk and protective factors. The quality of analysis is good and leads to recommendations which coherently address identified needs. Assessment of unborn babies is undertaken

at an early stage and appropriately identify potential risks and strengths. The assessment process supports effective case planning and results in targeted interventions to reduce risk and the provision of additional support.”

36. In July 2014, Gateshead was part of a themed inspection of assessment carried out by Ofsted and the subsequent report was published in August 2015. The inspectors reported that assessments in Gateshead were of good quality and were rich in information and that they had seen evidence of the positive change to social workers’ approach to analysis.
37. The session confirmed that Gateshead has done well in ensuring people and professionals understand thresholds and they are encouraged to call for advice before making a referral. It was also recognised that Operation Encompass, where domestic violence cases are reported to schools, is working very well

Evidence Gathering Session 3

38. The third evidence gathering session on 21st January 2016 provided the committee with an overview of the process of holding a Strategy Discussion/ Meeting and undertaking child protection enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.
39. The session enabled the committee to follow the journey of the child and his/her family, to illustrate the steps and considerations social workers and partners take from the point of referral through to a strategy discussion and section 47 enquiry.

Strategy Discussions

40. Working Together Guidance (updated 2015), states that whenever there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, there should be a strategy discussion involving local authority children’s social care (including the fostering service if the child is looked after), the police, health professionals and other bodies such as the referring agency. This might be a meeting or telephone calls and more than one discussion may be necessary. It can take place following a referral or at any other time, including during the assessment process. Local authority children’s social care should convene a strategy discussion to determine the child’s welfare and plan rapid future action if there is reasonable cause to suspect the child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm.
41. The strategy discussion is convened by the social worker and his/her manager. Health and police colleagues should be involved, as a minimum with other relevant professionals involved depending on the nature of the case. The discussion is used to ensure available information is shared, agree the conduct and timing of any criminal

investigation; and decide whether enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 should be undertaken needed and how it will be obtained and recorded, what immediate and short term action is required to support the child, and who will do what by when, and whether legal action is required.

42. In Gateshead, there were 693 strategy discussions held in 2014/15. This is an increase of 6.3% since 2011/12. There were 576 strategies from 1st April to 31st Dec 2015.

Enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989

43. A section 47 enquiry is initiated to decide whether, and what type of, action is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child who is suspected of, or likely to be, suffering significant harm. It is carried out by undertaking or continuing with an assessment in accordance with the guidance set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015).
44. Local authority social workers have a statutory duty to lead assessments under section 47 of the Children Act 1989. The police, health professionals, teachers and other relevant professionals should help the local authority in undertaking its enquiries. Following section 47 enquiries, the social worker and his/her manager are responsible for deciding what action to take and how to proceed.
45. Where concerns of significant harm are not substantiated, the social worker and manager will determine whether support from any service may be helpful. Other professionals may contribute to the development of any plan and provide services as specified in the plan for the child.
46. Where concerns of significant harm are substantiated and the child is judged to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, the social worker with his/her manager should convene an initial child protection conference which should take place within 15 working days of a strategy discussion.
47. In Gateshead, there were 482 section 47 enquiries undertaken in 2014/15. This was a decrease on the previous year's total of 581. The rate of enquiries per 10,000 of the child population was 120.1 in 2014/15, which is lower than the England average (138.2) and statistical neighbours (157.9). There have been 456 enquiries undertaken from 1st April to 31st Dec 2015 a 26% increase this year to date.

Case Study

48. To help to clarify these processes, a case study was presented which focused on one particular family, following the child's journey through the system from initial contact and referral to a Strategy Discussion and eventual Section 47 Child Protection Enquiry.

49. A representative from Northumbria Police gave a police perspective on the process and explained how the role of the police officer at a Strategy Discussion is to provide information on the family, including convictions and to look at information shared by other agencies involved.
50. A solicitor from Gateshead's Litigation Team provided a legal overview of the process. At the strategy discussion/ meeting, the solicitor's role is to help assess risk and advise on the criteria for Section 47 and how the case may fair if it goes to court.
51. The committee received information on a family where one child had suffered unexplained injuries and a decision was made to remove the child. There are three possible routes to remove a child: through agreement with the parent (section 20). In Gateshead parents receive a mini booklet which outlines the issues around section 20. Alternatively a child can be removed through police protection under (Section 46) or an application can be made to court for an Emergency Protection Order (Section 44).
52. During the Strategy Discussion a medic must confirm that the injuries are non-accidental and if a decision is made that a child requires police protection, there must be reasonable cause to believe that he/she would otherwise suffer harm.
53. If the decision is made to proceed with a Section 47 Enquiry, this will assess whether the risk of harm is still there. In Gateshead, during a section 47 enquiry, a social worker will, on average, speak with 21 agencies in relation to the family.

Evidence Gathering Session 4

54. The fourth evidence gathering session provided the committee with an overview report and DVD presentation of how multi agency decisions are made regarding whether a child needs to become subject to a child protection plan and under which category. The session considered decision making during Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC) and how these decisions are reviewed at subsequent Review Child Protection Conferences (RCPC). The session enabled Members of the committee to have an overview of the process, quality assurance, the role of the Chair and the role of the agencies involved.

Purpose of an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC)

55. Following a Section 47 investigation, an ICPC brings together family members (and the child where appropriate), with the supporters, advocates and professionals most involved with the child and family, to make decisions about the child's future safety, health and development. If concerns relate to an unborn child, consideration should be given as to whether to hold a child protection conference prior to the child's birth.

56. The ICPC should take place within 15 working days of the last strategy discussion. Government guidance for convening child protection case conferences is contained in '*Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015*' and outlined in Gateshead LSCB Child Protection Procedures <http://proceduresonline.com/gateshead/lscb>

57. Conference responsibilities include:

- To bring together and analyse, in an inter-agency setting, all relevant information and plan how best to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child. It is a shared multi-agency responsibility of conference participants to make recommendations on how agencies work together to safeguard the child in future.
- To consider the evidence presented to the conference and taking into account the child's present situation and information about his or her family history and present and past family functioning, make judgements about the likelihood of the child suffering significant harm in the future and decide whether the child is continuing to, or is likely to, suffer significant harm; and
- To decide what future action is needed to safeguard the child and promote his/her welfare, how that action will be taken forward, and with what intended outcomes.
- The Safeguarding Children's Unit based in the Civic Centre has a key responsibility in chairing child protection conferences ensuring that accurate minutes are recorded and all agencies involved including family members are provided with a record of the decisions made and where a child protection plan had been agreed a copy of that plan.
- In Gateshead Child Protection Conferences are chaired suitably trained social workers experienced in child protection. In Gateshead the role is carried out by the same staff who undertake the role of Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs). However in their capacity as Child Protection Chairs they are directly accountable to the Director of Children's Services, whereas in the role of IRO they are personally responsible for monitoring the performance by the local authority of their functions in relation to a child's review and their case and as such have direct recourse to Cafcass, if deemed necessary.

56. Child Protection Chairs should;

- a). where possible be a consistent Chair for the case; the same person should chair subsequent child protection reviews (RCPCs);
- b). Independent of operational and/or line management responsibilities for the case; and
- c). meet the child and parents in advance to ensure they understand the purpose and the process.

57. The Decision Making Process. All involved professionals should:

- Contribute to the information their agency provides ahead of the conference, setting out the nature of the agency's involvement with the child and family;

- Consider, in conjunction with the police and the appointed conference Chair, whether the report can and should be shared with the parents and if so when; and
 - Attend the conference and take part in decision making when invited.
58. The conference should examine the following questions when determining whether the child should be subject to a Child Protection Plan.
- Ensure the child is safe from harm and prevent him/her from suffering further harm;
 - Promote the child's health and development; and
 - Support the family and wider family members to safeguard and promote the welfare of their child, provided it is in the best interests of the child.
59. The Conference Chair must ensure that the decision about the need for a Child Protection Plan takes account of the views of all agencies represented at the conference and also takes into account any written contributions that have been made. This discussion will normally take place with the parents/carers present.
60. The decision will be taken by professionals attending the conference, i.e. those eligible to be counted for the purposes of establishing a quorum. This will not include the child, parents, carers or supporters although they may be asked to comment on the strengths, concerns, risks, future plans and protection. Where there is no consensus, the decision will normally be made by a simple majority. Where a majority decision cannot be reached, the Conference Chair will make the decision.
61. The Conference Chair must ensure that all members of the conference are clear about the conclusions reached, the decision taken and recommendations made, and that the record of the conference accurately reflect the discussions, the decision and, where relevant, the reasons for the Conference Chair exercising their decision-making powers. Any dissent by professionals at the conference must be recorded in the conference record. If parents/carers disagree with the decision, this also must be recorded in the record of the conference and the Conference Chair must discuss the issue with them and explain their right to and the process for challenge.
62. The attendees at the conference will pull together an outline of the Child Protection Plan to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child and decide who will form the Core Group Meetings. A date must also be decided upon for a review conference.

Categories of Significant Harm

63. If the decision is that the child is at continuing risk of Significant Harm and is, therefore, in need of a Child Protection Plan, the Conference Chair should determine the category of significant harm which the child has suffered or is at risk of suffering.

The following definitions are taken from Appendix A of *Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015*:

- **Physical Abuse** A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
- **Emotional Abuse** The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or making fun of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (**including** cyber bullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- **Sexual Abuse** Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the Internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.
- **Neglect** The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Core Groups

64. The committee were advised that the **Core Group**, is a group of individuals responsible for implementing and progressing the Child Protection Plan. The Core Group is the forum for inter-agency collaboration and should facilitate good communication to achieve the objectives detailed in the Child Protection Plan. Members of the Core Group are jointly responsible for sharing information, undertaking tasks, reviewing and refining the plan with a focus on achieving improved outcomes for the child.

65. Membership of the Core Group is identified at the ICPC and is reviewed at subsequent review conferences. A lead social worker will be identified to lead the Core Group and parents will be key members along with professionals who have direct contact with the family. Although the lead social worker has the lead role, all members of the Core Group are jointly responsible for the formulation, implementation, and review and monitoring of the Child Protection Plan. Core groups are an important forum for working with parents, wider family members and children of sufficient age and understanding

66. The first Core Group should be held within 10 working days of the Initial Child Protection Conference. Thereafter Core Groups should be held on a six weekly basis or more frequently if necessary. Dates for subsequent Core Groups should be agreed at the first meeting. Core Group meetings will focus on sharing information and progress, measuring any changes in the family's behaviours or the family's capacity to change and what resources are required to help the family achieve or sustain any changes. The core group will measure progress against the planned outcomes.

67. An effective Core Group promotes good inter-agency co-operation and provides the framework in which professionals and family members can work in partnership towards achieving the aim, objectives and desired outcomes contained within the Child Protection Plan.

Purpose of the Child Protection Review Conferences (RCPCs)

68. The review conference procedures for preparation, decision-making and other procedures should be the same as those for an initial child protection conference.

- To review whether the child is continuing to suffer, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, and review developmental progress against child protection plan outcomes.
- To consider whether the child protection plan should continue or should be changed.
- The SCU ensures best practice through the engagement of children and their families in the conference and reviewing service making sure their views are fully represented in planning, service delivery and decision making.

Performance Data April 2014- January 2016

69. The committee was given the following breakdown of performance data: **Between April 2014 and January 2015**, 618 CP conferences took place (157 ICPCs/446 RCPCs /15 Transfers).

Between April 2015 and January 2016, 508 CP conferences took place (178 ICPCs/328 RCPCs/2 Transfers). This represents an 18% decrease overall in the number of CP conferences taking place, despite a 13% increase in ICPCs.

While there has been a decrease in the number of conferences held in the period April 2015 to January 2016 April compared with the same period last year, during the last 4 months the numbers of conferences per month is more in line with the picture from 2014 -2015

70. **Between April 2014 and January 2015**, 263 children became subject to CP plans, and 268 children became de-registered (an overall change of -5).

63.1% (166) of those children became subject to a plan under a category of neglect, 22.1% (58) became subject to a plan under a category of emotional abuse, 9.9% (26) became subject to a plan under a category of physical abuse and 4.9% (13) became subject to a plan under a category of sexual abuse.

Between April 2015 and January 2016, 266 children became subject to CP plans, and 255 children became de-registered (an overall change of +11). 71.1% (189) of those children became subject to a plan under a category of neglect, 21.4% (57) became subject to a plan under a category of emotional abuse, 4.9% (13) became subject to a plan under a category of physical abuse and 2.6% (7) became subject to a plan under a category of sexual abuse.

71. Gateshead continues to have high numbers of children with child protection plans. The majority of those children continue to be registered under the category of neglect.

72. 100% of plans are distributed within 1 day of the ICPC and during the last 12 months significant work has been undertaken to ensure that Chair's reports following conference have been distributed within the required timescale of 20 days. Since February 2015 we have been able to demonstrate 100% compliance with timescales.

73. Ensuring the right people are represented at the conference has also been subject to performance improvement during the last 12 months. Specifically, ensuring that GP information and police information is available to the conference to ensure decisions can be made with a complete picture of the circumstances surrounding the child.
74. Concerns were expressed about the availability of GP reports at both ICPC's and RCPC's. Despite an improvement in reports being shared when practices were reminded these improvements were not able to be sustained. In order to support Health to meet statutory performance targets and improve practice work was undertaken with the named GP visiting a range of GP Practices, and holding sessions with both GP and Practice Managers to review administrative processes and organisational issues and the key lessons learnt for both Health and the SCU from the Baby T SCR. As a result there has been a significant improvement in communication and an improvement from 22% of conferences having GP reports to 71% of conferences having GP reports.

Recommendations

- i) Additional work is undertaken to further improve the availability of GP reports at ICPCs and RCPCs**
- ii.) To improve the detail of data provided in relation to school referrals to children's social care: Providing a breakdown by school to facilitate the committee's scrutiny of safeguarding within education.**
- iii.) To review the evidence in light of the latest Ofsted inspection findings published on 11th March 2016.**

CONTACT: Ann Day, Service Manager, Children's Commissioning and Performance

Extn: 3484

TITLE OF REPORT: Role of the Council in Supporting Educational Outcomes with a particular focus on Vulnerable and Poorly Performing pupils

REPORT OF: Alison Elliott, Interim Strategic Director - Care, Wellbeing and Learning

Summary

Council agreed that the Committee should review how the Council supports educational outcomes in Gateshead, with a specific focus on vulnerable or poorly performing pupils. This is in recognition of the rapidly changing educational landscape, including the emergence of Academies, the increasing autonomy of schools, and the promotion of “school to school” support as the vehicle for school improvement. The review has focused on the Council’s overall role, remit and approach and will, in addition, focus on vulnerable children through a focus on the use of Pupil Premium and improving the educational outcomes of Looked After Children.

This report gives an update on the progress, to date, following the Committee’s and Cabinet’s approval of the report.

1. Background

The Committee identified the following recommendations from the review:-

Information and transparency

- a. On an annual basis, the Committee to receive a pupil performance data report that focuses upon the gap between disadvantaged and other pupils. This “closing the gap” report to show performance trend over time.
- b. While the secondary “closing the gap” initiative is active, for Committee to receive an annual assessment of impact.

Governors’ role in supporting and challenging school leaders on ‘closing the gap’

- c. The Governing Body Support team to review its training programme to ensure that Governors have access to a range of courses that support them in holding school leaders to account.

The strategic delivery of education services

- d. Care, Wellbeing and Learning to review the implementation of the Council's Education Strategy to:
 - review how support for the most vulnerable pupils is provided and funded
 - determine how a focus on school improvement can be best delivered in view of the ongoing financial constraints
 - ensure the right balance between core funded services and traded services

Special schools

- e. An annual conversation with special schools to include examples of innovative work to achieve better outcomes
- f. The specific issues around support for pupils with complex health needs. Agree to focus a case study in the 2015/16 work programme on the issues around targeted and specialist support from the NHS for special schools. This will focus on the delivery of therapeutic support, the role of the Community Children's Nursing Team and Continuing Care.

2. What has happened since completion of the review?

The findings of the review were agreed by Committee on 2nd April 2015 and presented to Cabinet for comment on 2nd June 2015. Officers have begun to implement the necessary changes or reviews in response to the Committee's findings.

Information and transparency

- Reports have been produced for pupil performance data that are in line with the review's finding based on 2013/14 examination data i.e. the reports show school specific "gap data" between disadvantaged pupils and others.
- The Headteacher of the virtual school for looked after children has produced a "data dashboard" that specifically details the performance of looked after children. This dash board will be produced on an annual basis and was shared with the Ofsted Inspection Team during the recent inspection. A SEN data dashboard is also being produced.
- An annual assessment of the impact of the secondary "narrowing the gap" project has been incorporated in to a senior officer's performance management targets.
- The Governing Body and Inspection Teams have begun to review and assess the present Governors' development programme. The key theme is supporting Governors to give robust but appropriate challenge to school

leaders. The theme of developing appropriate challenge for Governors will be central to the Governing Body Team's Business/Action plan.

The strategic delivery of education services

- The strategic delivery of education services is a key part of the Council's ongoing review that is taking place at this time as a response to the reducing budget. To retain high quality provision and intervention that deliver excellent outcomes for children and young people at a significantly reduced cost will need highly creative and innovative thinking. In the financial year 2015/2016 no further resource has been taken from mainline funding for those services in Schools and Learning that support the needs of vulnerable children e.g. Educational Psychologists, LAC services or Educational Welfare. As a consequence, no voluntary or compulsory redundancies were required.

Special Schools

- Special Headteachers have shared concerns and successes with Committee and will continue to do this on an annual basis.
- The extension to Eslington School, on the Tyne View site, has been completed and the facility is now operational. Children and staff are extremely positive about their new building.
- The Case Study exploring the issues around targeted and specialist support from the NHS for special schools will form part of the Committee's annual discussion with Special School Headteachers.

3. What impact has this had for users?

Summative exam data indicates that there has been a further reduction in the attainment gap by the end of primary school age. The gap between disadvantaged pupils and others has increased by the end of Key Stage 4.

4. What will we do next?

- A reviewed approach/programme to development of the skills of Governors to appropriately challenge school leaders will be further reviewed based on the present good practice.
- The Council will continue to assess the likely impacts of a significant reduction in funding. This will include how and what Education and other related services it wishes to fund in the future. This will require the development of new delivery models, especially following the publication of the Whiter Paper, "Educational Excellence Everywhere".

- Consultation between the Council and Special School Heads and Governors will be accelerated to ensure that Gateshead is providing the correct number and type of places in special education.
- Careful analysis of 2015/2016 assessment information will be conducted to assess the level of impact in closing the attainment gap between vulnerable pupils and others, especially at Key Stage 4. Results of the analysis will have a significant influence on the Council's future strategy.

5. The White Paper

Every school an academy

The Government produced an Education White Paper, "Educational Excellence Everywhere" in March 2017. Key points include:

- Most schools will be expected to form or join multi-academy trusts.
- By the end of 2020, all remaining maintained schools will have become academies or will be in the process of conversion.
- "Apart from in exceptional circumstances, the smallest schools will have to form or join a MAT. But other successful, sustainable schools will still be able "to continue as single academy trusts if they choose to do so".
- New government powers will be created to direct schools to become academies in local authority areas which are underperforming or where the local authority no longer has capacity to maintain its schools or where schools have not started the process of becoming an academy by 2020.
- Views will be sought on a number of changes to the school admissions system to make it simpler and clearer, including "requiring local authorities to coordinate in-year admissions and handle the administration of the independent admission appeals function".
- The government will consider how parents may be able to petition regional schools commissioners for their school to move to a different MAT "where there is underperformance or other exceptional circumstances".
- New accountability measures for MATs will be launched, MAT performance tables will be published in addition to the continued publication of, and focus on, inspection and performance data at individual school level.

- ***“In the short term, local authorities will continue to have responsibilities which include: employment of staff in community schools; ownership and asset management of school buildings; and responsibilities relating to the governance, organisation and curriculum of maintained schools. Those responsibilities will shrink as each school in their area becomes an academy; when every school has done so, they will fall away entirely.” [4.73]***

The Future Role of Local Authorities as envisaged in the White Paper

- **Ensuring every child has a school place:** including that there are sufficient school, special school and alternative provision places to meet demand. Local authorities will retain responsibility for this in a fully academised system. The government will support them by continuing to provide substantial funding to allow them to deliver sufficient places, as well as by creating places through the free schools programme.
- **Ensuring the needs of vulnerable pupils are met:** including identifying, assessing and making provision for children with special educational needs and disability and looked after children; promoting school attendance and tackling persistent absence; ensuring that alternative provision is available for headteachers to commission for children and young people excluded from school or otherwise unable to attend a mainstream school, leading on safeguarding responsibilities for all children, including those in unregulated settings, educated at home and children missing education, as well as children at risk of radicalisation.
- **Acting as champions for all parents and families:** including listening to and promoting the needs of parents, children and the local community – working alongside elected mayors; supporting parents in navigating the system through a continuing role in admissions; supporting children, young people and parents to navigate local SEND arrangements (such as providing information, advice and support) and engaging them in designing and co-producing local SEND policies, service commissioning and delivery; and championing high standards locally for all pupils, for example, by encouraging high performing providers to establish new school places and where necessary calling for action from the Regional Schools Commissioner to tackle underperformance

6. Recommendations

The views of the OSC are sought on:-

- Whether the OSC is satisfied with progress against actions to date.

Contact: Steve Horne	ext 8612
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TITLE OF REPORT: Closing the Gap Annual Report – Pupil Performance Data 2015

REPORT OF: Alison Elliott, Interim Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing and Learning

Summary

This report details the position of Gateshead schools in relation to the academic performance of disadvantage and other children in the Borough for the academic year 2014/15.

Background

1. The Committee identified the following recommendation from the review, “**Role of the Council in Supporting Educational Outcomes with a particular focus on Vulnerable and Poorly Performing pupils**”:-

- On an annual basis, the Committee to receive a pupil performance data report that focuses upon the gap between disadvantaged and other pupils. This “closing the gap” report to show performance trend over time.

This report is the first to the Committee that specifically considers the gap between academic achievement between disadvantage children and young people and their peers.

Pupil Performance Information

2. The Foundation Stage

	EYFSP %Good Level Of Development					
	2014			2015		
	Pupils Known to be eligible for free school meals	All other Pupils	GAP	Pupils Known to be eligible for free school meals	All other Pupils	GAP
England Average	45	64	-19	51	69	-18
Gateshead LA	37	62	-25	50	67	-17

Interpretation

The “achievement gap” narrowed in 2015 and is now just below the gap seen nationally.

End of Year 1 Phonics Assessment

	Year 1 Phonics % Meeting the Expected Standard of Phonic Decoding					
	2014			2015		
	Pupils Known to be eligible for free school meals	All other Pupils	GAP	Pupils Known to be eligible for free school meals	All other Pupils	GAP
England Average	61	77	-16	65	79	-14
Gateshead LA	60	78	-18	62	80	-18

Interpretation

Whilst the “achievement gap” remained static within Gateshead, the achievement of disadvantaged children increased nationally, resulting in the gap for 2015 increasing by 2%.

3. Key Stage 1

	Key Stage 1 % Level 2+ Reading					
	2014			2015		
	Pupils Known to be eligible for free school meals	All other Pupils	GAP	Pupils Known to be eligible for free school meals	All other Pupils	GAP
England Average	80	92	-12	82	92	-10
Gateshead LA	78	91	-13	79	92	-13

Interpretation

Whilst the “achievement gap” remained static within Gateshead, the achievement of disadvantaged children increased nationally, resulting in the gap for 2015 increasing by 2%.

	Key Stage 1 % Level 2+ Mathematics					
	2014			2015		
	Pupils Known to be eligible for free school meals	All other Pupils	GAP	Pupils Known to be eligible for free school meals	All other Pupils	GAP
England Average	85	94	-9	86	94	-8
Gateshead LA	82	93	-11	82	94	-12

Interpretation

Disadvantaged pupils achieved less well than their peers nationally and so the “gap” increased from 2% to 4%.

4. Key Stage 2

%Level 4+ RWM Disadvantaged Pupils

2014 comparisons with Statistical Neighbours and England Average

	%L4+ RWM Disadv	National Rank
St. Helens	76	13
Halton	71	33
Gateshead	70	40
Durham	69	49
Tameside	69	49
Sunderland	68	58
England Average	67	
Darlington	66	78
Barnsley	64	98
South Tyneside	64	98
North Tyneside	63	112
Wakefield	59	141

2015 comparisons with Statistical Neighbours and England Average

	%L4+ RWM Disadv	National Rank
South Tyneside	75	29
Darlington	74	33
Sunderland	74	33
Gateshead	72	46
Durham	71	58
North Tyneside	71	58
St. Helens	71	58
Tameside	71	58
England Average	70	
Halton	70	67
Barnsley	68	87
Wakefield	62	140

Interpretation

A greater proportion (2%) of disadvantaged pupils achieved a level 4 in reading, writing and mathematics in 2015 than 2014. However, the national figure increased by 3% and so Gateshead’s national rank dropped slightly.

%Level 4+ RWM Disadvantaged Pupils

2014 comparisons with Regional Neighbours and England Average

	%L4+ RWM Disadv	National Rank
Redcar and Cleveland	72	27
Hartlepool	71	33
Gateshead	70	40
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	70	40
Durham	69	49
Middlesbrough	68	58
Stockton-on-Tees	68	58
Sunderland	68	58
England Average	67	
Darlington	66	78
Northumberland	66	78
South Tyneside	64	98
North Tyneside	63	112

2015 comparisons with Regional Neighbours and England Average

	%L4+ RWM Disadv	National Rank
Redcar and Cleveland	78	12
Hartlepool	75	29
South Tyneside	75	29
Darlington	74	33
Sunderland	74	33
Gateshead	72	46
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	72	46
Durham	71	58
North Tyneside	71	58
England Average	70	
Middlesbrough	69	76
Stockton-on-Tees	69	76
Northumberland	67	102

5. Key Stage 4

%5 A*-C Grades inc English & Mathematics Disadvantaged Pupils

2014 comparisons with Statistical Neighbours and England Average

	%5A*-C inc EN&MA Disadv Pupils	National Rank
Halton	43.0	29
Durham	38.3	44
Gateshead	37.6	50
England Average	36.7	
St. Helens	36.6	54
North Tyneside	36.5	55
Darlington	35.1	67
South Tyneside	35.0	69
Wakefield	34.7	72
Tameside	32.9	90
Sunderland	29.0	134
Barnsley	25.7	148

2015 comparisons with Statistical Neighbours and England Average

	%5A*-C inc EN&MA Disadv Pupils	National Rank
Halton	40.5	36
North Tyneside	40.1	38
South Tyneside	39.0	46
England Average	36.8	
Tameside	36.3	59
Durham	35.3	69
Wakefield	32.5	104
Gateshead	32.4	105
St. Helens	32.0	113
Darlington	31.4	121
Sunderland	30.2	134
Barnsley	29.3	141

%5 A*-C Grades inc English & Mathematics Disadvantaged Pupils

2014 comparisons with Regional Neighbours and England Average

	%5A*-C inc EN&MA Disadv Pupils	National Rank
Hartlepool	40.0	38
Durham	38.3	44
Gateshead	37.6	50
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	36.8	52
England Average	36.7	
North Tyneside	36.5	55
Middlesbrough	35.4	63
Darlington	35.1	67
South Tyneside	35.0	69
Redcar and Cleveland	31.1	117
Stockton-on-Tees	30.3	124
Sunderland	29.0	134
Northumberland	26.2	147

2015 comparisons with Regional Neighbours and England Average

	%5A*-C inc EN&MA Disadv Pupils	National Rank
North Tyneside	40.1	38
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	39.1	42
Stockton-on-Tees	39.1	42
South Tyneside	39.0	46
England Average	36.8	
Durham	35.3	69
Middlesbrough	34.6	82
Hartlepool	33.4	94
Gateshead	32.4	105
Redcar and Cleveland	32.1	111
Darlington	31.4	121
Northumberland	31.2	124
Sunderland	30.2	134

6. The Closing the Gap Project at Key Stage 4

This was introduced in September 2014, in order to provide an opportunity for schools to share good practice in relation to the Closing the Gap agenda in order to improve performance in relation to this measure.

At the launch there was both a national and a regional rationale for this initiative which was summarised by the HMI who spoke at the launch event:

- “The north east has the highest proportion of FSM entitlement outside of Inner London in both the primary and secondary sectors
- Too many FSM students are failing to reach the expected levels by the end of Key Stages 2 or 4 or to make the progress they should
- The North east has the highest level of NEETs by the age of 19
- There is significant variation in the performance of FSM students between schools and LAs in the North East
- CTG represents a major challenge for the education sector and had major implications for the life chances of thousands of students
- There is a moral imperative to tackle this strategically across the North East and England”

7. How the project has supported schools

The establishment of a Closing the Gap Network with Termly meetings through which schools have been able to share practice. Specific examples of activities include:

- Examining whole curriculum approaches to Key Stage 3, such as the REAL projects in Joseph Swan and Kingsmeadow, to support transition into Secondary and to develop skills for learning
- Providing subject focused information sharing such as the “Closing the Gap in Maths” initiative developed by Cardinal Hume and delivering a “Literacy Day” looking at whole school and Departmental approaches to Literacy [Note that Cardinal Hume has been recognised nationally for work in this area]
- Sharing approaches to Assessment and Tracking with a session devoted to Progress Tracking
- Exploring approaches to curriculum design in the context of changed Performance Measures [introduction of Progress 8] and qualification tariffs [changes to the value of the Vocational Curriculum]
- Sharing information from published reports
- Assessing the impact of new qualification specifications and options for schools
- Sharing understanding of the demands of the Ofsted Framework for Inspection especially as it relates to the role of the Subject Leader and support for disadvantaged learners
- Accessing the experience of schools beyond Gateshead through visiting speakers
- At the request of the schools, organising a Science Network as a means of supporting a wider school approach to CTG

8. Outcomes so far:

- The data shows there has been a disappointing drop in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils on the 5A*-C (inc. En and Ma) measure.
- In identifying development areas schools have noted the 4 aspects of provision identified by HMI ie Leadership, quality of teaching, stability around the child, use of data
- Schools have rightly said that a focus on improving progress and attainment overall has to be maintained as a priority
- Schools have identified the need to develop greater resilience and capacity for sustained study in students who experience barriers to learning. Consequently, significant work has been done in relation to identifying issues, designing interventions and monitoring their effectiveness in Key Stage 3. This ground work is expected to yield benefits in the future but, necessarily, impact cannot yet be assessed in relation to Key Stage 4 new measures.

- The importance of whole school approaches and, within that, greater personal accountability has been identified as a key consideration. Developments in relation to personal accountability, target setting and tracking and targeted support for students reflect this
- Schools have welcomed the opportunity to share experience and approaches and some networking has occurred
- Maths has been identified as an area of need. There are regional initiatives with which schools can engage but we have established a link between the schools and our Primary Maths consultants who are beginning to work with Secondaries in relation to Key Stage 3 support. One maintained Secondary has received extensive support to improve its maths provision

9. Summary

The pupil performance data shows that there is still a considerable amount of work to be carried out if the achievement gap is to be closed.

The situation at Key Stage 4 is most concerning. After a year of the “Closing the Gap” Project outcomes have been disappointing. However, the reasons for under attainment are complex and a single year’s weak result may mask improvements in provision and leadership. However, the 2016 examination results (although based on a new set of measures) will provide a basis to review the Council’s approach to “Closing the Gap” by the age of 16.

Recommendations

OSC is asked to consider the position of schools and the authority in relation to the “Closing the Gap” agenda.

Contact: Steve Horne	Extension: 8612
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14 April 2016

TITLE OF REPORT: **Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Board**

REPORT OF: **Alison Elliott, Interim Strategic Director Care, Wellbeing and Learning**

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to:
 - inform Families OSC of the findings from Ofsted's Inspection **services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and their Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Board** in Gateshead published on 11th March 2016;
 - refer the Ofsted improvement plans for consideration to the Committee
 - and provide a precis of other recent Ofsted Inspection Reports relating to Local Authorities within the region under this inspection framework. **(appendix 1)**

Background

2. The inspection was conducted under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. The framework for Inspection services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers, the Single Inspection Framework (SIF) came into force in November 2013. They focus on the effectiveness of local authority services and arrangements to help and protect children, the experiences and progress of children looked after, including adoption, fostering, the use of residential care, and children who return home. The framework also focuses on the arrangements for permanence for children who are looked after and the experiences and progress of care leavers. The leadership, management and governance judgement addresses the effectiveness of leaders and managers and the impact they have on the lives of children and young people and the quality of professional practice locally.
3. All local authorities will be inspected under this framework within a three-year period. The inspection is undertaken over a four week period at short notice, the Local Authority being informed the day before the inspection team arrives on site. Prior to arrival the inspectors have already received an analysts' précis of the local authority with the analyst joining the inspection team on site at various points during the 4-week period.

4. Between November 2013 and 11th March 2016, 85 Inspection reports have been published. Of those, only 20 others have achieved an overall judgement of 'Good', 22 inspections resulted in a judgement of Inadequate and the remaining 43 achieved a judgement of Requires Improvement. To date no authority has achieved an overall judgement of outstanding.

The Gateshead Inspection

5. The inspection took place between 27th October and 19th November 2015. The inspection was undertaken by seven of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) 2 additional shadow inspectors and an Ofsted Senior Data Analyst. The inspection team evaluated children's cases through audit analysis and through speaking directly to frontline practitioners, managers and other professionals involved in the cases. Inspectors shadowed staff observing the practice of duty social workers, the work of social workers with children and families and the work of the independent reviewing officers. The inspectors approach tested the decision making at all stages of the child's journey from early help, referral and assessment to permanence planning, placement decisions and leaving care.
6. Inspectors scrutinised over 200 cases and undertook in depth cases analysis of over 20 cases including interviews with staff and managers involved. Inspectors also observed practice, spoke with children, their families, social workers, managers and other professionals to assess the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements. They analysed performance data, management information and strategy documents.

Inspection Findings

7. The Inspection judgement overall was that **Children's Services in Gateshead are Good**. The detailed Grading in each judgement area of the Ofsted framework was;
 - **Children who need help and protection – Good**
 - **Children looked after and achieving permanence – Good**
 - Adoption performance – Good
 - Experience and progress of care leavers – Requires Improvement
 - **Leadership management and Governance - Good**
8. The inspection report highlights a great many strengths in practice across the whole system, including highlighting very good practice in the following areas; intensive family support in relation to domestic abuse; performance management and quality assurance arrangements; fostering support; celebrating the achievements of children looked after and care leavers and promoting children's rights. Each of the above named areas received an Annex O* commendation from Ofsted inspectors during the inspection period. The report recognises the significant improvements that have taken place over the last 4 years and the methodical way in which those improvements have been sustained.

* **Annex O** Where inspectors observe best and/or innovative practice in a local authority they record the detail in Annex O, the best practice log.

9. The inspection also included a review of the LSCB to evaluate the effectiveness of the Board in carrying out its statutory functions. Inspectors considered the evidence that the LSCB;
- coordinates the work of statutory partners in safeguarding children and monitors the effectiveness of those local arrangements,
 - delivers multi-agency training in the protection and care of children which is evaluated regularly for impact on management and practice,
 - ensures local policies and procedures in respect of thresholds for intervention are understood and operate effectively
 - uses serious case reviews, management reviews and reviews of child deaths as opportunities for learning and feedback that drive improvement.
 - evaluates and monitors the quality and effectiveness of the local authority and statutory partners in protecting and caring for children, including the provision of improvement advice and
 - how it challenges practice between partners and uses casework auditing to ensure improvements can be made in frontline practice and management oversight.
10. The Inspector for the LSCB scrutinised minutes of board meetings and subgroup meetings, strategies, policies and performance management information alongside interviewing the LSCB Chair, Business Manager, LSCB Partners and Subgroup Chairs. The information gathered was triangulated with the inspection team who, when talking to social workers in relation to practice, discussed the impact of the LSCB on practice through multi-agency training and the dissemination of learning from serious case reviews.
11. It is proposed to take forward actions to respond to the areas for development highlighted by the inspection and outlined below through the Learning and Children's performance framework overseen by the Strategic Director, CWL, Children's Trust Board and Local Safeguarding Children Board.
12. **Children in need of help and protection was judged to be Good** The inspectors noted that children who need help and protection are identified early and receive effective and timely interventions, delivering improved outcomes. They judged the experience and progress of children who need help and protection as good highlighting that:
- Multiagency partnership are strong with a robust focus on safeguarding

- Thresholds for access to social care are well understood and embedded.
- A wide range of very good targeted and coordinated early help is delivered across a range of services, with elements of outstanding practice within intensive family support.
- The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and team around the family (TAF) approaches are being used effectively to identify and respond to need and lead to effective family-focused interventions. CAF assessments include an assessment of risk and how it impacts on the child.
- The Early help quality assurance system is providing a good overview of early intervention; as a result children who require more targeted or specialist help are identified quickly.
- Referrals to children's social care receive timely responses that are thoroughly considered, safely managed and lead to swift and decisive actions.
- Robust information gathering by duty workers at the contact and referral stage leads to timely and informed decision making. Information sharing between partners is effective and appropriate.
- Child protection enquiries are thorough and benefit from effective multi-agency strategy meetings.
- Assessment quality is good; assessments are holistic, make good use of historical information and evaluate the child's experience well and contain balanced strengths and risks analysis leading to appropriate outcomes for children.
- Evidence of direct work with children is a particular strength.
- Social workers know the children they work with well and, as a result, provide good support to meet children's needs and promote their safety. Visits to children are regular and most benefit from having a consistent Social worker which enables trusting relationships to be built.
- Multi-agency arrangements to safeguard vulnerable children who go missing from home, care or education or are at risk of sexual exploitation are robust.
- The proactive approach taken with unborn children is identified as a strength ensuring protective action commences and continues before and after birth.

13. **The experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence was judged to be good.** The inspectors noted that decisions to look after children are generally timely, appropriate and in the best interests of the children. The following areas of good practice were highlighted:

- The Public Law Outline (PLO) is applied appropriately and ensures that children are supported and protected well.
- Effective intensive family support services wrap around families to keep children within their family where it is safe to do so.
- Social workers carry out viability assessments and use family group conferences to explore alternative options to being taken into care, resulting in effective use of placements with family members and SGOs (Special Guardianship Orders)
- Social workers are good at listening to children and know them well. Children's wishes and feelings are well recorded in assessments.
- The quality of assessment is good; assessments are comprehensive with good analysis and evidence of research.
- The needs of children are well considered with good attention to health matters, identity and diversity.
- Decisions and planning for children to return home are robust, with clear evidence of senior management oversight and support plans in place to address risks.
- Children are seen alone where appropriate and, importantly, the frequency of visits is increased where needed.
- Children are very well supported to express their views; social workers take good account of children's wishes and feelings when considering where they should live. Looked after Children are well represented through One Voice, which is highly influential in shaping services for looked after children.
- Placement stability in Gateshead is very good.
- The projected needs of children looked after is very well understood. This informs recruitment activity and planning to maintain sufficient resources. The recruitment of foster carers is good.
- Children looked after in Gateshead who are missing and at risk of sexual exploitation receive a well-coordinated response to the risks.
- Clear protocols, procedures and good access to early intervention and treatment services for substance misuse ensure that children in Gateshead receive appropriate support.

- Educational attainment for looked after children is improving and is above national comparators across all the key stages.

13. **Sub judgement: Adoption performance is good**

- Children are identified at an early stage and their parallel plans are effectively tracked to minimise delays.
- There is a coherent recruitment strategy for adopters based on an analysis of the likely predicted numbers, needs and profiles of children.
- The majority of assessments of adopters are timely, robust and child centred, with clear analysis supporting the recommendations. The adoption panel is suitably robust and carefully considers recommendations for approvals and the quality of matching children with adopters.
- There are minimal disruptions, with one breakdown in 2014–15. This demonstrates the quality of matches for children and the post-adoption support available.
- Fostering to adopt is a relatively new initiative that is successfully achieving permanence through Adoption for Children.
- Arrangements to support children and adopters pre and post adoption are effective and responsive. Timely assessments are completed to identify individual needs and tailor support packages.
- Adoption support is commissioned through an adoption agency. This is particularly highly regarded by adopters. Individual therapy and psychological support has been effective in helping families to improve relationships and attachments between child and adopter.

14. **Sub judgement: The experience and progress of care leavers requires improvement.** Inspectors highlighted the following good practice:

- Arrangements for keeping in touch with care leavers are effective.
- Assessment of risk is key to the work undertaken by social workers, personal advisers and other support staff working with care leavers.
- Care leavers are effectively supported and challenged to identify risk and reduce their involvement in risky behaviour.
- Support is carefully calibrated to meet the specific needs of care leavers over time and to deal with the scale of the issues they may confront.
- Care leavers have also been involved in developing a care leavers' charter.

- The young people value the relationships they have with their personal advisers and the support they receive. As one young person put it, 'I see them as family; they are always there for me'.
- Seven care leavers are being well supported to attend local universities, including help with fees and maintenance costs and additional payments to foster carers providing 'staying put' arrangements.
- For the very small number of care leavers who have disabilities, thorough and well-managed transition arrangements ensure they continue to be effectively supported by adult services.
- The Council are compliant with the Southwark Judgement, ensuring that all 16- to 17-year-olds who become homeless are assessed as a child in need and, where appropriate, become looked after.
- All young people and care leavers now live in safe and secure accommodation. Care leavers have good access to a range of suitable accommodation, including increasing numbers who are benefitting from the staying put policy now in place.
- A successful and innovative commissioned service, which uses sport to engage with young people was developed in response to an identified need for supported accommodation for young people in Gateshead.
- Joint working arrangements with housing staff and a proactive and strategic approach ensures that young people at risk of losing their tenancies or becoming homeless are quickly identified and supported, increasing the numbers of care leavers successfully taking up and sustaining their own tenancies.

15 **Leadership, management and Governance** is good. The inspectors found that children and young people were at the heart of good practice in Gateshead. They highlighted the following areas:

- Political leaders and members led by the CEO are good advocates for vulnerable children and young people.
- There is a strong ethos of collective responsibility across the council, which is helping to achieve the best outcomes for children
- The level of challenge by elected members is robust; areas of strength and improvement are well understood and this leads to effective and timely challenge of key issues.
- Governance arrangements are robust and there is a golden thread running through all of the strategic plans for children, young people and families, both within children's social care and across the partnership.

- There is an outstanding performance management and outcomes framework that is contributing to a shared ambition for and prioritisation of services for children and families.
- A coherent and comprehensive quality assurance framework is embedded and supports a rigorous programme of management oversight and continuous improvement within the local authority.
- Routine auditing is strong with good attention to the consistency of the work and effective consideration of both qualitative and quantitative standards.
- A quality assurance system is also embedded in relation to early help. This is providing a good overview of the effectiveness of early intervention
- There are effective arrangements with Gateshead Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB).
- There are clear pathways established for accessing a comprehensive range of services to support children and families in need of early help, targeted and specialist support.
- Services are robustly monitored and evaluated for their effectiveness. There is effective monitoring of contract compliance by the Children's Commissioning Team; this is ensuring good quality and choice of accommodation for children looked after and care leavers.
- The joint strategic needs assessment (JSNA) is comprehensive and informs service needs well and supports the alignment of adult and children's commissioning.
- The workforce strategy appropriately includes clear expectations for learning and continuous professional development to improve and inform workers' practice. There is a responsive, accessible and appropriately targeted offer of training for social workers and managers, including good learning from serious case reviews regionally and nationally.
- The Principal Social Worker role is well established and has a positive impact on improving quality and the recruitment and retention of social workers through implementing an attractive workforce offer and clear career pathways.
- Historically, Gateshead has had a stable workforce and the increase in the recent turnover of staff is well understood, with responsive action being taken to ensure competitive remuneration packages and securing the stability of the workforce in the longer term. Existing staff are supported in maintaining appropriate caseloads.

- Supervision is of a consistently good quality and management oversight of cases is routine and comprehensive in most cases seen. There is a consistent focus on continual professional development through supervision, observations of practice and through appraisal.
- The children's rights service provides effective services for and coordination of complaints, advocacy and the provision of independent visitors for children, young people and their families.
- There are many excellent examples of operational staff going the extra mile to ensure that children and young people are helped to understand interventions and contribute to planning.
- There are cohesive working relationships between the corporate complaints team and children's rights service, which help children express their views well both formally and informally when they are not happy about a service.
- High numbers of children make a positive contribution across all areas of service delivery and this was consistently seen through direct work.

16. **Recommendations from Ofsted** However, despite the good practice highlighted above there were elements that Inspectors determined should be improved and they provided a number of recommendations as detailed below:

- Improve the quality of all children's plans, including pathway plans to ensure that targets for improvement are clear and that they focus on risk and the most important issues for children, young people and care leavers.
- Ensure that child protection conferences and looked after reviews are used to drive and progress plans through the use of effective challenge and robust risk analysis.
- Improve the attendance of education professionals at all children and young people's reviews and meetings, to ensure a robust focus on their educational outcomes.
- Ensure that children who are subject to child protection processes have access to independent advocacy, in order to help share their views and to inform decisions about their lives.
- Support care leavers to understand their health histories more thoroughly and ensure they have regular and timely access to mental health services.
- Devise a more effective way of communicating legal entitlements to all care leavers.

- Establish a protocol with all education and training partners to ensure that arrangements are in place to provide proactive support for care leavers to stay on their courses and complete their qualifications.
- Ensure the adoption panel provides quality assurance feedback to the agency on the quality of reports being presented to panel and adoption performance.

17. **The review of the LSCB found that the LSCB requires improvement.**

The inspectors found that while it fulfils its statutory responsibilities and there is clear, strong commitment from key statutory agencies, there are gaps in its membership, activities and monitoring of frontline practice that limit its effectiveness. However, much of the work it undertakes it does well and some, very well. They highlighted the following areas of good practice

- The LSCB has a comprehensive and robust business plan covering a three-year period. Yearly action plans build on progress from the previous year.
- Plans are well aligned to other strategic plans and are well informed by identified local needs, shared priorities and findings from local LSCB auditing activity as well as national learning.
- The LSCB exerts its challenge function appropriately, with some examples of strong challenge to partners resulting in improved engagement with safeguarding.
- the LSCB identified most of the areas for development seen in this inspection in March 2015 and is taking action to address them.
- Good collaborative working between sub-groups has resulted in an effective whole systems approach to safeguarding, including child sexual exploitation and extremism.
- The board's auditing activity is used to improve practice. For example, the Neglect Inquiry has led to the development of comprehensive guidance for all agencies.
- Communication across the LSCB sub groups and to the full Board is generally effective, leading to well-coordinated activities based on an established cycle of scrutiny, learning training and action.

18. The review made the following recommendations for improvement;

- Ensure that the LSCB engages more effectively with the community it serves, including learning from the participation and testimony of children and young people, increased engagement with faith and ethnic minority groups, and timely recruitment of lay members.

- Develop appropriate pathways to increase the LSCB contribution to and influence on the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure the experience of children and young people are given appropriate consideration in all activity.
 - Ensure that training is sufficient to meet demand and is informed by a training needs analysis that includes analysis of impact on practice over time and the difference it has made to outcomes for children.
 - Ensure that agencies report the outcomes of single-agency auditing activity to the LSCB to increase its oversight of practice
 - Review the multi-agency data set used by the board to ensure that it meets LSCB priorities and includes all relevant activity that impacts on frontline practice, including workforce information
 - Develop robust mechanisms for measuring the LSCB's effectiveness as part of a performance management framework
 - Ensure that the LSCB annual report provides a clear account of the activity of the LSCB and its strengths and areas for improvement that is easily understood by a lay reader.
19. A number of the recommendations have already been addressed and a robust action plan has been developed in order to monitor progress and ensure the continual drive to outstanding across all service areas.
20. Recommendation for the Overview and Scrutiny committee;
- to note the contents of this report and to
 - scrutinise and monitor the subsequent improvement plan relating to the Ofsted findings

Appendix 1

Cumbria Local Authority – inspected 3rd - 25th March 2015

19. Overall judgement is that **Children’s Services in Cumbria are inadequate**. The detailed Grading in each judgement area of the Ofsted framework was;

- **Children who need help and protection – requires improvement**
- **Children looked after and achieving permanence – inadequate**
 - Adoption performance – Requires Improvement
 - Experience and progress of care leavers – Requires Improvement
- **Leadership management and Governance - Inadequate**

The Ofsted inspection found that following the inspection of help and protection in May 2013 in which Cumbria were found to be inadequate, Children’s Services has made significant progress, from a low base, in tackling critical issues around the help and protection of children, culture change, social work capacity and working to effectively engage the wider partnership that helps and protects children. However, services for looked after children had not had the same level of prioritisation and focus and as a result were inadequate. The authority were given 23 areas to prioritise for immediate action for improvement

20. The main issues for Cumbria related to the following

- Many looked after children have experienced unacceptable drift in decision-making and delay in the progress of their plans.
- Management oversight across all areas of work is weak. This leaves poor practice unchallenged, and too many children’s needs are unmet and plans not progressed within the child’s timescale.
- The Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) service is not effectively championing the needs of looked after children; nor is their practice consistently robust when considering the risks to children subject to child protection plans.
- There are insufficient resources to meet the emotional well-being needs of LAC
- Strategic planning to respond to both child sexual exploitation and domestic abuse is underdeveloped.

Quality of practice

- Social work practice is too variable, and too often children’s plans, including those for looked after children, are not reviewed and progressed in a timely manner.
- Assessments to inform decision-making and plans for looked after children are not always completed in a timescale that meets the child’s needs.
- Some child protection assessments are too long, and do not focus sufficiently on risk in a way that enables families and professionals to understand exactly what the concern is.
- When safeguarding concerns have reduced, in some cases step-down arrangements are not robust and are closed prematurely by children’s social care.
- Not all homeless 16 and 17 year olds in Cumbria are provided with a service that effectively meets their needs.

- Care leavers do not receive the minimum £2,000 setting up home grant as recommended in statutory guidance.

Darlington Local Authority inspected 23 June – 16 July 2015

21. Overall judgement is that **Children’s Services in Darlington are inadequate**. The detailed Grading in each judgement area of the Ofsted framework was;

- **Children who need help and protection – inadequate**
- **Children looked after and achieving permanence – Requires Improvement**
 - Adoption performance – Good
 - Experience and progress of care leavers – Good
- **Leadership management and Governance - Inadequate**

22. The inspection found that The local authority has not made sufficient progress in all areas identified by the last inspection in 2012. The standard of some social work services for children needing help and protection and the quality of leadership, management and governance have declined. Managers at all levels of the organisation do not have sufficient grip or oversight of front-line practice for children who need help and protection. As a result a significant number wait too long for their needs to be assessed. This inspection identified a high number of assessments (94) that were not completed within timescales agreed by managers, with too many children left in situations of unassessed risk.

23. Leadership, management and governance are inadequate because of serious failures by senior leaders to take effective oversight of, and accountability for, Darlington’s services to children. Elected members and the council’s Chief Executive have not been sufficiently challenging towards children’s services managers to assure themselves that children are safe. A reliance on inaccurate performance reports and upward self-reporting by senior managers means they were unaware, until this inspection, of the extent or impact of the service’s underperformance.

24. This led to the following recommendations for improvement being made by Ofsted

- Ensure robust management oversight of the single assessment process at both first tier and senior management level, so that children and families are seen and risks evaluated within timescales that meet the child’s need.
- Drive improvement through the quality assurance of assessments that ensures that all areas of risk to children are addressed, historical information is considered and analysis is robust, so that children’s needs, including the need for protection, are fully addressed.
- Improve the quality and timeliness of social work reports prepared for child protection conferences, ensure that initial child protection conferences are held within timescales that accord with statutory guidance, and ensure core groups are recorded effectively.

- Review the current configuration of social work teams to ensure equity in workload distribution and that the working environment is conducive to good social work practice across the whole of the service.
- Review processes and resources available for performance monitoring at all levels of the organisation and ensure that robust arrangements are put in place as a matter of urgency.
- Ensure that elected members are rigorous in their understanding of children's services performance and are enabled to robustly challenge senior managers to improve.
- Complete a thorough review of all children subject to section 20 accommodation to ensure that its use is legitimate and appropriate in all cases.
- Ensure that independent reviewing officers (IRO) demonstrate rigour when overseeing both the quality and progress of plans, and the frequency of social work visits to children who are the subject of child protection plans.
- When IROs challenge poor practice, make sure this is clearly recorded and monitored to ensure improvements are made and, where necessary, a lack of progress can be formally escalated to senior leaders.
- Ensure when children are looked after that decisions about their need for permanence are timely with robust oversight, including by IROs
- Ensure that return interviews are offered for all children who go missing and that the take-up of these interviews is monitored and information is used to inform plans to keep children safe
- Make sure that early help is effectively targeted, coordinated and evaluated so that families receive appropriate support when need is first identified, and the quality of early help assessments is improved by robust quality assurance arrangements
- Extend the range of housing provision available to homeless 16- and 17-year-olds and for care leavers so that no young person is placed in bed and breakfast accommodation
- Ensure that all children looked after can access an independent visitor when necessary, and that the impact of advocacy is subject to evaluation and review.
- Ensure that all children looked after have timely initial health assessments.
- Improve the monitoring of educational progress of children looked after so that action is taken to narrow the gap in attainment compared with all children in Darlington.

- Improve the consistency and quality of personal education plans and ensure that the pupil premium is effectively utilised to improve the educational attainment and achievement of looked after children.
- Ensure that reports are completed on fostering and adoption services every six months so that elected members, senior leaders and other stakeholders receive information about performance, standards, achievements and service developments in line with national minimum standards.

Sunderland Local Authority inspected 11th May – 4th June 2015

25. Overall judgement is that **Children's Services in Sunderland are inadequate**. The detailed Grading in each judgement area of the Ofsted framework was;

- **Children who need help and protection – inadequate**
- **Children looked after and achieving permanence – Inadequate**
 - Adoption performance – Inadequate
 - Experience and progress of care leavers – Inadequate
- **Leadership management and Governance – Inadequate**

26. The Ofsted Inspectors found that there are widespread and serious failures in the services provided to children and their families in Sunderland and that this was as a result of corporate failure by senior leaders and managers which led to children and young people being left unsafe. During the inspection, 21 children's cases were referred back to the local authority by inspectors to request that action be taken to ensure children were safe. This is one out of every ten children's cases looked at by inspectors. They found that services had significantly deteriorated since the last inspection of children's services in April 2012. Poor practice has already been identified by two independent reviews of children's services commissioned by the local authority in 2014. Despite this, inspectors identified widespread, systemic poor practice and services that are neither adequately ensuring the safety nor promoting the welfare of children and young people. They found fundamental shortfalls in frontline practice across the breadth of children's services.

27. The local authority and partner agencies do not have a shared, up to date strategic plan that sets out their current priorities for children, how they will be delivered and how their impact will be measured. Performance management and quality assurance processes are poor, based on unreliable data and do not always focus on services and areas of practice in the greatest need of improvement. Learning from audits, the complaints process and feedback from children, young people and their families is not used to drive improvement planning. In addition, scrutiny by elected members lacks rigour and has had little positive impact.

28. This led to the following **recommendations for improvement from Ofsted commenting that the recommendations are the priorities for Sunderland but do not address** all of the detailed failings identified in this inspection and contained in the main body of the report:

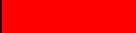


- Take urgent action to review the cases of all children and young people who do not have an allocated social worker or who are not being actively worked with, and provide immediate and appropriate assessment and help as necessary.
- Review as a matter of urgency all cases where children are looked after under voluntary arrangements to establish whether this legal basis is sufficient to ensure their safety and emotional security; and take additional action where it is not.
- Increase the capacity, quality and focus of the MASH to meet the demand for service.
- Review the cases of all children being worked with under the public law outline or in care proceedings to ensure that robust plans are in place and that cases are progressing at a pace that matches children's needs.
- Ensure robust management oversight of frontline practice so that decision making, assessment and planning for children are timely, clear and meets their needs.
- Ensure children are seen promptly and regularly and that their views inform assessments and plans in line with their developing needs.
- Take urgent action to recruit qualified and experienced staff and retain and support professional skills and competence.
- Ensure manageable caseloads for social workers so that they can respond appropriately and in a timely manner to the needs of children and young people.
- Work with partners to ensure that there is a single, clear, up-to-date multi-agency strategic plan to shape services for children and young people in Sunderland and against which progress can be measured.
- Ensure that strategic planning is focused on the areas of practice most in need of improvement and is underpinned by clear arrangements
- Develop performance management and quality assurance processes that focus on key priorities to help drive improved performance.
- Strengthen the function of scrutiny committee so that it has a clearer impact on improving outcomes for children.
- Ensure that the local authority meets its role and responsibilities as a corporate parent.

- Ensure there is sufficient breadth and quality of placements to meet the needs of children looked after and care leavers.
- Provide an out of hours service that meets the emergency needs of children and young people and is effectively coordinated with day-time services to ensure consistent and safe work with children and their families.
- Establish clear practice standards, policies and procedures so expectations are clearly understood by social workers, early help practitioners and their managers.
- Strengthen the arrangements for disabled children's transition assessments to adult services.
- Engage with partner agencies to agree the aims, structure and implementation of the integrated early help offer and its fit with wider services for children and young people.
- Build on the recent review of services for children and young people at risk of child sexual exploitation to ensure that these services, and those for children missing from home, care or education, are comprehensive, joined up and have sufficient capacity.
- Revise the arrangements for supervised contact to ensure these are driven by children's needs and that workers are sufficiently experienced and trained to oversee contact appropriately.
- Strengthen the Virtual School so that it is able to track effectively the progress of all children looked after and care leavers.
- Improve the quality, consistency and monitoring of all personal education plans (PEPs,) particularly target setting and action planning, so that these become a more useful tool to help young people make educational progress.
- Establish an effective recruitment strategy for adopters.
- Reduce the likelihood of adoption breakdown by developing the adoption support offer so that children and adopters receive support that matches their needs
- Improve ways to keep in touch with care leavers, providing a place for them to drop in and have access to the care leavers' team.
- Improve pathway plans so that they reflect the needs and aspirations of young people and involve them in the planning process.
- Improve arrangements to provide and monitor education, employment and training opportunities for care leavers and increase options available to them, for example through apprenticeships

29. Overall judgement is that **Children's Services in Middlesbrough Require Improvement**. The detailed Grading in each judgement area of the Ofsted framework was;
- **Children who need help and protection – Requires Improvement**
 - **Children looked after and achieving permanence – Requires Improvement**
 - Adoption performance – Good
 - Experience and progress of care leavers – Good
 - **Leadership management and Governance – Requires Improvement**
30. Ofsted Inspectors found that Children and young people in Middlesbrough are kept safe by the work of the local authority. When children are at immediate risk of significant harm, social workers respond quickly and effectively. However, due to insufficient management oversight of work in frontline teams and the failure of some professionals in other agencies to fully engage with the early help offer, some children and young people have experienced delays in receiving services.
31. Despite the authority's need to identify savings, significant additional funding has been identified to further develop the early help offer. Assessments are generally good but because they are not always supported by chronologies of children's history or reviewed in timescales that match children's circumstances, the individual needs of some children are not identified as quickly as they could be. The local authority has been successful at retaining and recruiting staff. The workforce is relatively stable and social workers have manageable caseloads. This means that children and young people in Middlesbrough are likely to be able to build a good relationship with their social worker and not experience multiple changes of worker.
32. Performance management does not sufficiently help to improve practice. Some data is not accurate and management reports lack the analysis that could identify both poor practice and possible solutions. A lack of audits in the last few months limits the local authority's understanding of the quality of frontline practice. Although children and young people's views are well considered on an individual basis, and there are some good examples of the Children in Care Council influencing practice. Strategic partnership working is under-developed. Corporate parenting is a strength in Middlesbrough, with a clear commitment from the council to children and young people. There is very good support for children's emotional well-being and improvement in the performance of the youth offending service has led to a significant reduction in the number of children looked after entering the criminal justice system.
33. **This led to the following recommendations for improvement being made by Ofsted**
- Ensure that all children and young people receive the right services without delay and that their progress is tracked by strengthening management oversight, supervision and recording.

- Ensure that managers review the progress of assessments within timescales that match individual children and young people's circumstances and needs.
- Improve performance management and quality assurance systems, including data quality, to effectively monitor and improve the quality of services.
- Work with partner agencies to build a stronger strategic vision of the shared priorities for children's safeguarding and social care needs, particularly for early help services.
- Engage with partner agencies to increase the number and quality of early help assessments completed and to ensure that a full range of agencies are taking on the role of lead professional.
- Ensure that the independent reviewing officer service is adequately staffed to provide a consistently effective service to children and young people, including the timely circulation of minutes from review meetings.
- Support improved outcomes for children looked after by ensuring that care plans contain sufficient detail, clear actions and timescales.
- Improve the systems for progressing cases in a timely way following adoption process meetings, so that they are effective in all cases and that the reasons for matching decisions are clearly recorded.
- Develop systems to improve the participation of children and young people, including in child protection case conferences and how their views are collated and used to improve services.
- Strengthen the provision and use of return home interviews to ensure that individual children and young people are safeguarded and that patterns of risk are better understood and addressed, particularly where they relate to child sexual exploitation.
- Further develop work with Middlesbrough's diverse communities, particularly asylum seekers, to better understand and meet the needs of these children and young people.
- Make sure that children looked after receive statutory visits within expected timescales to more effectively monitor progress.
- Help social workers understand the historical context and risk factors for the children and families they are working with by making better use of chronologies.
- Improve the attainment levels of all children looked after, but particularly those of secondary school age, by improving attendance and better supporting the transition between primary and secondary school.

- Sharpen the focus of personal education plans on addressing the specific actions that children looked after and their teachers need to take to improve progress, as well as on setting out in detail how the school will use the pupil premium to improve behaviour, attendance and attainment.
 - Further increase the numbers of care leavers securing sustainable education, training and employment by maintaining and improving existing good partnership work with education and training providers.
34. Northumberland and Durham have both been inspected during 2016 and the reports are awaited.

	Outstanding
	In progress
	Completed

Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers

Improvement and Development Action Plan 2016



	Outstanding
	In progress
	Completed

	Key tasks	Measure/milestones of success	Leads	Actions Taken	timescale	RAG
1.1	Improve the quality of all children's plans, including pathway plans to ensure that targets for improvement are clear and that they focus on risk and the most important issues for children, young people and care leavers					
Page 60	New CP, CiN and LAC plans formatted based on audit and inspection findings	Plans in live on Carefirst	Steve Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed templates for the plans have been disseminated with SGCP team managers Plans are with the care first team for formatting 	30 April 2016	
	New planning template to be developed for pathway plans	Plans in live on Carefirst	Elaine Devaney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans in development with Looked After Children's Service Review of current planning documentation. 	30 April 2016	
	Targeted training for SWs team managers and IROs to be developed and rolled out	<p>Deliver training workshops to ensure staff including IROs and CP Chairs are equipped to write comprehensive and outcome focused plans with clear timescales and contingencies</p> <p>SWs managers and IROs are confident in use of new planning templates.</p>	Elaine Devaney/ Steve Day /IRO service/ workforce development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training programme in development Series of workshops to be scheduled to deliver training 	30 June 2016	
	Ensure actions arising from MSET translate into individual children's	Practitioner guidance provided at MSET	Louise Gill/ MSET Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practitioner Guidance in development 		

	Outstanding
	In progress
	Completed

	Key tasks	Measure/milestones of success	Leads	Actions Taken	timescale	RAG
	plans	Planning template allows for revision Core groups understand the role of MSET and can adapt plans in light of new information		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How MSET information impacts on planning to be included in core group training 		
1.2	Ensuring Improved quality of all planning across CP/CiN/LAC and pathway planning					
Page 61	Specific audit documentation to be developed to focus on plans taking account of new planning template Targeted auditing to be undertaken 3 months and 6 months after roll out of the training and new template	Audit to confirm targets for improvement are clear and that they focus on risk and the most important issues for children, young people and care leavers Ensure that plans have improved	Ann Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning standard item for performance clinic 	Audit tool 1 st May – Audit activity 3 & 6 months November 2016	
	Managers to ensure plans are completed to the appropriate standard – evidencing robust Management oversight of care planning	Audit assesses plans have improved and management oversight is robust Service managers and team managers report improvement through performance clinic	All team managers/ service managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management oversight strengthened in relation to plans 	31 st May 2016	

	Outstanding
	In progress
	Completed

	Key tasks	Measure/milestones of success	Leads	Actions Taken	timescale	RAG
	CP Chairs and IROs to ensure children, young people and parents if they know what is expected of them and what would happen if things don't improve	Feedback from children young people and parents shows improvement in their understanding of plan requirements and consequences	IRO team manager		ongoing	
1.3	Strengthening the role of core groups to ensure plans are challenged and driven forward					
Page 62	Core group documentation to be revised in order to support core group functionality and monitor progress re the plan	Revised core group documentation live on Carefirst Plans are effectively monitored and contingency planning comes in to force where progress is inadequate	SWs/multi-agency leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revision of core group documentation in light of new planning template 		
	Multi agency Training on the role and responsibility of core groups Measuring progress	Core groups understand their role and can adapt plans in light of new information (incl from MSET) Audit analysis demonstrates effectiveness of core groups	LSCB workforce lead Naju Khanom			

	Outstanding
	In progress
	Completed

	Key tasks	Measure/milestones of success	Leads	Actions Taken	timescale	RAG
2.0	Ensure that child protection conferences and looked after reviews are used to drive and progress plans through the use of effective challenge and robust risk analysis					
	Progress work with CP Chairs and IROs in relation to risk analysis	Systems are used effectively to routinely monitor challenge log	IRO team manager			
Page 63	Challenge log developed to monitor issues raised with SW staff	Challenge log discussed at all performance clinics to ensure progress is made and themes are addressed	Ann Day/all service managers and team managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge log in place Standing Item on performance clinic agenda 	30 th April 2016	
3.0	Improve the attendance of education professionals at all children and young people's reviews and meetings to ensure a robust focus on their educational outcomes					
	Education attendance monitored by SCU and reported to LSCB		IRO team manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance reporting provided by performance management Included in refresh of LSCB data set 	31 st May 2016	
	Guidance re-education attendance	Improved information received from	Team			

	Outstanding
	In progress
	Completed

	Key tasks	Measure/milestones of success	Leads	Actions Taken	timescale	RAG
	to be circulated	education including attendance at least part of reviews	manager IRO/Anne Muxworthy			
	Innovative ways of providing education input explored to facilitate better contribution from education colleagues		SCU/SW service managers		31 st May 2016	
Page 64	Ensure that children who are subject to child protection processes have access to independent advocacy in order to help share their views and to inform decisions about their lives					
	Preparation of CYP in R&A to participate in CP processes ensures advocacy is offered including access to MOMO and Children's Rights Officer	All children are appropriately offered advocacy within CP processes All children who raise concerns are offered advocacy service	Steve Day/Chris Hulme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MOMO being promoted by SWs for children and young people's involvement in CP conferences Reviewing access to i-pad usage Monitoring use of MOMO and where issues are raised ensure advocacy is offered 	31 st May 2016	
	Commitment to commissioned advocacy service continues	Increased use of commissioned advocacy service Monitoring of advocacy contract to include focus on ensuring greater promotion of the service to CYP	Ann Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raised within contract review meetings Regional position assessed in relation to contract 	31 st May 2016	

	Outstanding
	In progress
	Completed

	Key tasks	Measure/milestones of success	Leads	Actions Taken	timescale	RAG
5.0	Support care leavers to understand their health histories more thoroughly and ensure they have regular and timely access to mental health services					
Page 65	Increase capacity and support to designated nurse	Additional demand on health professionals met including development of specific offer to care leavers	Linda Hubbicks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Band 6 nurse appointed March 2016 	31 st March 2016	
	PA monitoring that care leavers are provided with their health histories		Lesley Thompson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health passport developed to include health histories Ensuring that care leavers are registered with GPs and Dentists Information collated for PAs to share with care leavers in relation to current services available to support health including mental health 	30 th April 2016	
	Transformation of mental health services takes account of specific needs of care leavers	Care leavers mental health is addressed	Gateshead/ Newcastle/ CCG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional mental health provision through counselling in place from 1.4.16 	1 st April 2016	

	Outstanding
	In progress
	Completed

	Key tasks	Measure/milestones of success	Leads	Actions Taken	timescale	RAG
6.0	Devise a more effective way of communicating legal entitlements to all care leavers					
Page 66	CYP will be supported to share their experiences at regional care leavers conference focussing on care leaver entitlement	Care leavers report positively on their awareness of their entitlements	Chris Hulme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care leavers attended planning event in October to prepare for Regional Conference to be held 8th July 2016 Children's Commissioner booked to attend Developing the current information through IT and social media Further development of MOMO 	July 2016	
7.0	Establish a protocol with all education and training partners to ensure that arrangements are in place to provide proactive support for care leavers to stay on their courses and complete their qualifications					
	Protocol developed PAs work with providers to support	Increased numbers of care leavers complete their qualifications	Lesley Thompson/ Steve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with education and training providers 	30 June 2016	

	Outstanding
	In progress
	Completed

	Key tasks	Measure/milestones of success	Leads	Actions Taken	timescale	RAG
	care leavers		Graham			
8.0	Ensure the adoption panel provides quality assurance feedback to the agency on the quality of reports being presented to panel and adoption performance.					
Page 67	Analytical QA format to be developed for the adoption panel	Regular quarterly reporting in place	Elaine Devaney/Ann Day/Anne Roberts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QA format developed • Fostering panel processes reviewed for learning opportunities 	June 30 2016	
9.0	Pathways to early help services clearer for families and children including children with a disability.					
	Engage with frontline staff and managers to secure an understanding of current pathways	Restructure of services supports families' understanding of which services are available	Val Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops re early help being undertaken April 2016 • Provider workshop 12/4/16 re early help for CYP who have 		

	Outstanding
	In progress
	Completed

	Key tasks	Measure/milestones of success	Leads	Actions Taken	timescale	RAG
		Clear access routes for support are identified and promoted		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> mental health support needs • Protocols for CWD developed re accessing early help 		
		Audit systems are used effectively to routinely assure that cyp and families have had appropriate access to early help	Ann Day			
Page 68	Ensure assessment timescales are proportionate to level of complexity and need (In 2014–15, 53.1% of assessments took 41 to 45 days for completion and only 5.2% were within 10 days.)					
	Ensure managers receive accurate information re timescales at assessment check points and that this information allows them to identify where timeliness is an issue and take steps to address this	<p>Assessment timescales are in line with national picture</p> <p>Audit of timescales and manager rationale indicates improvement</p>	Ann Day/Steve Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team managers review all assessments at check point and note progress and their advice • Assessment framework re-circulated • Service manager dip sampling at 28days 		
11.	Ensure all community leaders understand social care thresholds and facilitate early engagement if there are concerns					

	Outstanding
	In progress
	Completed

	Key tasks	Measure/milestones of success	Leads	Actions Taken	timescale	RAG
0						
	Threshold documentation reviewed following restructuring of early help provision	New threshold documentation available in written format and on LSCB website	E Devaney/ Steve Day/ Ann Day		July 2016	
12.0	Implement multi agency training and guidance re neglect					
Page 69	Multi-agency guidance disseminated and neglect tool promoted	Multiagency guidance disseminated Consistent approach to neglect evidenced Reduction in the numbers of children requiring protection form neglect through cp plans	LSCB workforce development Louise Gill and Naj Khanom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multiagency neglect tool agreed based on graded care profile 		

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Gateshead local safeguarding children board Improvement Plan - 2016

The improvement plan below sets out actions and timescales required to address themed areas for development identified in the 2015 inspection of the LSCB.

Key tasks	Lead Board member	Actions taken	Deadline & RAG rating	Completion date
MEMBERSHIP				
Recruit lay members to LSCB to improve engagement with the local community and meet statutory requirements	Louise Gill, LSCB Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment process already in progress at time of Ofsted inspection The lay members recruited jointly with SAB on 27.01.2016. Joint induction process planned for February 2016 and all three lay members will attend the March Board meeting 	31 January 2016	27 January 2016
Progress work to establish a Youth LSCB or shadow LSCB	Gary Hetherington, LSCB Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gary working with Children's Right's Officer and colleagues to identify groups of young people to progress this with - <i>update on work undertaken requested by Business Manager</i> 	31 March 2016	
Arrange a youth engagement event similar to the tabletop/carousel event held in 2013	Gary Hetherington, LSCB Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gary working with Children's Right's Officer and colleagues. Event should include Youth Assembly, One Voice, Young Women's Project, YOT, Cadets – <i>update on work undertaken requested by Business Manager</i> 	31 March 2016	
Arrange smaller youth engagement events with targeted groups of young people	All BPG members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four questions identified to ask young people about feeling safe, staying safe and what is important to them Shelley Hudson to meet with police cadets – <i>update on work undertaken requested by Business Manager</i> Louise Gill, Jeanne Pratt and Maggie Lilburn to meet with a small number of school councils – <i>meetings with five school councils held, further meetings arranged for week after Easter holidays</i> Ann Day to liaise with Young Carers Group and One Voice - <i>update on work undertaken requested by Business Manager</i> 	31 March 2016	

Key tasks	Lead Board member	Actions taken	Deadline & RAG rating	Completion date
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Debra Patterson to liaise with Val Hall in relation to areas within her service - <i>update on work undertaken requested by Business Manager however Debra is leaving Gateshead Council on 31.3.16 and Val Hall currently on leave</i> 		
Progress work with Diversity Forum and other groups to establish a representative from these groups on the LSCB	Gary Hetherington, LSCB Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work undertaken with a number of council officers and potential representative identified. Gary to chase this up and bring a proposal to the next Board meeting 	31 March 2016	
Work with Gateshead Council Jewish Relationship Manager to re-establish representation from the Jewish community on the LSCB	Louise Gill, LSCB Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact made with Shlomi Isaacson at JCCG via David Andrew and work being progressed to identify a replacement for David Schleider Meeting held with Dovid Katz, has agreed to attend May LSCB meeting as representative of Jewish Schools and determine whether he is most appropriate rep or whether a colleague should attend further meetings 	31 March 2016	24 March 2016
LINKS TO HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD				
Develop appropriate pathways to increase LSCB contribution and influence on the work of the HWB	Louise Gill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSCB Business Manager has met with LA officer who supports HWB, protocol drafted and agreed. To be signed off at April BPG 	31 March 2016	24 March 2016
TRAINING				
Review processes to understand impact of training on practice, including the potential to seek the views of managers	Naju Khanom, Chair of Training Sub Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work underway to assess whether the new system to book/monitor LSCB training will support this better BPG felt that it would not be appropriate to survey managers for each learner as this would impact on capacity significantly. Naju to explore a dip sample. Sub group to explore this area further at the next meeting 	31 March 2016	
Establish a Training Needs Analysis to ensure that training is sufficient to meet demand	Naju Khanom, Chair of Training Sub Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial discussion at January Training Sub Group meeting, fuller discussion planned at 9.3.16 meeting. All sub group members asked to carry out work in advance of this meeting 	31 March 2016	
AUDITING				
Single agency auditing to be built into LSCB work plan for 2016-2017 to strengthen the oversight of frontline practice	Louise Gill, LSCB Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised work plan developed and presented to BPG on 17.02.2016 Audit activity to be a standing item at the LSCB from May 2016 onwards 	28 February 2016	17 February 2016

Key tasks	Lead Board member	Actions taken	Deadline & RAG rating	Completion date
LSCB DATA SET				
Identify national best practice in relation to LSBC data sets	Louise Gill, LSCB Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approach made to Leeds LSCB to compare their data set with the existing Gateshead model. Other best practice sought Discussion at LSCB Development Session on 16.3.16 about current and alternative data sets 	28 February 2016	16 March 2016
LSCB Data Set to be reviewed at LSCB Development Day to seek Board member views	Louise Gill/ Ann Day, Chair of Performance Sub Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion held at session and Board members consulted 	31 March 2016	16 March 2016
LSCB Performance Management Sub Group to review the LSCB Data Set in light of Ofsted's comments and national best practice	Ann Day, Chair of Performance Sub Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to be undertaken after the completion of the CSE Inquiry (a key priority area for the LSCB) 	31 May 2016	
LSCB PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK				
Local and national best practice to be sought to identify mechanisms to monitor the LSCB's effectiveness (as part of performance framework)	Louise Gill, LSCB Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scoping exercise undertaken Discussion held at LSCB Development Session on 16.03.2016 	28 February 2016	16 March 2016
Relevant learning from the national review of LSCBs to be included in any new performance or effectiveness framework	Louise Gill, LSCB Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome of national review due by end of March 2016 	30 April 2016	
LSCB Performance Framework to be reviewed to ensure that it measures LSCB effectiveness	All BPG members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to be progressed by BPG with input from Learning and Improvement Sub Group and Performance Management Sub Group Effectiveness framework in development following Development Session on 16.03.2016. To be presented to BPG in April 	31 May 2016	
LSCB ANNUAL REPORT				
LSCB Annual Report for 2015-2016 to provide a clear account of the activity of the LSCB, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on private fostering Section in strengths and areas for improvement Any other areas as identified by Ofsted 	Louise Gill, LSCB Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report to be written in April and May 2016 to align with performance reporting schedules and Cabinet/OSC work programmes 	31 May 2016	
LSCB lay members to contribute to the production of the annual report	Louise Gill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the lay members were only recruited in January 2016 they will only be able to make a small contribution to the content of the report, however all three will be asked to assist the LSCB Business Manager in ensuring that the report is easily understood by a lay reader 	31 May 2016	

TITLE OF REPORT: Review of Local Test of Assurance

REPORT OF: Mike Barker, Strategic Director Corporate Services and Governance

Summary

This report sets out details of a review of the operational and strategic effectiveness of assurance arrangements put in place when the statutory roles of the Director of Children's Services (DCS) and the Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) were allocated to a single chief officer, the Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing and Learning. The roles were merged as part of the organisational review and restructure which was implemented on 1 October 2014.

Background

1. On 16 September 2014 Cabinet agreed proposals which brought the functions within the former Children and Learning directorate and the adult care and safeguarding functions within the former Community Based Service directorate within a single group which also included the Council's public health functions. As part of the proposals the statutory posts of the DCS and DASS were allocated to a single chief officer, the Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing and Learning.
2. In accordance with the statutory guidance relating to the role of the DCS, to be applied when considering the allocation of additional responsibilities to the holder of the statutory role, a 'local test of assurance' was undertaken. The test took the form of a risk matrix and showed how the risks commonly associated with broadening the responsibilities of the DCS were mitigated.
3. Although not specifically referred to in the statutory guidance relating to the role of the DASS, a similar approach was undertaken and a 'local test' applied to the proposals as they related to that statutory role as well.
4. Cabinet agreed that a joint meeting of the Care, Health and Wellbeing and Families OSCs would be asked to undertake a review of the operation of the new service group twelve months after the new arrangements had been in place to ensure that the arrangements are robust and that the

Council continues to meet its statutory obligations in relation to children and vulnerable adults.

The Review Process

5. The review has included renewed scrutiny of the structures and organisational arrangements within Care, Wellbeing and Learning to ensure the group is able to:
 - fulfil its statutory duties effectively (including ensuring that children, young people and their families receive effective help and benefit from high educational standards locally),
 - be transparent about responsibilities and accountabilities; and
 - support effective integrating and partnership working.
6. Consultation has been undertaken with partners including the police and the CCG. Views have also been sought from the independent chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

The Ofsted Inspection 2015

7. The Ofsted inspection of Children's Services undertaken in November 2015, judged the service as 'good'. 'Children's services in Gateshead are good because leaders, managers and workers are highly effective' and there is a 'strong corporate commitment to safeguarding and improving outcomes for all children and young people in the borough'. Governance was found to be strong with solid foundations in place for taking services forward.
8. The Test of Assurance was described as 'coherent' and as demonstrating 'a clear understanding of statutory responsibilities to ensure the effective oversight and delivery of services for children'.

Proposals

9. The review has found that the Test of Assurance continues to be relevant and appropriate. The revised test is attached as Appendix 1. Amendments have been made to reflect changes in senior management and improvements to practice over the last 18 months.
10. These changes include:
 - The former Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing and Learning has retired. He has been replaced on a temporary basis by an interim Strategic Director who is a social care professional with considerable experience as both a DCS and DASS. It will be a requirement when recruiting a new Strategic Director that he or she is a social care professional with relevant experience. This should further strengthen the Council's ability to discharge its statutory duties in an integrated and coherent way.

- A Quality Assurance Unit has been established and will focus on quality, policy and performance across Care, Wellbeing and Learning. The Unit will provide comprehensive and robust performance management information and analysis with monthly reporting to senior managers and partnership boards to provide further assurance of the effectiveness of services regarding the wellbeing and safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults within Gateshead.
- Moving forward children, adults and public health commissioning will be brought together, enabling the Council to consider needs and strategic commissioning across the life course. The approach will be outcome focused commissioning which will provide more needs led, evidence based service provision and will include a focus on streamlining transitions between children and adults.

Recommendations

11. The views of the OSCs are sought on whether the assurance arrangements set out in the revised Test of Assurance are sufficiently robust and that the Council continues to meet its statutory obligations in relation to children and vulnerable adults.

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Merger of the Roles of Director of Children's Services and Director of Adult Social Services and the Creation of a Care, Wellbeing and Learning Directorate: Local Test of Assurance

The Statutory Guidance on the Roles and Responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services 2013 states that *'it is legally permissible for the Director of Children's Services (DCS) and the Lead Member for Children's Services (LMCS) roles to be combined with other operational and political functions of the local authority. However, given the breadth and importance of children's services functions that the DCS and LMCS cover, local authorities should give due consideration to protecting the discrete role and responsibilities of the DCS and LMCS before allocating any additional functions to individuals performing these roles. In particular, local authorities should undertake a local test of assurance so that the focus on outcomes for children and young people will not be weakened or diluted as a result of other responsibilities. Given the demanding nature of the DCS and LMCS roles, local authorities should consider all aspects of any combined posts e.g. the impact on both children and adult services where there is a joint DCS and Director of Adult Social Services post (DASS).'*

The guidance stresses that *'Local authorities will, as a matter of course, want to ensure that their structures and organisational arrangements enable them to:-*

- *fulfil their statutory duties effectively (including ensuring that children, young people and their families receive effective help and benefit from high educational standards locally),*
- *be transparent about responsibilities and accountabilities and*
- *support effective interagency and partnership working.'*

The guidance identifies the elements in the table below as being essential in assuring that effective arrangements are in place.

Essential Element of Assurance	Arrangements Proposed	Risk Areas and Mitigation	Any Additional Action Required?
<p>Clarity about how senior management arrangements ensure that the safety and the educational, social and emotional needs of children and young people are given due priority and how they enable staff to help the local authority discharge its statutory duties in an integrated and coherent way.</p>	<p>The Strategic Director Care, Wellbeing and Learning (DCWL) has overall responsibility as the DCS but is supported by the existing strong team of service directors whose roles, listed below, cover all Council responsibilities and duties in relation to children and young people:-</p> <p>Service Director - Children and Families Service Director - Early Help Service Director - Learning and Schools Service Director - Health & Social Care Commissioning (to be recruited)</p> <p>There is a requirement for the DCS to be a social work professional.</p> <p>The Principal Social Worker (PSW), a senior management post, will remain actively involved in front line service and feedback the views of</p>	<p>Risk : Capacity Given the breadth and importance of children’s services functions it is essential that there is sufficient capacity, capability and experience within the directorate to ensure all DCS duties and responsibilities are met. This is compounded by imminent and significant legislative and policy changes as well as increases in demand arising from demographic pressures.</p> <p>This risk is mitigated by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DCS being a social care professional • The continuity of the discrete service director roles, which together assume responsibility for all DCS duties in relation to children and young people. • All existing service directors have a relevant 	<p>Plans are in place to ensure the ongoing monitoring and scrutiny of the effectiveness of senior management arrangements.</p> <p>Early and proactive succession planning has ensured that all future senior managers have the breadth of expertise and experience necessary to deliver the potential benefits from combining the roles.</p> <p>Any changes to the structure of the senior management team should be planned in a transitional way, ensuring that necessary expertise is built up as appropriate.</p> <p>The DCWL will hold regular face to face meetings with the PSW to maintain an effective direct line of communication between qualified front line staff and senior management.</p> <p>The DCWL will continue to</p>

	<p>qualified operational staff to all levels of management.</p> <p>The DCWL will also have, as direct report a Service Director, Adult Social Care and the Director of Public Health.</p> <p>The DCWL will hold weekly management meetings with his/her full team of service directors ensuring more convergent approaches across all adult, children's and public health services in respect of areas such as safeguarding.</p>	<p>professional background in their key areas of responsibility as well as the experience and skills necessary to perform their roles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PSW role will champion best practice and ensure social workers have their voices heard at the highest level of management. • The integration of children and adult services' management teams means that the management structure has an appropriate focus on both children and adult services. • The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People will continue as a discrete role providing strong, strategic leadership, support and challenge. Regular, fortnightly portfolio 	<p>explore and welcome opportunities for peer led challenge and review.</p>
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		<p>meetings will be held in relation to children and young people, adult social care, and health and wellbeing. Each meeting will be attended by the three portfolio holders who will ensure that their own particular area of responsibility is appropriately addressed and that all services falling within the DCWL's remit remain focused appropriately on safeguarding both children and adults.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer led challenge and review where opportunities arise through the LGA Improvement Framework. 	
<p>Clarity about how the local authority intends to discharge its children's services functions and be held accountable for them from political, professional, legal and corporate perspectives (including where, for example, services are</p>	<p>Robust commissioning and contract monitoring arrangements across CWL have been put in place to ensure that where commissioned services are being delivered to support children and their families</p>	<p>Risk: Because of the scale of the role the DCWL is unable to keep abreast of all issues/developments arising in relation to both children and adult services.</p> <p>This risk is mitigated by the</p>	<p>The DCWL will ensure clear communication with stakeholders and partners to ensure that the role, purpose and governance arrangements of the directorate are clearly articulated.</p>

<p>commissioned from external providers or mutualised in an arms length body).</p>	<p>these are of consistent high quality and lead to improved outcomes.</p> <p>Moving forward children, adults and public health commissioning will be brought together. This will enable the Council to consider needs and strategic commissioning across the life course, including a focus on streamlining transitions between children and adults.</p> <p>The DCWL will ensure that the profile of children's services remains high on the Council agenda. They will report directly to the Chief Executive and report relevant issues to the Council's Corporate Management Team (which includes the Council's Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer).</p> <p>Accountability from a political point of view is through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of the Cabinet Member for Children 	<p>following:</p> <p>Maintaining the checks and balances already in place that provide assurance on safeguarding and improving the wellbeing of children including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular senior management meetings with full and effective sharing of issues with the DCWL • The annual accountability conversation between the DCS, the independent chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), the Chief Executive and the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People. • Regular reports to the LSCB and the LSCB annual report on safeguarding. • Internal audit. 	<p>The DCWL will support and ensure that the Health and Well-Being Board, the Children's Trust Board and the Safeguarding Children and Adults' Boards have a clear governance and assurance role.</p>
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	<p>and Young People.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny provided by the Families and Corporate Parenting Overview and Scrutiny Committees. • Established 'call-in' arrangements. <p>Service director roles are clearly articulated and are designed to ensure a strong focus on outcomes for children and young people.</p> <p>All staff, including service directors, have job profiles. Roles and responsibilities are reinforced through the Council's appraisal and development arrangements which emphasise competencies in all relevant areas.</p> <p>Social workers must adhere to the standards produced by their statutory regulator, the Health and Care Professions Council in relation to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular reports from the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) Service including the annual report. • Scrutiny provided through Families and Corporate Parenting Overview and Scrutiny Committees. • A Quality Assurance Unit has been established to provide comprehensive and robust performance management information and analysis with monthly reporting to senior managers and partnership boards to assure them of the effectiveness of services regarding the wellbeing and safeguarding of children within Gateshead. • Regular statutory reporting of performance and delivery to national 	
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	<p>proficiency and conduct, performance and ethics.</p> <p>The College of Social Work has developed a Professional Capabilities Framework which managers use to challenge and assess social worker competencies.</p> <p>A well established and close working relationship with legal services ensures legal support, advice and representation is provided as appropriate.</p> <p>The Monitoring Officer has a statutory duty to highlight any potentially unlawful decisions or activity.</p>	<p>bodies including Ofsted, the Departments for Education and Health, the NHS and the Social Care Information Centre. The recent Ofsted inspection judged the service as “good” with “good” leadership, management and governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership of the Association of Directors of Children’s Services (ADCS) including the virtual college development programme. • Joint meetings regionally of DCS’ and DASS’ providing an effective network for the sharing of knowledge and best practice. • Regional collaboration and benchmarking. • Peer led challenge and review where 	
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		opportunities arise.	
The seniority and breadth of responsibilities allocated to individual post holders and how this impacts on their ability to undertake those responsibilities (especially where a local authority is considering allocating any additional functions to the DCS post).	<p>The DCWL will have full responsibility for adults and children's services and Public Health.</p> <p>The DCWL will be responsible for strategic leadership.</p> <p>Functional and operational management will be at service director level. The key areas of responsibility of the existing service directors will ensure all responsibilities can be discharged at an appropriate senior level.</p>	<p>Risk: The breadth of responsibility will impact on the capacity of the DCWL to have a clear overview of the nature and quality of services being delivered.</p> <p>This risk is mitigated by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the senior managers at service director level and the regular reporting mechanism in place for the DCWL and his/her management team. • Clarity of roles and responsibilities is derived from comprehensive job profiles which include reasonable breadths of responsibilities. • Access to a suite of qualitative and audit information that provides a clear line of 	<p>The DCWL has put in place effective succession planning to ensure that all future service directors have the necessary expertise and experience to assume full responsibility for their key areas of work.</p> <p>Senior management arrangements will be scrutinised and reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that the delegation of functions to the senior management team remains appropriate and that service director workloads are manageable.</p> <p>The DCWL will fully utilise the Council's appraisal and development arrangements to ensure that senior managers update their skills as appropriate (including a comprehensive training programme) and remain focused on outcomes for children and young people.</p>

		<p>sight to frontline practice and on partners' perceptions of the Council's capacity to provide strong and effective leadership, ensuring that children are safeguarded and their wellbeing enhanced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer review and challenge where opportunities arise. 	
<p>The involvement and experiences of children and young people in relation to local services.</p>	<p>Ofsted's regulatory framework for the inspection of Children's Services cites as critical to its judgement of overall effectiveness that</p> <p><i>'The views and experiences of children, young people and their families are at the centre of service design and influence development and strategic thinking.'</i></p> <p>Children and young people are closely involved in planning services and the DCWL will ensure that a clear focus on the involvement of</p>	<p>Risk: Given the breadth of his/her responsibilities the DCWL may lose sight of the part played by children and young people in relation to local services</p> <p>This risk is mitigated by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversight of the involvement of children and young people is regularly provided through management, the Quality Assurance Unit, the LSCB, the Children's Trust Board 	

	<p>children and young people is maintained.</p> <p>Children and young people's involvement includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending or feeding views into any reviews or care planning meetings. • Completing questionnaires for consideration and action by the performance clinic, chaired at service director level. • Attendance twice yearly at the Corporate Parenting OSC. • Attendance or representation through the Children's Rights Officer, at the Corporate Parenting Partnership. • Children and young people's complaints 	<p>and the Corporate Parenting and Families OSCs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems for capturing and collating the views of children and young people are embedded and work on this issue has been considered and endorsed by Ofsted. • Peer review and challenge where opportunities arise. 	
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	<p>and compliments are fed into an annual report which is considered by the Cabinet, the Families OSC and senior management.</p> <p>These arrangements will continue to be managed at service director level.</p>		
<p>Clarity about child protection systems, ensuring professional leadership and practice is robust and can be challenged on a regular basis, including an appropriate focus on offering early help and working with other agencies in doing so.</p>	<p>Child protection systems will continue to be led at service director level.</p> <p>Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place including robust policies about early help and prevention. Policies are adhered to and regular scrutiny across all areas is provided through management, the Quality Assurance Unit, the LSCB and the Children's Trust Board.</p> <p>Clear thresholds and referral pathways are in place and will continue to be monitored through clear and strong partnership arrangements.</p>	<p>Risk: That given the breadth of his/her responsibilities the DCWL is unable to provide the level of leadership and challenge required in relation to the child protection systems.</p> <p>This risk is mitigated by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience, knowledge and leadership skills of the DCWL • The strong leadership and experience of existing service directors. • Robust partnership arrangements are in place with full 	<p>The DCWL will have regular face to face meeting with relevant service directors and the PSW to ensure that the existing child protection arrangements are fit for purpose, including best practice in the profession, and are subject to appropriate challenge.</p> <p>The DCWL will meet regularly with relevant partners to ensure partner arrangements continue to be robust and provide appropriate challenge to child protection arrangements.</p> <p>The DCWL will receive regular reports in relation to</p>

	<p>‘Children Gateshead’, the plan for children, young people and families 2014-17 has been developed by the partner organisations that form Gateshead’s Children’s Trust. It sets out the principles, priorities, and vision for children in Gateshead and will continue to inform how partners will work together to improve outcomes for children young people and their families.</p>	<p>cooperation from senior officers across all relevant agencies. (Duty to co-operate under section 10 of the Children Act 2004).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PSW will continue to provide professional leadership and challenge to social work staff. • Peer review and challenge where opportunities arise. • Scrutiny provided through Families and Corporate Parenting Overview and Scrutiny Committees. • The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People will continue as a discrete role providing strong, strategic leadership, support and challenge. 	<p>the delivery of ‘Children Gateshead’ and its impact on the outcomes for children and young people.</p>
<p>The adequacy and effectiveness of local partnership arrangements e.g.</p>	<p>Local partnership arrangements are well</p>	<p>Risk: Given the number of partnership boards/arrangements in relation</p>	<p>The DCWL will review all partnership activity, including statutory requirements for</p>

<p>the local authority's relationship with schools, the LSCB, the courts, the children's trust cooperation arrangements, Community Safety Partnerships Health and Well Being Boards, Youth Offending Team Partnerships, Police, Probation, Multi-agency Risk Assessment conferences and their respective accountabilities</p>	<p>established and will continue.</p> <p>The DCWL will attend meetings as necessary whilst ensuring that all partnership arrangements and boards continue to be managed at service director level.</p> <p>A protocol has been developed for the LSCB and the Children's Trust Board setting out their distinct roles and clarifying how and on what basis they will collaborate and how they will ensure there is clarity about local accountability for safeguarding children and families in Gateshead.</p> <p>The DCWL is and will remain a statutory member of the Health and Wellbeing Board and will ensure the interests of both children and adults are met. In particular, the risks associated with the transition from child to adulthood Well established meetings with head teachers and chairs of governors will continue as will meetings with the Diocese</p>	<p>to both children and adult services there is a risk that the DCWL is unable to appropriately balance service management with the strategic partnership work.</p> <p>This risk is mitigated by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The continued appropriate delegation of partnership activity to experienced service directors as appropriate. • Continuation of key personnel means roles and accountabilities are clearly articulated and understood. • There are clear governance structures and terms of reference for all partnership boards and multi-agency forums including reporting mechanisms. • Peer review and challenge where 	<p>representation, to ensure appropriate involvement at a senior level.</p> <p>The DCWL will have regular one to one meetings with service directors to ensure they are kept abreast of partnership activity.</p>
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	<p>and voluntary aided schools.</p> <p>Ofsted’s inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers undertaken in November 2015 found that</p> <p><i>“There is strong corporate commitment to safeguarding and improving outcomes for all children and young people in the borough. Political leaders and elected members led by the Chief Executive are good advocates for vulnerable children and young people.”</i></p> <p><i>The Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing and Learning is’ effectively supported by the Chief Executive, members and other directorates within the Council, and a strong, cohesive senior management team’.</i></p> <p><i>‘Governance is strong and solid foundations are in place for taking services forward’.</i></p> <p><i>‘Plans are well aligned to other strategic plans such as the Children’s Trust and the Health and Wellbeing Board as part of an overarching</i></p>	<p>opportunities arise.</p>	
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	<i>shared strategic vision</i> '. These arrangements will continue.		
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It is proposed the operational and strategic effectiveness of these assurance arrangements will be scrutinised at a joint meeting of the Care, Health & Wellbeing and Families OSCs twelve months after their implementation. This will enable the Council to satisfy itself that the arrangements are robust and that the Council continues to meet its statutory obligations in relation to children and young people.

Statutory Guidance and Best Practice Guidance on the Role of the Director of Adult Social Services May 2006 also states that it is legally permissible for the role of the DASS to be combined with other operational functions of the local authority. There is no specific recommendation for a local test of assurance, however, the guidance warns that *'In broadening the role beyond the DASS function it is essential that the role retains sufficient personal focus on adult social care'* and *'It is vitally important that the needs of adults from all disadvantaged groups and those needing support in society are given equal weight with the needs of children'*.

The elements in the table below are considered essential in assuring that effective arrangements are in place in relation to adult services.

Clarity about how the senior management arrangements ensure that the protection of vulnerable adults is given due priority and how they enable staff to discharge their duties in relation to such protection in an integrated and coherent way.	The interim DCWL is a social care professional with considerable experience as a DASS and DCS. The DCWL will retain overall responsibility for leading and ensuring effective and qualitative adult social care services in line with statutory guidance. This focus will continue. They are supported by a strong team of service directors whose roles in relation to adult social care	Risk : Capacity Given the breadth and importance of adult social care functions it is essential that there is sufficient capacity, capability and experience within the directorate to ensure all DASS duties and responsibilities are met. This is compounded by significant changes in legislation and policy	Plans are in place to ensure the ongoing monitoring and scrutiny of the effectiveness of senior management arrangements. Early and proactive succession planning will ensure that all future senior managers have the breadth of expertise and experience necessary to deliver the potential benefits from combining the roles.
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	<p>are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Director – Health and Social Care Commissioning and Quality Assurance. • Service Director - Adult Social Care. • The Director of Public Health. <p>The Principal Social Worker (PSW), an established senior management post within the service, will remain actively involved in front line service and feedback the views of qualified operational staff to all levels of management.</p> <p>The Quality Assurance Unit will focus on quality, policy and performance across CWL</p> <p>The DCWL will have already well established service director support in relation to their responsibilities as DCS/DASS.</p>	<p>together with increases in demand due to demographic pressures.</p> <p>This risk is mitigated by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The continuity of the discrete service director roles, • • All service directors and the Director of Public Health have a relevant professional background in their key areas of responsibility as well as the experience and skills necessary to perform their roles. • The PSW role will champion best practice and ensure social workers have their voices heard at the highest level of management. • The integration of the management teams 	<p>The DCWL will hold regular face to face meetings with the PSW to maintain an effective direct line of communication between professionally qualified social workers and senior management.</p>
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	<p>The DCWL will hold weekly management meetings with the full team of service directors enabling them to ensure that all social care needs of local communities are given equal emphasis and are managed in a co-ordinated way.</p>	<p>ensures a more holistic approach to meeting the care and health needs of all adults and children across the Borough.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Cabinet Members for Adult Social Care and Health and Wellbeing will continue as discrete roles providing strong, strategic leadership, support and challenge. Regular, weekly portfolio meetings will be held in relation to adult social care, health and wellbeing and children and young people. Each meeting will be attended by the three portfolio holders who will ensure that their own particular area of responsibility is appropriately addressed and that	
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		<p>all services falling within the DCWL's remit remain focused appropriately on safeguarding both adults and children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer led challenge and review where opportunities arise through the LGA Improvement Framework. 	
<p>Clarity about how the local authority intends to discharge its adult services functions and be held accountable for them from political, professional, legal and corporate perspectives (including where, for example, services are commissioned from external providers or mutualised in an arm's length body).</p>	<p>The integrated robust commissioning and contract monitoring arrangements will ensure that where commissioned services are being delivered to support vulnerable adults and their carers these are of consistent high quality and lead to improved outcomes.</p> <p>Existing systems for the protection of vulnerable adults and wider service user assessment and care management arrangements will continue.</p> <p>The DCWL will ensure that</p>	<p>Risk: Because of the scale of the role the DCWL is unable to stay abreast of all issues/developments in relation to both children and adult services.</p> <p>This risk is mitigated by the following:</p> <p>Maintaining the checks and balances already in place that provide assurance on safeguarding and improving the wellbeing of adults including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular senior management 	<p>The DCWL will ensure clear communication with stakeholders and partners to ensure that the role, purpose and governance arrangements directorate are clearly articulated.</p> <p>The DCWL will support and ensure that the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) and the Safeguarding Adult Board (SAB) maintain clear governance and assurance roles.</p>

	<p>the profile of adult care remains high on the Council agenda. He/she will report directly to the Chief Executive and report relevant issues to Strategy Group.</p> <p>Accountability from a political point of view will continue through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of the Cabinet Members for Adult Social Care and Health and Wellbeing. • Scrutiny provided by the Care, Health and Wellbeing, Families and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committees. • Established 'call-in' arrangements. <p>Service director roles are clearly articulated and are designed to ensure a strong focus on outcomes for vulnerable adults.</p>	<p>meetings with full and effective sharing of issues with the DCWL.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular reports to the SAB including the annual report on safeguarding. • Internal audit. • The Quality Assurance Unit • Scrutiny provided by the Care, Health and Wellbeing, Families and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committees. • Comprehensive and robust performance management arrangements with regular reporting to senior managers and partnership boards to assure them of the effectiveness of services regarding 	
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	<p>All staff, including service directors, have job profiles. Roles and responsibilities are reinforced through the Council's appraisal and development arrangements which emphasise competencies in all relevant areas.</p> <p>Social workers must adhere to the standards produced by their statutory regulator, the Health and Care Professions Council in relation to proficiency and conduct, performance and ethics.</p> <p>The College of Social Work has developed a Professional Capabilities Framework which managers can use to challenge and assess social worker competencies</p> <p>A dedicated solicitor for adult social care within the Council's legal service ensures legal support, advice and representation is provided as appropriate.</p>	<p>the wellbeing and safeguarding of adults within Gateshead.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular statutory reporting of performance and delivery to national bodies including CQC, the Departments for Education and Health, the NHS and the Social Care Information Centre. • Membership of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) including the virtual college development programme. • Joint meetings regionally of DASS' and DCS' providing an effective network for the sharing of knowledge and best 	
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	<p>The Monitoring Officer has a statutory duty to highlight any potentially unlawful decisions or activity.</p>	<p>practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional collaboration and benchmarking. • Peer led challenge and review where opportunities arise. 	
<p>The seniority and breadth of responsibilities allocated to individual post holders and how this impacts on their ability to undertake those responsibilities</p>	<p>The DCWL will have full responsibility for adult and children's services and Public Health</p> <p>The DCWL will be responsible for strategic leadership ensuring that both within the Council and amongst partnership agencies there is a real and sustainable focus on adult social care.</p> <p>Functional and operational management will be maintained at service director level. This strong team will provide capacity to ensure all responsibilities can be discharged at an appropriate senior level.</p>	<p>Risk: The breadth of responsibility will impact on the capacity of the DCWL to have a clear overview of the nature and quality of services being delivered.</p> <p>This risk is mitigated by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the senior managers at service director level and the regular reporting mechanisms in place for the DCWL and his/her management team. • Access to a suite of 	<p>The DCWL has put in place effective succession planning to ensure that all future service directors have the necessary expertise and experience to assume full responsibility for their key areas of work.</p> <p>Senior management arrangements will be scrutinised and reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that the delegation of functions to the senior team remains appropriate and that service director workloads are manageable.</p> <p>The DCWL will fully utilise the Council's appraisal and development arrangements to ensure that senior managers update their skills as appropriate</p>

		<p>qualitative and audit information that provides a clear 'line of sight' to frontline practice and on partners' perceptions of the Council's capacity to provide strong and effective leadership ensuring that vulnerable adults are safeguarded and their wellbeing enhanced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer led challenge and review where opportunities arise. 	<p>(including a comprehensive training programme) and remain focused on outcomes for vulnerable adults.</p>
<p>The involvement and experiences of service users in relation to local services</p>	<p>Service users and carers are involved in planning and directing services and the DCWL will ensure that a clear focus on their involvement is maintained.</p> <p>Service user and carer feedback is an essential strand of the coproduction of new plans, policies, procedures and promotional literature. They are involved in</p>	<p>Risk: Given the breadth of his/her responsibilities the DCWL may lose sight of the part played by service users and carers in relation to the design and delivery of local services.</p> <p>This risk is mitigated by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversight of the involvement of 	

	<p>the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attending or feeding views into any review or care planning meetings.• The completion of carers' and other national user surveys.• The contract monitoring framework which includes provision for service user and carer feedback.• Reporting against ASCOF and Better Care Fund indicators.• Service user involvement in partnership arrangements including the Learning Disability, Carers and Physical Disability and Sensory Improvement and Older People partnerships.• Inclusive scrutiny	<p>service users and carers is regularly provided through management, the SAB and the Families, Care, Health and Wellbeing and Community Safety OSCs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Systems for capturing and collating the views of service users and carers are well embedded and effectively managed by service directors.	
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	<p>arrangements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Service user involvement on the Health and Wellbeing Board.• Health Watch who feed views into the Council's decision making bodies.• The user and carer forum for more specialised areas of consultation and feedback e.g. autism.• Service improvement groups within the adult care and housing sectors.• Through peer review and challenge where opportunities arise.• Service user and carers' complaints and compliments are fed into an annual report which is considered by		
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	<p>the Cabinet, the Families OSC and senior management.</p> <p>These arrangements will continue to be managed at senior manager level.</p>		
<p>Clarity about adult protection systems ensuring professional leadership and practice is robust and can be challenged on a regular basis, including an appropriate focus on offering early help and working with other agencies in doing so</p>	<p>Adult protection systems will continue to be led at service director level.</p> <p>Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place.</p> <p>Policies are adhered to and regular scrutiny across all areas is provided through management and the SAB including file audits by the independent chair of the SAB.</p> <p>Clear thresholds and referral pathways are in place and will continue to be monitored through clear and strong partnership arrangements including those detailed in the Community Safety Board Plan and the SAB Annual Report and Strategic Plan.</p>	<p>Risk: That given the breadth of his/her responsibilities the DCWL is unable to provide the level of leadership and challenge required in relation to adult protection systems.</p> <p>This risk is mitigated by the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strong leadership and experience of existing service directors. • Robust partnership arrangements are in place with buy in from senior officers across all agencies. • The PSW will continue to provide 	<p>The DCWL will have regular face to face meetings with relevant service directors and the PSW to ensure that the existing adult protection arrangements are fit for purpose, including best practice in the profession, and are subject to appropriate challenge.</p> <p>The DCWL will meet regularly with relevant partners to ensure partner arrangements continue to be robust and provide appropriate challenge to adult protection arrangements.</p> <p>The DCWL will receive regular reports in relation to the delivery of the Community Safety and SAB Strategic Plans.</p>

		<p>professional leadership and challenge to qualified social work staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer led review and challenge where opportunities arise. 	
<p>Clarity about responsibility for services for adults ensuring professional leadership and practice is robust and can be challenged on a regular basis, including an appropriate focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offering clarity about care planning and delivery and • offering timely help, and working in collaboration with other agencies. 	<p>Delivery will continue to be led at service director level, with strategic oversight by the DCWL.</p> <p>Adult social care standards have been produced and approved by Cabinet. These standards will form the basis for ensuring that eligibility and other key legislative and policy requirements are met.</p> <p>A quality assurance framework has been developed to ensure effective delivery of the standards.</p> <p>Regular scrutiny across all areas is provided through management and the SAB</p> <p>Adherence to policy and best</p>	<p>Risk: That given the breadth of his/her responsibilities the DCWL is unable to provide the level of leadership and challenge required in relation to systems for care planning and delivery.</p> <p>This risk is mitigated by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strong leadership and experience of existing service directors. • The PSW will continue to provide professional leadership and challenge to qualified social work staff. 	

	<p>practice will continue to be monitored through clear and strong partnership arrangements including those detailed in the Community Safety Board Plan and the SAB Annual Report and Strategic Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The quality assurance framework.• Robust partnership arrangements are in place with buy in from senior officers across all agencies.• Peer led review and challenge where opportunities arise.• Scrutiny provided by the Care, Health and Wellbeing, Families and Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Committees.• The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health and Wellbeing will continue as discrete roles providing strong, strategic leadership, support and challenge.	
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<p>The adequacy and effectiveness of local partnership arrangements e.g. the local authority's relationship with Health, the Police, Community Safety Partnerships, Health and Well Being Partnerships, Health and Well Being Boards, Multi Agency Risk Assessment conferences and their respective accountabilities.</p>	<p>Local partnership arrangements are well established and will continue.</p> <p>The DCWL will attend meetings as necessary whilst ensuring that all partnership and boards continue to be managed at senior manager level</p> <p>The DCWL will remain committed to partnership working in a range of forums.</p> <p>The Community Safety Partnership and associated partnership governance forums as they relate to community safety will continue including, multi-agency public protection arrangements, multi-agency risk assessment conferences and all other interagency arrangements.</p> <p>The DCWL will continue to attend the SAB maintaining oversight of the safeguarding activity across the Borough.</p> <p>The DCWL is and will remain</p>	<p>Risk: Given the number of partnership boards/arrangements in relation to both adults and children there is a risk that the DCWL is unable to appropriately balance service management with the strategic partnership work.</p> <p>This risk is mitigated by the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The continued appropriate delegation of partnership activity to experienced senior managers as appropriate. • Continuation of key personnel means roles and accountabilities are clearly articulated and understood. • There are clear governance structures and terms 	<p>The DCWL will review all partnership activity, including statutory requirements for representation, to ensure appropriate involvement at a senior level.</p> <p>The DCWL will have regular meetings with senior managers to ensure they are kept abreast of partnership activity.</p>
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	<p>a member of the Health and Wellbeing Board and will ensure the interests of both children and adults are met. In particular the risks associated with the transition from child to adulthood</p> <p>The DCWL will continue to attend regional ADASS meetings to keep abreast of local and national issues, priorities and requirements.</p>	<p>of reference for all partnership boards and multi-agency forums, including reporting mechanisms.</p>	
<p>Clarity about financial arrangements and safeguards in place to ensure that budgets are appropriately apportioned and delegated to ensure that statutory obligations in relation to both adult and children services can be met.</p>	<p>Budgets will continue to be managed at service director level with strategic oversight by the DCWL.</p> <p>Separate group accountants will continue to offer support in relation to the monitoring and review of children and adult budgets.</p> <p>Adult and Children's Social Care Financial Strategies have been developed and approved and performance against the strategies is reported to Cabinet through revenue monitoring reports.</p>	<p>Risk: Given the size of his/her budget the DCWL will struggle to maintain control of the overall spend across the directorate and that there is a disproportionate amount of the budget spent on either children or adult services.</p> <p>This risk is mitigated by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The experience of service directors in managing high level budgets. • The retention of separate group 	<p>The DCWL should ensure that budget monitoring remains a priority and that service directors report their budget performance to them directly.</p>

		<p>accountants to oversee and advise in relation to the discrete areas of children and adult services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance by group accountants at the DCWL's weekly management meetings.• Monthly budget monitoring meetings with service managers and group accountants resulting in written reports to the DCWL which are considered at the weekly management meetings.• Political challenge from Cabinet Members for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, and Children and Young People.	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal audit will continue to ensure compliance with financial regulations. • Revenue monitoring reports to Cabinet. 	
Clarity about how the new regime and responsibilities introduced by the Care Act 2014 will be implemented and embedded across the Council.	<p>An implementation group has been established and is chaired by the DCWL. This will continue.</p> <p>A Care Act tracker is in place which highlights and rag rates the implications of the various sections of the Act as they come into force.</p> <p>The Care Act is a standing agenda item on the management meetings of both service directors and both have identified Care Act leads to cover all aspects of the new legislation and guidance.</p> <p>The Health and Wellbeing Board and the SAB both receive updates in relation to the legislation and will</p>	<p>Risk: That given the breadth of his/her responsibilities the DCWL will have insufficient time to understand the full operational and budgetary implications of the Care Act 2014 and, therefore, to ensure its effective implementation</p> <p>This risk is mitigated by the following :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment of an implementation group which the DCWL will continue to chair. • The scrutiny role of the Health and Wellbeing Board and the SAB. 	<p>The DCWL will ensure that politicians and chief officers are informed of the implications of the Care Act as it is implemented.</p> <p>The DCWL will factor the implications of the Care Act into any changes they make in relation to staffing roles and structures to ensure that the new regime and responsibilities of the Act can be effectively implemented and embedded.</p>

	<p>oversee and scrutinise its implementation.</p> <p>Regionally an ADASS Care Act group has been established to share expertise and best practice in relation to implementation of the Act.</p> <p>The PSW has connections at a national level through involvement in the national PSW network which is proactive in informing and advising on the implications of the legislation.</p> <p>Gateshead is an active participant in the development of guidance in relation to the Act through the Department of Health.</p> <p>The group accountant for adult social care is working proactively to understand and model the financial implications for service delivery in Gateshead.</p> <p>Legal services are working closely with the group to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political scrutiny and challenge through the Cabinet Members for Adult Social Care and Health and Wellbeing. • Regional collaboration including the ADASS Care Act group. • Involvement with the national PSW network • Work with the Department of Health to inform guidance in relation to the Act. • Strategy group and political oversight. • Early and proactive involvement of the group accountant and legal services. 	
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	advise on legal and policy implications of the legislation.		
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It is proposed the operational and strategic effectiveness of these assurance arrangements are scrutinised at a joint meeting of the Care, Health & Wellbeing and Families OSCs twelve months after their implementation. This will enable the Council to satisfy itself that the arrangements are robust and that the Council continues to meet its statutory obligations in relation to vulnerable adults.

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TITLE OF REPORT: Annual Work Programme

REPORT OF: Jane Robinson, Chief Executive
Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services
and Governance

Summary

The report details proposals for the development of the work programme for Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSCs) and sets out the provisional work programme for the Families OSC for the municipal year 2016-17.

Background

1. Every year each Overview and Scrutiny Committee draws up a work programme based on the Council's policy framework which is then agreed by the Council as part of the policy planning process.
2. The Committee's work programme is a rolling programme which sets the agenda for its six weekly meetings. It is the means by which it can address the interests of the local community, focus on improving services and seek to reduce inequalities in service provision and access to services.
3. Under the Council's constitution the issues which will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees come from a number of sources:
 - During the year the Committee may choose to scrutinise decisions made by the Cabinet to ensure decisions are taken properly;
 - The Committee may be requested by the Cabinet to carry out reviews of particular issues in accordance with the Council's policy priorities;
 - The Committee will receive six-monthly reports on performance for comment to Cabinet;
 - The Committee will receive reports on relevant service improvement reviews at key stages of development to confirm to Cabinet that reviews are progressing appropriately;
 - Section 119 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and Section 126 of the Police and Criminal Justice Act 2006 enable any member of the Council to refer to a relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee any local government matter and any crime and disorder matter which affects their ward or constituents (Councillor Call for Action - CCfA).
 - Members of the Committee may identify particular issues for consideration;
 - Members may also examine issues in the Council's Forward Plan; and
 - In addition, where the Committee has reasonable concerns about a particular executive decision, the call-in mechanism is available.

Proposals

4. The Council has consulted partner organisations on the emerging themes for each OSC for 2016-17.
5. Partners have been supportive of the emerging themes and the views outlined will be key in assisting the Committee in identifying the right priority areas to take forward and shape the initial focus of specific areas of work. Details of the emerging issues for potential review / case study topics and feedback from partners is set out in Appendix 2.
6. The work programmes will continue to be subject to a formal review every six months. At this stage, feedback will be provided to the OSCs on the outcomes generated by the OSCs' reviews and information provided on how it is proposed to measure the resulting impact on local people.
7. The attached provisional work programme (Appendix 1) has therefore taken account of the following:-
 - Six-monthly performance reporting
 - Vision 2030, the Council Plan and partnership work generally
 - Current issues referred to Committees
 - Details of potential review topics
 - Proposed case studies
 - Legislative provisions and guidance on the Councillor Call for Action
8. The work programme remains provisional as:
 - Cabinet has not had the opportunity to fully review its work programme and it may wish to refer further issues to Overview and Scrutiny Committees for further consideration;
 - It does not take account of new policy issues which may be identified during the year, which Cabinet may refer to Overview and Scrutiny; and
 - It does not include issues identified by members of committees on an ongoing basis during the year as a result of scrutiny of decisions, call – in and councillor call for action.

Recommendations

9. The Committee is asked to:-
 - a) Agree the review topic and areas it wishes to progress as case studies in 2016-17, having considered the proposals outlined at Appendix 2.
 - b) Endorse the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's provisional work programme for 2016-17 attached at Appendix 1, and refer it to Council on 26 May 2016 for agreement.
 - c) Note that further reports will be brought to the Committee to identify any additional issues which the Committee may be asked to consider.

Contact: Angela Frisby

Ext: 2138

Draft Families OSC 2016/17	
16 June 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council Plan - Year End Assessment and Performance Delivery 2015-16 • Five Year Target Setting 2016-17 • OSC Review- Scoping report (<i>see appendix 2</i>) • Safeguarding Children - LSCB Annual Report and Plans • 0-19 Public Health Developments
8 September 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSC Review - Evidence Gathering (<i>see appendix 2</i>) • Annual Report on Complaints and Representations - Children • Ofsted Inspections/School Data - Progress Update • Monitoring - OSC Review of Child Protection • Gateshead Child Health Profile
20 October 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSC Review - Evidence Gathering (<i>see appendix 2</i>) • Performance Improvement Update - Children Presenting at Hospital as result of Self Harm • Children and Young People's Plan - Refresh and Commissioning Priorities • Case Study (<i>see appendix 2</i>)
1 December 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSC Review - Evidence Gathering (<i>see appendix 2</i>) • OSC Work Programme Review • The Council Plan - Six Monthly Assessment and Performance Delivery (LSCB progress update as part of this report)*
26 January 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSC Review - Evidence Gathering • Ofsted - Annual Report • Liaison with Gateshead Youth Assembly

2 March 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSC Review - Interim Report • Annual Conversation with Head Teachers of Special Schools • Case Study (see appendix 2)
6 April 17 <u>5.30pm meeting</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSC Review - Final Report • Monitoring - OSC Review of Child Protection • Closing the Gap - Annual Report

Issues to slot in

- **Update Report - Implementing the government's FGM and Radicalisation obligations for schools and child carers**

Care, Health and Wellbeing OSC

Review Topic-

Review of the role of Housing in Promoting Health and Wellbeing” (to focus on housing conditions – impact of changes in the housing market, shift to private sector provision and vulnerability of specific tenants; low income families, people with complex issues and learning disabilities, isolated older people).

Links to

Vision 2030

Council Plan 2015-20

Partner Feedback**Health and Wellbeing Board**

The Board was supportive of the Review topic but suggested widening the focus to include the cost to the health and care system as well as individuals and the issue of fuel poverty. It was also considered important to link this work with any work carried out / to be carried out via Communities and Place OSC.

Gateshead Newcastle CCG

Support this topic as it brings the broader determinants of health into focus.

Gateshead Housing Company

Have indicated that they would wish to contribute to this Review.

The Housing Company has advised that two measures are likely to impact on this Review and lead to changes in the housing market

- Pay to stay – mandatory for council tenants in Gateshead when households are earning more than £30,000 – charged market rents
- Ending of secure tenancies replaced by fixed term tenancies

Case Study

Delayed Transfers of Care and Hospital Discharges (to focus on the joint work being progressed by the Council and Health Partners to avoid delayed discharges, specific challenges and examples of good practice / to be linked to evaluation of new model for Adult Social Care).

Links to

Vision 2030

Council Plan 2015-20

Performance Issue – (below 2015-16 target of 88.7% and decline in performance compared to the same period last year).

Partner Feedback**Gateshead Newcastle CCG**

Support this topic as it supports the CCG’s joint work on integrating care and the CCG’s BCF work. There is also a performance issue which the CCG needs to address and the case study will provide added focus.

Gateshead Housing Company

It has been suggested that it might be helpful to include information relating to a pilot that has been running between Health (NHS NTW), ASC and Housing relating to mental health which it is considered feeds into the work in relation to preventing delayed discharges and is classed as an example of good practice.

Corporate Resources OSC

It is proposed that this OSC focus on

Two Case Studies within its 2016-17 work programme

Case Study 1 – Implementation/Roll Out of Universal Credit (examine impact on residents in light of ongoing implementation / roll out and mitigating actions being put in place)

Links to:-

Vision 2030

Council Plan 2015-20

Partner Feedback

Department for Work and Pensions / Job Centre Plus – support both the areas identified for case studies and would be happy to participate / contribute in relation to the case study on Universal Credit.

Gateshead Housing Company

Suggest that the focus of the case study on Universal Credit is widened to cover other aspects of welfare reform.

Additional government Welfare Reform announcements are likely to impact further on tenants and reduce ability to sustain or maintain their tenancies including:-

- The Benefit Cap:- By 2017 it is expected that the maximum amount of out-of-work benefits working age families can receive will be £20,000, (£13,400 for single adults with no children).
- The shared room rate (bedroom tax). Currently 2300 tenants (almost 12%) of tenants have their housing benefit reduced by the shared room rate measure.
- Local Housing Allowance Proposals affecting supported housing and people aged under 35. This will apply to tenancies signed after 1 April 2016, with housing benefit entitlement changing from 1 April 2018 onwards.

Health and Wellbeing Board

The Board was supportive of the themes and noted that implementation of welfare reform / universal credit can have important impacts on residents health and wellbeing.

Case Study 2 – Workforce Strategy (examine progress being made in preparing the workforce to meet the changing role of the Council and adapt working practices / meet the demands of the business / next steps)

Links to:-

Council Plan 2015-20

Families OSC

Review Topic

Review of Children's Oral Health in Gateshead (potential areas of focus – inequalities in access / ward variations, prevalence of dental decay in five year olds, levels of hospital admissions, commissioning and planning arrangements)

Links to:-

Vision 2030

Council Plan 2015-20

Director of Public Health Report – focus on health inequalities and wider determinants of health, health in childhood and particularly the role of health services in child health improvement.

Case Studies

Case Study 1 – Consequences of Alcohol Consumption in Pregnancy (potential focus on current position/ impacts across the system and longer term / progress in tackling the issue)

Links to:-

Vision 2030

Council Plan 2015-20

Director of Public Health Report – focus on significance of achieving best start in life to reduce health inequalities in subsequent years

Case Study 2 – Support for Care Leavers who are NEET (specific focus on how the Council is fulfilling its corporate parenting responsibilities in this area)

Links to:-

Vision 2030

Council Plan 2015-20

Area of Improvement highlighted by Ofsted

Partner Feedback

Newcastle Gateshead CCG

Has indicated that it is supportive of the review and case study topics outlined above.

Health and Wellbeing Board

The Board was supportive of the themes and suggested that Case Study 1 also include reference to prevention and dealing with the consequences of FASD.

The National Probation Service (NE)

Has also indicated it is supportive of the areas of work outlined.

Partner Suggestion for Families OSC future work programme

Newcastle Gateshead CCG

Has indicated that childhood obesity is a priority area for the CCG and a major threat to health and have asked whether the OSC might focus on this issue in some way in a future work programme

Communities and Place OSC

Review Topic

Review of Impact of Gambling on the Borough (to focus on the financial /health and wellbeing impacts on Gateshead residents /consider how these issues are currently being addressed / potential areas for improvement)

Links to

Vision 2030

Council Plan 2015 - 20

Area of concern identified by Cabinet members.

Case Study

Street Cleanliness – Enforcement, Education and Community Involvement (to focus on how Council and communities can work together to tackle issues such as dog fouling and litter / highlight best practice schemes being developed in communities)

Links to

Vision 2030

Council Plan 2015-20

Residents Survey 2012 – street cleanliness issue for improvement.

Partner Feedback

Health and Wellbeing Board

The Board indicated that it was supportive of the themes and asked that in relation to the case study on Street Cleanliness that account be taken of the potential impact on the use of outdoor spaces if levels of street cleanliness are not maintained.