

Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee

Friday 15 September 2017

10.00 am Luttrell Room - County Hall,
Taunton



To: The Members of the Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee

Cllr L Redman (Chairman), Cllr M Pullin (Vice-Chairman), Cllr N Bloomfield, Cllr A Bown, Cllr M Dimery, Cllr N Hewitt-Cooper, Cllr J Lock, Cllr N Taylor, Cllr J Williams, Mr Richard Berry, Ms Helen Fenn, Ruth Hobbs and Mrs Eileen Tipper

All Somerset County Council Members are invited to attend meetings of the Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees.

Issued By Julian Gale, Strategic Manager - Governance and Risk - 7 September 2017

For further information about the meeting, please contact Neil Milne on 01823 359045 or ndmilne@somerset.gov.uk

Guidance about procedures at the meeting follows the printed agenda.

This meeting will be open to the public and press, subject to the passing of any resolution under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

This agenda and the attached reports and background papers are available on request prior to the meeting in large print, Braille, audio tape & disc and can be translated into different languages. They can also be accessed via the council's website on www.somerset.gov.uk/agendasandpapers



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AGENDA

Item Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee - 10.00 am Friday 15 September 2017

**** Public Guidance notes contained in agenda annexe ****

1 Apologies for Absence

to receive Members' apologies

2 Declarations of Interest

Details of all Members' interests in District, Town and Parish Councils will be displayed in the meeting room. The Statutory Register of Member's Interests can be inspected via the Community Governance team.

3 Minutes from the previous meeting (Pages 7 - 16)

The Committee is asked to confirm the minutes are accurate.

4 Public Question Time

The Chairman will allow members of the public to ask a question or make a statement about any matter on the agenda for this meeting. **These questions may be taken during the meeting, when the relevant agenda item is considered, at the Chairman's discretion.**

5 Scrutiny Work Programme (Pages 17 - 36)

To discuss any items for the forthcoming work programme. To assist the discussion, the following documents are attached:

- a) – The Cabinet's latest published forward plan;
- b) – Current Work Programme for the Committee;
- c) – Outcome Tracker.

6 SEND 0-25 - Peer Review Update (Pages 37 - 46)

To consider this report on progress made since the Peer Review last May.

7 Children's Social Care Statutory Customer Feedback report (Pages 47 - 66)

To consider this annual update report.

8 Update on Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and Syrian Families (Pages 67 - 72)

To receive an update on Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and Syrian Families in Somerset.

9 Update on the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and saving targets (Pages 73 - 76)

To consider an update on progress against savings targets identified in the MTFP.

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10 **Update on Family Support Services** (Pages 77 - 80)

To consider an update report on changes to Family Support Services in Somerset.
An additional report, on the forthcoming consultation, will be sent to Members
before the meeting.

11 **Any other urgent items of business**

The Chairman may raise any items of urgent business.

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Guidance notes for the meeting

1. Inspection of Papers

Any person wishing to inspect Minutes, reports, or the background papers for any item on the Agenda should contact the Committee Administrator for the meeting – Neil Milne on 01823 359045 or email: ndmilne@somerset.gov.uk
They can also be accessed via the council's website on www.somerset.gov.uk/agendasandpapers

2. Members' Code of Conduct requirements

When considering the declaration of interests and their actions as a councillor, Members are reminded of the requirements of the Members' Code of Conduct and the underpinning Principles of Public Life: Honesty; Integrity; Selflessness; Objectivity; Accountability; Openness; Leadership. The Code of Conduct can be viewed at: <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/organisation/key-documents/the-councils-constitution/>

3. Minutes of the Meeting

Details of the issues discussed and recommendations made at the meeting will be set out in the Minutes, which the Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record at its next meeting.

4. Public Question Time

If you wish to speak, please tell the Committee's Administrator by 12 noon the (working) day before the meeting.

At the Chairman's invitation you may ask questions and/or make statements or comments about any matter on the Committee's agenda – providing you have given the required notice. You may also present a petition on any matter within the Committee's remit. The length of public question time will be no more than 30 minutes in total.

A slot for Public Question Time is set aside near the beginning of the meeting, after the minutes of the previous meeting have been signed. However, questions or statements about any matter on the Agenda for this meeting may be taken at the time when each matter is considered.

You must direct your questions and comments through the Chairman. You may not take a direct part in the debate. The Chairman will decide when public participation is to finish.

If there are many people present at the meeting for one particular item, the Chairman may adjourn the meeting to allow views to be expressed more freely. If an item on the Agenda is contentious, with a large number of people attending the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group.

An issue will not be deferred just because you cannot be present for the meeting. Remember that the amount of time you speak will be restricted, normally to two minutes only.

5. **Exclusion of Press & Public**

If when considering an item on the Agenda, the Committee may consider it appropriate to pass a resolution under Section 100A (4) Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the basis that if they were present during the business to be transacted there would be a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information, as defined under the terms of the Act.

6. **Committee Rooms & Council Chamber and hearing aid users**

To assist hearing aid users the following Committee meeting rooms have infra-red audio transmission systems (Luttrell room, Wyndham room, Hobhouse room). To use this facility we need to provide a small personal receiver that will work with a hearing aid set to the T position. Please request a personal receiver from the Committee's Administrator and return it at the end of the meeting.

7. **Recording of meetings**

The Council supports the principles of openness and transparency. It allows filming, recording and taking photographs at its meetings that are open to the public - providing this is done in a non-disruptive manner. Members of the public may use Facebook and Twitter or other forms of social media to report on proceedings and a designated area will be provided for anyone wishing to film part or all of the proceedings. No filming or recording may take place when the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting. As a matter of courtesy to the public, anyone wishing to film or record proceedings is asked to provide reasonable notice to the Committee Administrator so that the relevant Chairman can inform those present at the start of the meeting.

We would ask that, as far as possible, members of the public aren't filmed unless they are playing an active role such as speaking within a meeting and there may be occasions when speaking members of the public request not to be filmed.

The Council will be undertaking audio recording of some of its meetings in County Hall as part of its investigation into a business case for the recording and potential webcasting of meetings in the future.

A copy of the Council's Recording of Meetings Protocol should be on display at the meeting for inspection, alternatively contact the Committee Administrator for the meeting in advance.

Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee held on Friday 28 July 2017 at 10.00 in the Luttrell Room, County Hall, Taunton.

Present

Cllr L Redman (in the Chair)

Cllr A Bown

Cllr S Coles (Substitute)

Cllr M Dimery

Cllr James Hunt (Substitute)

Cllr J Taylor

Cllr J Williams

Apologies: Cllr N Bloomfield, Cllr Hewitt-Cooper, Cllr Lock and Cllr Pullin. Mrs Helen Fenn (Church representative) and Richard Berry – Schools Forum

Church representatives present:

Parent Governor representatives present: Mrs Ruth Hobbs.

CHYPPS & Schools Forum representatives present: Mrs Eileen Tipper (CHYPPS).

Cabinet Members present: Cllr A Groskop and Cllr F Nicholson.

Other Members present: Cllr Purbrick.

11 Declarations of interest – agenda item 2

11.0 Cllr Bown, Cllr Coles, Cllr James Hunt, Cllr Redman, Cllr J Taylor, and Cllr Williams, all declared a personal interest as a District and/or City/Town, Parish Councillor.

11.1 Mrs Hobbs declared a personal interest regarding agenda item 7 as a Director Somerset Parent Carer Forum.

12 Public question time – agenda time 3

12.0 There were no members of the public present, and hence no questions asked, statements/comments made or petitions presented.

13 Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2017 – agenda item 4

13.0 The Committee agreed the minutes of the last meeting were accurate, providing they were amended to show Cllr Filmer had been present, and the Chairman signed them.

14 Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee work programme – agenda item 5

- 14.0 The Committee considered and agreed its own work programme and the future agenda items listed.
- 14.1 The Committee considered and noted the Council's Forward Plan of proposed key decisions in forthcoming months including Cabinet meetings up to 27 September 2017.
- 14.2 The Committee also accepted the updated outcome tracker and the Scrutiny Manager reminded Members that once an outcome had been agreed as complete (Green) and reported to the Committee, it would be retained on the master copy but not reported again.

15 Children and Young People's Plan 2016-2019 – agenda item 6

15.0 The Committee considered this report that provided the Committee with details of the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) a three year plan that had started in April 2016 that set out the actions the Council and its partners were taking to continue and sustain improvements in Children's Services. The Plan followed a multi-agency approach, and was overseen by the Somerset Children's Trust and had 7 improvement programmes, each managed by a relevant Board to ensure improvement in those areas, as follows:

- 15.1
1. Supporting children, families and communities to become more resilient
 2. Promoting healthy outcomes and giving children the best start in life
 3. Improving emotional health and wellbeing
 4. Building skills for life
 5. Providing help early and effectively
 6. Achieving effective multi-agency support for more vulnerable children and young people and developing an excellent children's social work service.
 7. Embedding a 'Think Family' approach

15.2 The Partnership Business Manager – Children's Services, introduced the report and provided a very thorough overview of its contents, noting that the CYPP was reported on a quarterly basis and the report contained details of the activity of the first quarter of Year 2 and provided a summary of activity and progress as demonstrated by each of the 7 programmes' Highlight Reports.

15.3 Attention turned to the Executive Summary and it was reported that the second year of the CYPP had begun with ambitious and robust action plans that reflected the good progress made throughout the first year, and would focus on embedding the developments made in year one, and setting out the challenges to ensure the Somerset Children's Trust (SCT) meets the outcomes agreed in the CYPP.

15.4 It was reported that as a result of an analysis of the achievements to date that they could be categorised in to 4 main areas and they were: Information and Resources; Resilience in children, young people, their families and those who support them; SEND – a focus on the 9 priorities identified during the recent peer review; and Approaches – the main focus would be on developing early help hubs (or Family Hubs) through closer joint working between public health

nursing and 'getset' services.

- 15.5 The Committee then began to consider the 7 highlight reports that provided an overall status update; progress made since the last highlight report; slippage – reasons and remedial actions; actions and outputs for the next period; and the most significant current risks and issues regarding each improvement programme. There was a brief discussion about the direction of travel arrows and how the 'trend' judgement was decided and it was suggested that consideration be given to how this was assessed and shown as for a few of the programmes it seemed as if the trend arrow and colour did not seem to match the narrative report or overall direction of travel on the improvement journey.
- 15.6 In respect of Programme 1 there was a question about the most significant current risk concerning debt advice and support and the lack of data to show if family (when signposted) were accessing advice and/or benefits they were entitled to. In response it was explained that much of this information was held by the Department for Work and Pensions and possibly due to the General Election last May, data on universal credit roll out and the number of family in each District Council area this affected. It was thought the numbers of family seeking help with debt issues were lessening but effort was made to provide advice/support when identified. The Committee noted its on-going concerns with the universal credit scheme and its implementation, delays in which had seemingly caused unnecessary hardship to a number of vulnerable young people and families.
- 15.7 Also regarding Programme the Chairman asked about the increase in the number of school aged children with Special Educational Needs/Disabilities (SEND) placed out the state sector. In response the Director for Children's Services said that this was a complex issue however the key was to ensure children were supported in the most appropriate provision to suit their (often complex needs) and currently he acknowledged too many children were placed in special schools or out of county settings. An idea was floated about a possible future Task and Finish Group to consider the 'wider inclusion' agenda. It was suggested and agreed to receive an overarching SEND update at the next meeting.
- 15.8 Regarding Programme 2 the Committee welcomed the news that the first cohort of 21 teaching staff had completed the Personal, Social, Health, Economic (PSHE) Education Continuing Professional Development (CPD) course. It was also noted that there were now 23 breastfeeding volunteer champions, and an additional 30 staff had been trained in perinatal and infant mental health awareness. There was a question about the transition from 'statements' to Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP's) and it was agreed to include these figures in the SEND update at the September meeting. There was a question about the fall in the number of new birth visits conducted by Health Visitors within 14 days and it was explained that there was uncertainty on the accuracy of this figure; breastfeeding support and midwifery were the responsibility of the Clinical Commissioning Group and those services were undergoing a period of change. However the majority of support for new mothers continued to be provided in the home.

- 15.9 In respect of Programme 3 attention was drawn initially to correct a typographical error and it was explained that 'Kooth' was an online counselling service launched in Somerset. There was question about the quality of the CAMHS service was measured particularly in regard to the various referrals – emergency, urgent or routine. In response it was noted that this information could be included in the next report, it was noted that the emergency and urgent referrals were showing 100% on target and the waiting time for routine referrals was currently 6 weeks in Somerset, against 8 weeks elsewhere.
- 15.10 Consideration of Programme 4 began with an overview of schools performance as measured by Ofsted inspections/visits and how this had compared with previous years. There was also a brief discussion of the availability of provision for 30 hours per week in Early Years settings in Taunton. It was noted that the concern was with parents currently accessing the 15 hour provision and the capacity to extend to 30 hours and it was explained that it was believed that the extra provision was available but that this didn't have to be in the same location. There was a question about a new interim head of SEND being in place and in response it was confirmed that in fact this post was now vacant as a result of management changes. The Director for Children's Services promised to keep the Committee updated on staffing developments. It was noted that the number of pupils being excluded on a fixed term and/or permanent exclusion basis had continued to increase and two thirds of those affected were categorised as having SEND. Members sought and received assurance that Officers were working with Head teachers Association to understand this trend and address the issues. It was also noted that the number of families choosing to home educate continued to increase and a survey was being undertaken to understand the reasons for those choices.
- 15.11 Regarding Programme 5 the Committee welcomed news of the successful implementation of the Early Help Case Management System for 'getset' services including initial training and wider deployment was being considered for other services. It was requested that the supporting information to demonstrate performance in the length of time open cases (Early Help assessment) be reviewed.
- 15.12 In respect of Programme 6 there was a brief discussion of IR35 and what the change in locum rules referred to. Members heard that that this was a change in the tax legislation that impacted on locum staff and made them less likely to want to travel. It was acknowledged that this might encourage some to look to take up more permanent positions although the general shortage of social workers in the South West of England and a shortage of social workers willing to relocate to the region remained an issue. There was a question about Team Around the School (TAS) coverage and it was explained that all secondary schools had access to TAS and approximately 505 of Primary Schools.
- 15.13 In respect of Programme 7 the Chairman suggested that the highlight report contain more information so that the Committee would be better able to understand the situation and provide support if required. There was a question about increase in the average caseload for social workers and it was explained that this was due to an increase in the overall caseload and a number of

vacancies arising in some teams. It was requested that a map be produced for Young Carers to help them identify available services/support. It was suggested that further education colleges might be approached regarding apprenticeships and in response it was explained that consideration had been given to creating an apprenticeship in social care and an update would be provided in the next report.

- 15.14 The Chairman thanked the Committee for its detailed consideration of the report in detail and the suggested outcomes/actions points had been noted and picked up at future meetings.

16 Children and Young People's Plan – Member Champions – agenda item 7

- 16.0 The Committee considered a report that recognised that the focus of the Committee's work programme would be to ensure the continuous improvement and delivery of the 7 priorities contained within the Children and Young Peoples Plan (CYPP). In this endeavour the Chairman, as he had initiated during the last quadrennium, had again suggested that each Member of the Committee volunteer to act as a 'Champion' for each of the 7 programmes.
- 16.1 The Committee, in recognising the importance of the CYPP in ensuring continued improvement in Children's Services, was asked to ensure that each member of the Committee took a special interest in one of the 7 improvement programmes of the CYPP.
- 16.2 There was a brief discussion of this ambition and attention turned to Appendix A of the report which listed the 7 programmes and the Member volunteers to date. The Committee noted that Cllr Lock had indicated she would be happy to take an interest in Programme 5 and the Chairman indicated his continued interest in Programme 6.
- 16.3 In addition Cllr Williams volunteered to take an interest in Programme 1; Mrs Eileen Tipper volunteered to take an interest in Programme 2; Cllr Dimery volunteered to take an interest in Programme 4, and it was noted that Cllr Pullin (although absent) had also indicated an interest in Programme 4; Cllr Taylor indicated his willingness to take an interest in programme 7.
- 16.4 The Committee welcomed the interest in this suggestion and it was explained that those volunteer Members would not have lone responsibility for each topic but would be an initial point of contact and allow better understanding of that area. The Committee would retain overall responsibility for questioning/challenge. The report was accepted.

17 Developing Family Hubs in Somerset – agenda item 8

- 17.0 The Committee considered this report and received a presentation that provided an update on the progress to create 'early help hubs' in local communities, agreed as a key priority in the Children and Young People's Plan 2016-2019. The hub service would offer multi-agency integrated services to identify and support children and families who need additional help and quick

intervention, and over time help reduce the gap in outcomes for those in deprived areas.

- 17.1 It was explained that phase 1 of the creation of the Family Hub Service in Somerset would be to establish joint working across universal health and well-being services for children and young people (health visiting services for 0-5 years and also school nursing services for 5-19 years) commissioned by the Council and the SCC getset services for children and young people (including children's centre services and family support/troubled family support services).
- 17.2 Members heard that the current gaps in outcomes for instance a 20% lower breastfeeding rate in deprived areas showed that services needed to be delivered in a different way. The proposed changes would help improve outcomes for Somerset's children, young people and families; align service provision to the strategic direction set out in the CYPP; better reflect national best practice and result in efficiencies and cost savings.
- 17.3 It was reported that national research on integrating services would improve processes resulting in an increased understanding, trust and cooperation between different services; improve communication and bring about a more consistent implementation of services; and lead to less duplication of processes across agencies. The changes would lead to improved outputs through providing more responsive and appropriate services; resulting in better access to services and/or increased user involvement; whilst also being more cost-effective. It was also noted that, importantly, the changes envisaged better outcomes such as improved cognitive or school performance; improved general physical health; enhanced social behaviour and improved parenting and/or family relations.
- 17.4 In response to a question it was acknowledged that engagement with effected staff would be of crucial importance as the project evolved and an initial series of workshops had been held with staff groups during March and July. In the latest round of sessions over 100 staff including those from 'getset', Health Visitors and School Nursing had given mostly positive feedback and indicated a desire to work together. Staff had also been able to volunteer to support the 4 work streams that would help to progress the detailed work that would be required.
- 17.5 The next stage was for wider consultation through the Autumn with a decision made on the final implementation of the service delivery early next year.
- 17.6 The Chairman invited comments from Committee Members and in the ensuing discussion the following points were made, issues raised and/or questions asked/answered including:
- 17.7
- An explanation was provided of the background regarding Children's Centres in Somerset and how those facilities and the services they provided had evolved over the last few years; it was explained that many other local authorities had already addressed their early help offer and had closed children centre buildings whilst still delivering an early help service via other delivery

mechanisms;

- With the onset of different agencies and providers working together it would be important to ensure agreements and protocols regarding information governance were in place for the secure handling of personal information;
- It was confirmed that a variety of other public sector agencies/services would be involved in the Family Hub centres including the Police, NHS services such as Midwifery, and Education Welfare Services;
- It was noted that the on-going Team Around The School policy had proved to be successful as this would be a helpful indicator/model of bringing about changes and how to work with partners and integrate services;
- It was acknowledged that an aim of the move to creating Family Hubs was to achieve efficiencies however this would not be at the expense of frontline staff, the objective was to slim down management, administration and overheads including the number of buildings and not reduce the number of staff providing services in local communities;
- It was requested that the Family Hub service takes an holistic approach to and offers a variety of services as this would be more likely to ensure greater patronage in local communities;
- A suggestion regarding performance indicators/targets asked that they be meaningful and think about how appropriately successful change could be measured and judged.

17.8 The Chairman thanked Officers for the update and the report was accepted. It was suggested and agreed that an update report be provided as a standing item at each meeting.

18 Fostering Recruitment Update report – agenda item 9

18.0 The Committee considered this report that provided an overview of the proposed Progression Scheme as part of the Council's attempt to improve the offer to foster carers. These changes had been designed to help ensure that children were cared for by people with the right skills and experience and that foster carers were recognised for the skills and experience they brought to the role.

18.1 It was reported that currently Somerset was one of the few local authorities who did not have such a scheme and therefore these changes would enable the service to align and put itself in a more competitive position regarding the recruitment and retention of foster carers. It was noted that 2016/17 had seen the lowest number of new approvals over a five year period and an overall net loss of foster carers. However in response to a question it was explained that an analysis of why foster carers had left the service did not suggest that they had done so for negative reasons but were more likely due to retirement, ill-health or family commitments.

18.2 Members also had the benefit of hearing from a Foster Carer who provided the Committee with an overview of his experiences and his opinions and views on the proposed changes, which he welcomed. Members also heard the Foster Carer welcome the inclusive approach of the Foster Carer team which meant that Foster Carers were treated like professionals and felt valued and a part of

the team. He had recently spoken to a fellow Foster Carer, who worked with another agency and did not feel as well supported as those working with the Council. He thought this might mean some working with other agencies might come back to the Council.

- 18.3 The Committee's views were sought on the proposed changes, prior to a non-key decision being taken by the Cabinet member for Children and Families in mid-August. In response to a question that the cost of the proposal had been calculated at £226,200 per annum. That figure had been based on the number of current carers, the payment level received during the first 2 weeks of July 2017 and the current number of children in each placement.
- 18.4 There was a brief discussion of the report and attention turned to the Appendix that provided details on the proposed progression scheme and an explanation was provided of the difference between fees and allowances. In response to a question it was stated the fees compared favourably with those paid by other agencies, particularly for specialist fostering and the overall package (including training and support) mean that the Somerset offer was much improved.
- 18.5 The Chairman thanked the Officers for the update and the report was accepted. It was requested that the final version of the revised progression scheme of fee payments be circulated to the Committee once approved.
- 19 Any other business of urgency – agenda item 10**
- 19.0 The Chairman, after ascertaining there were no other matters arising, thanked all those present for attending.

(The meeting closed at 12:58)

Cllr Leigh Redman
Chairman – Scrutiny for Polices, Children and Families Committee

Scrutiny for Policies, Children & Families Children and Young Peoples Plan Committee Champions

The Children & Families Scrutiny committee agreed that 7 Members of the Committee would each take a special interest in one of the 7 improvement programmes and focus their attention and consideration on performance in each report, feeding back and commenting on how progress was being made against their particular improvement programme.

The DCS replied that he thought this was a good suggestion and offered to provide Officer support for any Member of the Committee.

Members would not have lone responsibility for topic but would be initial point of contact and allow better understanding of area. Committee would retain overall responsibility for questioning/challenge.

1. Supporting children, families and communities to become more resilient

Scrutiny member: Cllr. Josh Williams

Nominated officer:- Philippa Granthier

2. Promoting healthy outcomes and giving children the best start in life

Scrutiny member: Mrs Eileen Tipper and Cllr ?

Nominated officer:- Alison Bell

3. Improving emotional health and wellbeing

Scrutiny member: Cllr ?

Nominated officer:- Deborah Howard

4. Building skills for life

Scrutiny member: Cllr Martin Dimery & Cllr Mike Pullin

Nominated officer:- Dave Farrow

5. Providing help early and effectively

Scrutiny member: Cllr. Jane Lock

Nominated officer:- Sue Rogers

6. Achieving effective multi-agency support for more vulnerable children and young people and developing an excellent children's social work service

Scrutiny member: Cllr. Leigh Redman

Nominated officer:- C Winter & Sally Halls

7. Embedding a think family approach across the workforce

Scrutiny member: Cllr. Nigel Taylor

Nominated officer:- Chris Squire

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Somerset County Council Forward Plan of proposed Key Decisions

The County Council is required to set out details of planned key decisions at least 28 calendar days before they are due to be taken. This forward plan sets out key decisions to be taken at Cabinet meetings as well as individual key decisions to be taken by either the Leader, a Cabinet Member or an Officer. The very latest details can always be found on our website at:

<http://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=134&RD=0&FD=1&bcr=1>

Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 defines a key decision as an executive decision which is likely:

(a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or

(b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the relevant local authority.

The Council has decided that the relevant threshold at or above which the decision is significant will be £500,000 for capital / revenue expenditure or savings. Money delegated to schools as part of the Scheme of Financial Management of Schools exercise is exempt from these thresholds once it is delegated to the school.

Cabinet meetings are held in public at County Hall unless Cabinet resolve for all or part of the meeting to be held in private in order to consider exempt information/confidential business. The Forward Plan will show where this is intended. Agendas and reports for Cabinet meetings are also published on the Council's website at least five clear working days before the meeting date.

Individual key decisions that are shown in the plan as being proposed to be taken "not before" a date will be taken within a month of that date, with the requirement that a report setting out the proposed decision will be published on the Council's website at least five working days before the date of decision. Any representations received will be considered by the decision maker at the decision meeting.

In addition to key decisions, the forward plan shown below lists other business that is scheduled to be considered at a Cabinet meeting during the period of the Plan, which will also include reports for information. The monthly printed plan is updated on an ad hoc basis during each month. *Where possible the County Council will attempt to keep to the dates shown in the Plan. It is quite likely, however, that some items will need to be rescheduled and new items added as new circumstances come to light.* Please ensure therefore that you refer to the most up to date plan.

For general enquiries about the Forward Plan:

- You can view it on the County Council web site at <http://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=134&RD=0&FD=1&bcr=1>
- You can arrange to inspect it at County Hall (in Taunton).
- Alternatively, copies can be obtained from Scott Wooldridge or Julia Jones in the Community Governance Team by telephoning (01823) 359027 or 357628.

To view the Forward Plan on the website you will need a copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader available free from www.adobe.com
Please note that it could take up to 2 minutes to download this PDF document depending on your Internet connection speed.

To make representations about proposed decisions:

Please contact the officer identified against the relevant decision in the Forward Plan to find out more information or about how your representations can be made and considered by the decision maker.

The Agenda and Papers for Cabinet meetings can be found on the County Council's website at:
<http://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=134&Year=0>

Weekly version of plan published on 5 September 2017

FP Refs	Decision Date/Maker	Details of the proposed decision	Documents and background papers to be available to decision maker	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring it to be considered in private?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
<p>FP/17/07/11 First published: 26 July 2017</p>	<p>Not before 29th Aug 2017 Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport</p>	<p>Issue: Hinkley C Corridor Improvement Scheme Programme Decision: To approve the delivery of corridor improvement schemes associated with the Hinkley C development</p>	<p>Notification report for proposed decision regarding Hinkley Point C Corridor Improvement Scheme Programme</p>		<p>Andy Coupe, Acting Strategic Manager - Major Programmes Tel: 01823 355145</p>
<p>FP/17/06/10 First published: 30 June 2017</p>	<p>30 Aug 2017 Cabinet Member for Children and Families</p>	<p>Issue: Capital Funding Investment Expansion of Bridgwater College Academy Decision: Approval to fund expansion of Bridgwater Academy to meet Local Authority Statutory Duty to provide sufficient school places</p>	<p>School Place Planning Infrastructure Growth Plan for Somerset 2017 Capital Investment Expansion of Bridgwater College Academy</p>		<p>Elizabeth Smith, Service Manager – Schools Commissioning Tel: 01823 356260</p>
<p>FP/17/07/02 First published: 3 July 2017</p>	<p>4 Sep 2017 Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport</p>	<p>Issue: To award procurement contract for the replacement of tail-lift vehicles with low-floor buses and people carriers. Decision: The purchase of replacement passenger transport vehicles that will improve accessibility for elderly, frail or disabled users across Somerset and facilitate future financial savings</p>	<p>Contract Award Low Floor Minibuses and MPV's Appendix A</p>		<p>Jane Newell, Service Commissioning Manager Highways and Transport Tel: 01823 6738</p>

Weekly version of plan published on 5 September 2017

FP Refs	Decision Date/Maker	Details of the proposed decision	Documents and background papers to be available to decision maker	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring it to be considered in private?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
FP/17/08/01 First published: 9 August 2017	11 Sep 2017 Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development	Issue: Disposal of Surplus Land at Castle Cary Decision: Authority to conclude negotiations for the disposal of surplus (former) farm land (13 acres, land only) at Castle Cary. Authority to conclude negotiations for the disposal of surplus (former) farm land (13 acres, land only) at Castle Cary.	Disposal of Surplus Land		Richard Williams, Commercial & Business Services Director Tel: 01823 359007
FP/17/02/01 First published: 14 February 2017	Not before 18th Sep 2017 Commercial & Business Services Director	Issue: Award of Contract for the provision of a 3 Classroom Block at Court Fields School, Wellington Decision: To approve the awarding of the contract to the successful contractor	Confidential Financial Report Capital Programme Paper	Part exempt	Carol Bond, Project Manager, Property Programme Team Tel: 01823 355962
FP/17/06/07 First published: 26 June 2017	Not before 18th Sep 2017 Director of Commissioning for Economic and Community Infrastructure, Commercial & Business Services Director	Issue: Authorise the purchase of Land at Cathedral Park, Wells for the development of Wells Technology Enterprise Centre. Decision: Authority to: • Purchase of land at Cathedral Park, Wells for the development of the Wells Technology Enterprise Centre	Any relevant decision paper which have acted as precursors to this decision paper.		Nathaniel Lucas, Senior Economic Development Officer Tel: 01823359210

FP Refs	Decision Date/Maker	Details of the proposed decision	Documents and background papers to be available to decision maker	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring it to be considered in private?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
<p>FP/17/07/10 First published: 24 July 2017</p>	<p>Not before 18th Sep 2017 Director of Commissioning for Economic and Community Infrastructure, Finance & Performance Director</p>	<p>Issue: Wells Technology Enterprise Centre (WTEC) – Approval to start a procurement process, to accept ERDF/LEP funding and sign the grant funding agreements Decision: Approval to accept the ERDF/LEP funding and sign the grant funding agreements for the WTEC development. Approval to start the procurement process to find a suitable supplier for the development of the WTEC.</p>		<p>Part exempt</p>	<p>Nathaniel Lucas, Senior Economic Development Officer Tel: 01823359210</p>
<p>FP/17/07/09 First published: 24 July 2017</p>	<p>Not before 18th Sep 2017 Finance & Performance Director, Director of Commissioning for Economic and Community Infrastructure</p>	<p>Issue: Wiveliscombe Enterprise Centre (WEC) – Approval to start a procurement process, to accept ERDF/LEP funding and to sign the grant funding agreements Decision: Approval to accept the ERDF/LEP funding and sign the grant funding agreements for the WEC development. Approval to start the procurement process to find a suitable supplier for the development of the WEC.</p>	<p>ERDF grant funding agreement LEP grant funding agreement Equalities Impact Assessment Key Decision to authorise the purchase of the land at Wiveliscombe</p>	<p>Part exempt</p>	<p>Nathaniel Lucas, Senior Economic Development Officer Tel: 01823359210</p>
<p>FP/17/04/08 First published: 24 April 2017</p>	<p>Not before 18th Sep 2017 Finance & Performance Director, Director of Commissioning for Economic and Community Infrastructure</p>	<p>Issue: Approval to accept Highways England Growth & Housing Fund award toward the M5 J25 improvement scheme. Decision: To accept the funding awarded by Highways England & sign the funding agreement</p>	<p>Copy of the funding agreement to be signed.</p>		<p>Sunita Mills, Service Commissioning Manager Tel: 01823 359763</p>

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<p>FP/17/07/03 First published: 10 July 2017</p>	<p>Not before 18th Sep 2017 Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport</p>	<p>Issue: To agree to the purchase of the land for the construction of the M5 Junction 25 Highways Improvement Scheme. Decision: The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport agrees to: • the acquisition of land required for the construction of the M5 Junction 25 highways scheme • the continued development of the scheme.</p>	<p>Cabinet Member Key Decision - M5 Junction 25 – decision to proceed with consultation, design, planning and procurement – 19 Aug 2016 Cabinet Member Key Decision - To agree to enter into a funding agreement with the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (HotSW LEP) for the M5 J25 Improvement scheme – 13 Jan 2017</p>	<p>Part exempt</p>	<p>Sunita Mills, Service Commissioning Manager Tel: 01823 359763</p>
<p>FP/17/08/01 First published: 14 August 2017</p>	<p>Not before 18th Sep 2017 Director of Children's Services</p>	<p>Issue: AdoptSW, Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) virtual Adoption Panel Decision: Operating an AdoptSW adoption panel is a first step to regionalisation ahead of the move to full regionalisation on 1st April 2018.</p>			<p>Suzanne Lyus, Operations Manager, Resources - Fostering Adoption Placements Tel: 01823357146</p>

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<p>FP/17/08/04 First published: 15 August 2017</p>	<p>Not before 18th Sep 2017 Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development</p>	<p>Issue: To approve the inclusion of the Welsh Government in the existing SME Business Support for HPC Supply Chain & Nuclear South West Inward Investment Expertise Cross-LEP Contract for which SCC is the accountable body. Decision: Approve the acceptance of £500,000.00 from the Welsh Government to extend the SME Business Support for HPC Supply Chain element of the Contract to include Wales</p>			<p>Julie Wooler, Economic Development & Strategic Tourism Officer</p>
<p>FP/17/06/04 First published: 13 June 2017</p>	<p>Not before 25th Sep 2017 Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development</p>	<p>Issue: Disposal of Surplus Land and Farms Decision: Authority to conclude negotiations for the disposal of surplus land and farms including those disposals to be conducted via public auction, as appropriate.</p>	<p>Cabinet Minutes June and July 2010: County Farm Review Cabinet Member Key Decision 18 October 2010: County Farm Estate – Outcome of farm by farm reviews Notification of proposed decision for Disposal of Surplus Land and Farms Appendix A - List of proposed surplus assets for disposal Chilton Polden land Edington Middle Thrupe Farm Willetts and Paul's Copse, Donyatt Donyatt Oxenford Farm</p>	<p>Part exempt</p>	<p>Charlie Field, Estates Manager, Corporate Property Tel: 01823355325</p>

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Fp/17/03/11 First published: 29 March 2017	Not before 25th Sep 2017 Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development	Issue: Asset Rationalisation : A refreshed approach Decision: Sets out our principles for a refreshed approach to assets and disposals with a more proactive approach working with services in order to deliver the council's priorities			Claire Lovett, Head of Property Tel: 07977412583
FP/17/07/05 First published: 13 July 2017	Not before 25th Sep 2017 Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport	Issue: Award of specialist traffic signals contract. Decision: To approve the procurement of specialist Traffic Signals design services via a Framework contract.	Confidential tender appendix	Part exempt	Bev Norman, Service Manager - Traffic Management, Traffic & Transport Development, John Kitchen, Traffic Control Engineer, Traffic Control, Traffic & Transport Development Tel: 01823358089, Tel: 01823358140
Fp/17/07/07 First published: 19 July 2017	27 Sep 2017 Cabinet	Issue: End of July 2017 Performance Monitoring Report Decision: To consider the latest quarterly performance monitoring report			Emma Plummer, Strategic Manager Performance Tel: 01823 359251
FP/17/07/08 First published: 19 July 2017	27 Sep 2017 Cabinet	Issue: Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report End of July 2017 Decision: to consider the latest quarterly budget monitoring report and any proposed decisions			Elizabeth Watkin, Service Manager - Chief Accountant Tel: 01823359573

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<p>FP/17/08/15 First published: 1 September 2017</p>	<p>Not before 2nd Oct 2017 Public Health Director</p>	<p>Issue: New Model of Healthy Weight Services Decision: To agree a new model of healthy weight services from 1st January 2018 at the end of the current contract. This new model will be a population-level approach to encourage healthy eating and physical activity.</p>			<p>Matthew Hibbert, Public Health Specialist</p>
<p>FP/17/07/12 First published: 27 July 2017</p>	<p>Not before 2nd Oct 2017 Cabinet Member for Children and Families</p>	<p>Issue: Creation of a new Academy in Somerset Decision: The Secretary of State for Education has directed via an Academy Order, the conversion to Academy Status for Ashill Community School. This is a technical decision to facilitate the transfer of non fixed assets.</p>	<p>Academies Act 2010</p>		<p>Elizabeth Smith, Service Manager – Schools Commissioning Tel: 01823 356260</p>

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<p>FP/17/08/16 First published: 1 September 2017</p>	<p>Not before 9th Oct 2017 Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development</p>	<p>Issue: Library Service Redesign - Strategy Decision: Agree the recommendation of commissioners (following a strategic review of delivery model options) to continue to manage the Library Service predominantly in-house and not to pursue an alternative / externalised delivery model for the whole service for the next three years. 2. Agree a revised outcomes framework for the Library Service for the period to 2020/21. 3. Agree indicative 3 year financial targets for the Library service budget, to support the delivery of the County Council's wider Medium Term Financial Plan, having regard to potential impacts assessed. 4. Agree a 3 year strategy for the re-design of the service, in order to maximise delivery of outcomes within a reduced financial envelope, noting proposed investment. 5. Endorse the proposed process and timetable for developing and consulting on specific proposals to implement the overarching service re-design strategy.</p>	<p>Appraisal of alternative service delivery model options Library service redesign Cabinet Report - December 2015</p>	<p>Part exempt</p>	<p>Oliver Woodhams, Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services Tel: 07977400667</p>
<p>FP/16/05/02 First published: 9 January 2017</p>	<p>18 Oct 2017 Cabinet</p>	<p>Issue: Road Safety Strategy Update Decision: To agree to adopt the updated Road Safety Strategy</p>			<p>Sunita Mills, Service Commissioning Manager Tel: 01823 359763</p>

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Fp/17/08/12 First published: 16 August 2017	18 Oct 2017 Cabinet	Issue: County Plan 2017-2021 Decision: to consider the proposed County Plan to recommend to November's Full Council			Simon Clifford, Customers & Communities Director
FP17/7/06 First published: 19 July 2017	18 Oct 2017 Cabinet	Issue: Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 - proposed revenue savings Decision: To consider the proposed revenue themed savings and proposed approach			Kevin Nacey Tel: 01823 359014
FP/17/08/03 First published: 15 August 2017	18 Oct 2017 Cabinet	Issue: Updated policy in respect of the introduction of Resident Parking Schemes Decision: To agree the new policy of how resident parking schemes are introduced.			Steve Deakin, Parking Services Manager, Parking Services, Community and Traded Services Tel: 01823355137
FP/17/08/05 First published: 16 August 2017	15 Nov 2017 Cabinet	Issue: Quarter 2 Revenue and Capital Budget monitoring reports Decision: to consider the Quarter 2 position in relation to the Council's revenue and capital budgets for 2017/18			Elizabeth Watkin, Service Manager - Chief Accountant Tel: 01823359573

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FP/17/08/12 First published: 17 August 2017	15 Nov 2017 Cabinet	Issue: Full Business Case for proposed Joint Strategic Commissioning Function Decision: to consider the full business case for establishing a new Joint Strategic Commissioning Function with NHS England and Somerset CCG			Trudi Grant, Public Health Director Tel: 01823 359015
Fp/17/08/06 First published: 16 August 2017	15 Nov 2017 Cabinet	Issue: Quarter 2 2017/18 Performance monitoring report Decision: to consider the quarter 2 update against the council's performance targets			Emma Plummer, Strategic Manager Performance Tel: 01823 359251
FP/17/08/07 First published: 16 August 2017	15 Nov 2017 Cabinet	Issue: 2018/19 Proposed Capital Programme Decision: to consider and recommend to November's Full Council the proposed Capital Programme for 2018/19			Elizabeth Watkin, Service Manager - Chief Accountant Tel: 01823359573
FP/17/08/11 First published: 16 August 2017	15 Nov 2017 Cabinet	Issue: 2017/18 Treasury Management mid-year report Decision: to consider and recommend to November's Full Council the mid-year report			Alan Sanford, Principal Investment Officer Tel: 01823 359585

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<p>Fp/17/07/04 First published: 12 July 2017</p>	<p>13 Dec 2017 Cabinet</p>	<p>Issue: Family support services for Somerset Decision: To outline the proposed approach and outline business case</p>			<p>Philippa Granthier, Assistant Director - Commissioning and Performance, Children's Services Commissioning Tel: 01823 359054</p>

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Scrutiny for Policies Children and Families Committee Work Programme

Committee meetings	Link to CYPP	Lead Member & Officer
15 September 2017		
SEND 0-25 Peer Review Update		Julian Wooster
Children's Social Care Statutory Customer Feedback report		Simon Clifford/Jan Stafford
Update on Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children		Julie Skorupka/Orla Dunn
Update on the Medium Term Financial Plan and savings targets		Martin Young
Update on Family Support Services		Alison Bell & Philippa Granthier
20 October 2017		
Regional Adoption Agency Update		Julian Wooster
SEND Peer Review - update		Julia Ridge
Family Support Services - update		Alison Bell/Philippa Granthier
Information Management (Data Handling)		Rowina Clint-Shanley
17 November 2017		
CYPP 2017/18 – Q2 Update		Philippa Granthier
Young Carers Update report		Tom Whitworth
8 December 2017		
Update on Family Based Care (fostering) Peninsula Framework		Louise Palmer
SEND Peer review - update		Julia Ridge
MTFP draft savings proposals		Kevin Nacey
26 January 2018		
MTFP draft settlement version		Kevin Nacey
16 March 2018		
CYPP 2017/18 – Q3 Update		Philippa Granthier
School Performance		Sue Rogers

(What impact does that have on Children in Somerset?)

Scrutiny for Policies Children and Families Committee Work Programme

Addressing drug and alcohol safeguarding concerns in families		Amanda Payne
20 April 2018		
18 May 2018		
15 June 2018		
CYPP 2017/18 – Q4 & Year 2 Update		Philippa Granthier
20 July 2018		
14 September 2018		
CYPP 2018-19 – Q1 Update		Philippa Granthier
19 October 2018		
16 November 2018		
CYPP 2018-19 – Q2 Update		Philippa Granthier
7 December 2018		

Note: Members of the Scrutiny Committee and all other Members of Somerset County Council are invited to contribute items for inclusion in the work programme. Please contact Jamie Jackson, Governance Manager Scrutiny, who will assist you in submitting your item. jajackson@somerset.gov.uk 01823 359040.

(What impact does that have on Children in Somerset?)

Scrutiny for Policies Children & Families Committee Outcome Tracker

Agenda items	Link to Former Imp Plan	Action owner	Agreed Outcome	RAG Status
13 May 2016	Link to CYPP			
Focus on the education of vulnerable children (To include Children Looked After, Special Educational Needs and Free School Meal recipients)	All	Sue Rogers	The update was accepted and it was suggested that to help improve information available for and communications with all service users a decision tree (visual aid in the form of a diagram/flow chart) for the benefit of service users be considered.	Pending
17 June 2016				
Any Business of Urgency	All	Chairman	The Chairman suggested that 7 Members of the Committee each take a special interest in one of the 7 improvement programmes and focus their attention and consideration of each report of how progress was being made against their particular improvement programme. The DCS replied that he thought this was a good suggestion and offered to provide Officer support for any Member of the Committee.	By the end of the quadrennium 5 Members of the Committee had volunteered.
22 July 2016				
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)		Sue Rogers	Committee received and accepted an update and requested a further update at a future meeting.	Update at Sept 17 mtg
9 September 2016				
DBS checks	All	Scrutiny Manager	Officers to ensure all Members of the Committee, as well as those on the Adults and Health Scrutiny Committee and the Corporate Parenting Board have completed a DBS check	Members will be required to complete DBS checks.
11 November 2016				
Work Programme	All	Leigh Redman	Chairman to liaise with the Chairman of Adults and Health Scrutiny Committee to discuss the possibility of a joint meeting.	Incomplete
9 December 2016				

(What impact does that have on the Children in Somerset?)

Scrutiny for Policies Children & Families Committee Outcome Tracker

27 January 2017				
Impact of proposed financial changes to Schools	All	Sue Rogers	The Committee encouraged Officers to continue to lobby for these proposed changes to be made so the higher funding materialised.	Pending
10 March 2017				
Addressing drug and alcohol safeguarding concerns in families		Amanda Payne	The update was accepted and it was suggested that an update report be provided at a future meeting in 12 months.	March 2018
School Performance 2016		Sue Rogers	The report was accepted with an update requested in 12 months.	March 2018
7 April 2017				
Data Handling update		Rowina Clift-Shanley	The update was accepted and it was suggested that an update report be provided at a future meeting.	Oct 2017
Young Carers Task and Finish Final report		Gemma Waugh	The Committee agreed the suggested recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Children and Families/Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and requested a follow-up/update report in 6 months.	Nov 2017
16 June 2017				
Work programme		J Wooster Sue Rogers	To include for the 29 July meeting an update on the MFTP process and savings within Children's Services; To include for the 15 September meeting an update on Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children	Sept 2017 agenda both items
SEND Peer Review		Julia Ridge	The report was accepted and it was suggested and agreed that an update be provided in a few months to give the Committee an overview of the progress	Sept 2017
CYPP		Committee Chair	The Chairman encouraged every Member of the Committee to familiarise themselves with the CYPP with a view to having each Committee member becoming a Champion for one of the 7 improvement programmes.	July meeting
28 July 2017				
Children and Young People's Plan update		Julian Wooster	To receive a SEND update, to include EHCP figures, at Sept meeting	Sept 2017

Scrutiny for Policies Children & Families Committee Outcome Tracker

Children and Young People's Plan – Member Champion		Philippa Granthier	5 of the 7 programmes have a Member Champion	
Family Hubs – now Family Support Services		A Bell/ P Granthier	It was suggested and agreed that an update report be provided as a standing item at each meeting.	Sept 2017
Fostering Recruitment Activity		Becky Hopkins	It was requested that the final version of the revised progression scheme of fee payments be circulated to the Committee once approved.	

The CYPP has been produced following a multi-agency process, overseen by Somerset Children's Trust. Seven improvement programmes have been identified – our work is focused on ensuring progress and achievement within these 7 programmes:

1. Supporting children, families and communities to become more resilient
2. Promoting healthy outcomes and giving children the best start in life
3. Improving emotional health and wellbeing
4. Building skills for life
5. Providing help early and effectively
6. Achieving effective multi-agency support for more vulnerable children and young people and developing an excellent children's social work service
7. Embedding a think family approach across the workforce

Key:

Completed	Action complete and will be removed from tracker for next meeting.
Pending	Action on-going or plans in place to address.
Incomplete	No action currently in place with a minimum of 3 months since action agreed.

(What impact does that have on the Children in Somerset?)

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SEND 0-25 – Peer Review Update

Lead Officer: Julian Wooster, Director of Children’s Services

Author: Rowina Clift-Shanley, Senior Programme Manager

Contact Details: 07585 983353

Cabinet Member: Frances Nicholson

Division and Local Member: ALL

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report is to update Scrutiny on progress of the SEND 0-25 intervention nine priorities following the Peer Review report to Scrutiny in June 2017. The peer review acknowledged some good practice and initiatives throughout the service but a local area inspection is likely to find ‘significant weaknesses’ in practice. This is based on progress to date in the implementation of SEND reforms and a lack of evidence to display the positive impact made in relation to outcomes for children across Somerset to date.
- 1.2. A system wide response to the Peer Review has been mobilised with nine priority areas for improvement identified (see 2.1). Objectives have been agreed and actions to demonstrate improvement are in progress. In addition the results of the interim survey from the Education Health and Care Plans experience and impact in Somerset (Personal Outcomes Evaluation Tool- POET) were published in July (Appendix 1). This survey, available for children and young people, parents and practitioners, offered an opportunity to use the experiences of people who receive SEND services to inform the priority group action plans (see 2.2).
- 1.3. Following questions at the last Scrutiny meeting about the numbers of children with SEND in Somerset, a SEND dataset has been produced (Appendix 2). This dataset will be developed further and will be used to report progress on the SEND 0-25 intervention arrangements and evidence improvement.
- 1.4. Linking to better Education and prospects for our Children in the County Plan. *We will aim to have better school results for all children across all key stages and in particular at GCSE and A-Level with a particular focus on disadvantaged children.*

2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

- 2.1. SEND 0-25 Intervention arrangements have been put in place to address the findings from the Peer Review as reported to scrutiny in June 2017. The Committee are asked to consider and comment on these arrangements. The nine multi-agency priority groups have been mobilised and have identified actions which would evidence improvement and improve outcomes for Children and Young people with SEND in Somerset. These are being closely managed until December 2017 with multi-agency strategic leads reporting monthly on progress.

	Priority Group	Objectives
1	Joint Commissioning.	To ensure effective joint arrangements are in place to commission services.
2	Health engagement and	Review of therapy services Health Professionals to be supported so that they

	Co-ordination	<p>contribute to EHCPs in a co-ordinated and timely way, to deliver a plan with SMART outcomes</p> <p>Address delays in child development through application of Speech and Language Therapy services for children experiencing speech and language problems</p> <p>Ensure there is clear navigation of services for children with specific needs in line with NICE guidance</p> <p>Clarify and communicate health duties in SEND 0-25</p>
3	Transitions	<p>Improve phase transition planning to adult services for children (14+) with long term conditions and disabilities.</p> <p>To improve the integrated arrangements between education, health and adult social care (including children's services for care leavers) for young people aged 19-25 in the assessment, planning and review of their EHCPs.</p>
4	Participation	<p>To strengthen the involvement of children and parents in co-producing plans (inc EHCPs, Pastoral Support Plans, Early Help) to address SEND.</p> <p>Further define and improve the SEND local offer by raising the profile of Somerset's local provision to meet children and young people's holistic needs for the duration of their childhood</p>
5	Early Help for SEND	<p>To ensure children with SEND are identified early and receive support to meet their needs.</p>
6	Statutory assessment & Education Health & care plan (EHCP)	<p>To ensure all children who need one have an up-to-date EHCP</p> <p>To ensure EHCPs are effective in meeting the needs of children who have SEND, establishing an auditing programme with the findings reported to Scrutiny on a Quarterly basis</p>
7	Complex cases	<p>To ensure the most vulnerable children in Somerset have an integrated and co-ordinated care plan enabling more children to remain in Somerset where appropriate.</p>
8	School Improvement	<p>Develop advice and guidance for all schools and settings to ensure that settings are meeting their statutory duties under the Equalities Act, and the Code of Practice. Develop a monitoring process.</p> <p>All schools and settings to consistently use the Core Standards as part of their provision.</p> <p>Schools and settings will feel supported to confidently</p>

		<p>meet the needs of pupils in all areas including those with all four categories of need with a particular focus on social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH) learning from best practice in Somerset.</p> <p>A continuum of local authority or maintained provision will be available to meet the needs of pupils with complex and behavioural challenges, reducing the need for independent provision and exclusions. Tackle the issues created by children and young people in schools and settings who do not yet have an EHCP</p>
9	Ofsted Preparation	To ensure that the Local Area is prepared for its inspection and that there is a team in place to support the process.

2.2. In July 2017 an interim POET survey reported a significantly larger response rate than last year due to a targeted engagement process. The report recommended key areas for improvement and these have been used to inform the actions for the priority groups see below. Progress will be reported to the SEND 0-25 intervention group as part of on-going arrangements.

- Review EHCP business processes for coproduction, and publish good practice standards for Somerset. (Priority 6)
- Establish process for tracking EHCP outcomes at key stage end and embed in Somerset systems. (Priority 8)
- Coordinate the planned engagement programme for parents, children and young people across education, health and care to ensure: (Priority 4)
 - clear programme of events that can be signposted to each other
 - sharing of opportunities for consultation and coproduction across a 12 month period,
 - provide an opportunity for collating, comparing and contrasting feedback
 - a means to evaluate overall reach, and gaps
 - maximise efficiency and use of available resources including IAS services
 - appropriate use of “piggy-backing” on existing events as well as judicious use of dedicated information and engagement activities.
- Improve coordination, publication, awareness and accessibility of “you said-we did” in response to local feedback, based on engagement and feedback in POET and related SEND consultations and surveys. Include in Local Offer annual report (due August 2017). (Priority 4)
- Make sure all those involved in inspection can answer the “so what” question

– What did you find out from feedback from parent carers/children and young people and so what have you done differently as a result? (Priority 9)

- Work with schools to develop and share improved practice for involving children and young people in expressing their views, ideas, and supporting children in making choices from the earliest years – good practice examples, peer to peer support, track consistency and quality of evidence of “voice” available in annual reviews. (Priority 8)
- Improve coproduction and participation at SEN Support (link to Core Standards development work). (Priorities 4 and 8).
- Review the Cambridgeshire SEND Ofsted report (June 2017) as the difference between parent carer strategic and frontline participation/feedback has echoes with what feedback is telling us in Somerset (Priority 4)

3. Background

- 3.1.** A peer review in May acknowledged some good practice and initiatives throughout the service but a local area inspection is likely to find ‘significant weaknesses’ in practice, based on progress to date in the implementation of SEND reforms and a lack of evidence to display the positive impact made in relation to outcomes for children across Somerset to date.
- 3.2.** The POET survey conducted by In Control (with support from the Department of Education and Lancaster University) has produced interim results in advance of the survey closure at the end of July 2017 (Appendix 1). Full results are due in the Autumn 2017.

4. Consultations undertaken

- 4.1.** Somerset has taken part in the nationally available Education, Health and Care plan POET survey over two successive academic years. POET is run by In Control with the support of the Department of Education and Lancaster University.

POET surveys are available for children and young people, parents and practitioners. In Control provide data reports for each category which includes local and national comparators. The POET survey outcomes are being used to validate and strengthen the 9 priority area intervention plans.

5. Implications

- 5.1.** Any changes recommended as a result of the priority intervention areas should improve the educational outcomes for people with SEND.

6. Background papers

- 6.** Report to June meeting of Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee.

Appendix 1

PERSONAL OUTCOMES EVALUATION TOOL (POET) SURVEY *INTERIM* SUMMARY RESULTS 2017



Somerset has taken part in the nationally available Education, Health and Care plan POET survey over two successive academic years. POET is run by In Control with the support of the Department of Education and Lancaster University.

POET surveys are available for children and young people, parents and practitioners. In Control provide data reports for each category which includes local and national comparators..

This **interim** report is based on the data set available in April 2017 (Appendices 1, 2, 3) and a comparison with the results from July 2016 (Appendix 4). A further and final set of data reports will be available when the POET closes at the end of July 2017.

Key messages

- There is a good increase this year in the numbers of returns from Somerset in 2017 compared to 2016 (93% increase to date). A targeted engagement programme was put in place between January and July 2017 and the impact of different activities can be seen in the timeline and return data (Appendix 5).
- There is however little improvement in results from 2016:
 - Somerset continues to be below the national picture for full involvement of parents and children in the EHC process and plan writing. There is indicative potential for improvement as figures for partial involvement are higher than last year.
 - The impact of EHCPs on outcomes is mixed, but is somewhat disappointing as some of our results are now below the national picture.

The analysis of Somerset's results suggest:

1. A priority to understand how EHCP outcomes will be tracked and improved for children and young people with complex, long term SEND, and their families. A consistent understanding is required across the EHC workforce in Somerset.
 - Priorities: (1) quality of life, including taking part in community activities, being relaxed and happy, and (2) looking to the future
2. An urgent need for a concentrated, consistent effort to listen to, and involve children, young people and their parents in the process of constructing and reviewing EHC plans by caseworkers and supporting practitioners, particularly the

key information services (SENDIAS, Independent Supporters and Local Offer) ¹

3. A need to embed participation in all stages of assess-plan-do and review so that children and young people acquire the skills of self-advocacy, choice and control, parents are confident that their views count and practitioners become more confident and skilled in supporting and eliciting views and including these in review and planning for individuals.
4. A focus on a shared approach to personalisation, choice and control for personal budgets across education, health and care, supported by workforce development and systems to enable SEND personal budgets and direct payments to be a practical reality.

Key recommendations for action:

1. Review EHCP business processes for coproduction, and publish good practice standards for Somerset.²
2. Establish process for tracking EHCP outcomes at key stage end and embed in Somerset systems.
3. Coordinate the planned engagement programme for parents, children and young people across education, health and care to ensure:
 - clear programme of events that can be signposted to each other
 - sharing of opportunities for consultation and coproduction across a 12 month period, provide
 - an opportunity for collating, comparing and contrasting feedback
 - a means to evaluate overall reach, and gaps
 - maximise efficiency and use of available resources including IAS services
 - appropriate use of “piggy-backing” on existing events as well as judicious use of dedicated information and engagement activities.
4. Improve coordination, publication, awareness and accessibility of “you said-we did” in response to local feedback, based on engagement and feedback in POET and related SEND consultations and surveys. Include in Local Offer annual report (due August 2017).
5. Make sure all those involved in inspection can answer the “so what” question – What did you find out from feedback from parent carers/children and young people and so what have you done differently as a result?
6. Work with schools to develop and share improved practice for involving children and young people in expressing their views, ideas, and supporting children in

¹ Research report (DfE , IFF Research and University of Derby) March 2017, **Experiences of Education, Health and Care Plans**, showed use of these services was related to a better experience of the process.

² A listening card for TAC meetings was coproduced and is available for use routinely as a feedback tool

making choices from the earliest years – good practice examples, peer to peer support, track consistency and quality of evidence of “voice” available in annual reviews.

7. Improve coproduction and participation at SEN Support (link to Core Standards development work).³
8. Review the Cambridgeshire SEND Ofsted report (June 2017) as the difference between parent carer strategic and frontline participation/feedback has echoes with what feedback is telling us in Somerset.

9. Actions for final 2016-17 POET report:

- 9.1 Update interim POET report with final results available end of July.
- 9.2 Look at the comments page for individual questions such as the outcomes one (see Herts Inspection report) – given the critical importance of the quality of relationships between families and professionals, look at the consistent POET feedback, how people feel they have been treated/respected has an important impact on their perception of the outcome.
- 9.3 Consider POET data along with feedback from other sources, eg short breaks survey/ SEND parent road-show feedback.⁴
- 9.4 Establish number of EHCPs in place over period of both 2015-16 and 2016-17 survey to compare increase in returns against increase in potential respondent group.

Results in more detail:

✓ **An increase in numbers of surveys**

- 93% increase in returns in June 2017 compared to full year 2016 (timeline of engagement activity against returns shows impact particularly of face to face events (Appendix 5).
- 286% increase in proportion of online completion versus paper/ telephone.
- 10.7% decrease in CYP returns however no responses from CYP under 11 – 77% over 16 compared to 31% nationally.
- The needs profile represented is in line with national picture.
- In 2016 only 10% of EHCPs were older than 1 year compared to 50% this year which means that more returns represent plans that have been reviewed at least once. The proportion of plans that were transfers from statements of special educational needs (SEN) is marginally higher this year but remains 20% less than nationally.
- 132% increase parent carers and 72% in practitioners. The practitioner returns this year are already sufficient to generate a report (insufficient last year). We are below the national picture for practitioners working in the secondary sector and have more 16+ and health/care responses from practitioners than nationally.

³ A Customer Satisfaction Survey used in 2016 is available for re-use in 2017-18 (Appendix 4)

⁴ See for example the concerns regarding direct payments in both the Short Breaks and POET surveys.

- The increase in returns, whilst positive, is not at the same rate as the increase in the number of EHCPs in Somerset.
- Analysis of returns in June has informed the communication plan for final few weeks of survey and the recommended engagement activity for any successive POET programme.



Somerset continues to be below the national picture for full involvement of parents and children in the EHC process and plan writing

- The Somerset – national gap has **increased** and the results indicate a worsening of results with only 1/3 reporting full involvement for themselves or their children comparing to more than half in 2016.
- CYP reported “I was involved” for 46% of surveys – this compares to 66% nationally and is in the context of 77% returns being from those over 16 in Somerset.
- Partial involvement is higher and is close or above the national figures which indicates some potential for short term improvement.
- Knowing how much is in their personal budget has dropped from 25% to 0% of the 2017 returns (47% and 91% nationally) (the majority of Somerset PBs are health/social care currently). Although financial transparency is not evident there is improvement (50% now 100%) in the proportion reporting full or partial involvement in decision making about use of the budgets.








The impact of EHCPs on outcomes is mixed but remains disappointing

- Last year, Somerset’s results were closer to the national picture for all outcomes, this year only the impact on family relationships and friendships echoed the national picture.
- Looking to the future, quality of life, taking part in school and learning were all reported less well than nationally although the last two had more positive ratings than in 2016. Looking to the future had a poorer rating than nationally (45% versus 74%). Community inclusion remains a concern as it was in 2016 (40% poor/very poor rating (32% nationally)).
- In all 7 areas asked about, Somerset practitioners found the EHCP helped less well than nationally for example 73% said the plan helped partnership working with parents compared to 88% nationally, and 33% said the plan did **not** help with providing individual tailored support compared to 16% nationally.
- In 2016 children reported 4 impacts as being in the poor/very poor category. This year **no** outcomes were in this category. “Being heard” is

no longer good/very good (56% in 2016), and Choice about Support has shown a shift from 28% returns in the poor/very poor to 31% returns in the good/ very good category. At this interim point children's returns are predominantly from older young people (16+), compared to the national.

- The parent reported impact of support provided on relationships with staff has been maintained (69% to 73%) and is above the national figure (54%).
- The impact of support on quality of life both nationally and locally shows a less positive return reduced from 67% to 47% (Somerset), 57% to 47% nationally (2016/17).
- The percentage saying that support had made things worse or a lot worse has increased in Somerset from 10% to 18% (nationally 8%).
- Children and young people reported improved results for enjoying time with friends and taking part in fun activities. Community inclusion remained at a poor level and quality of life had a less positive result than in 2016. Other areas remain in the good category at a similar or a little lower rate than in 2016. The pattern of responses remains similar to the national in both years.

Outcome	2016	2017
I am as healthy as I can be	75% good	69% good
I do the best I can in school/ college or work	76% good	77% good
I enjoy time with friends	33% poor	62% good
I enjoy my home and life	85% good	69% good
I feel safe at home and out and about	84% good	62% good
I take part in activities I like	32% poor	69% good
I can do things in my area	33% poor	38% poor
I can enjoy being relaxed and happy	89% good	54% good

Outcome measure/Performance Indicators	Current performance (as at end of July 2017)	Direction of travel (Previous data for end of June 2017)   
Total number of children with an Education Health and Care plan (all Somerset Children whether they are in a Somerset school or not and children from other Local Authorities who attend a Somerset School).	1052*	977
Total number of children with a statement.	635*	687
Percentage of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) completed in the academic year within 20 weeks.	56%	54% 
Total number of conversions (to EHCPs) required by March 2018 that are completed (including those ceased).	46% (530/1148) **	44% (501/1145) 
Number of SEND cases which are Electively Home Educated (EHE).	190	179
Number of SEND cases educated out of Somerset.	398	392
Children's Social Care Cases which are SEND.	1005	1028
Total number of Children Looked After with SEND.	269	269
Total number of Child Protection cases with SEND.	107	104

Note: For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author

Somerset County Council
Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families
Committee - 15 September 2017

Children's Social Care Statutory Customer Feedback Report 2016-2017

Lead Officer: Julian Wooster, Director Children's Services

Author: Rebecca Martin, Service Manager – Customer Access & Experience

Contact Details: 01823 356257

Cabinet Member: Frances Nicholson, Cabinet member for children and families

Division and Local Member: All

1. Summary

1.1. Somerset County Council [SCC] has a statutory obligation to report on the operation of its complaints procedure in relation to Children's Social Care Services. The regulations require that an annual report is produced that includes; the number of complaints at each stage including those considered by the Local Government Ombudsman; the type, timescale and outcomes of complaints; which customer groups made complaints; learning and service improvements and a summary equality monitoring data. In addition to this, the annual report contains a summary of the compliments and comments received by the service.

This report A has been produced by the Service Manager – Customer Access & Experience and has been approved by the Director of Children's Services. It will be published on the Council's website. The key messages and findings from the report include:

- 426 pieces of customer feedback received during the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017. This comprised 267 complaints, 124 compliments, 16 comments and 19 member enquiries.
- Virtually all complaints were resolved at the initial stage (Stage 1) with only 4 cases escalated to Stage 2 and/or Local Government Ombudsman investigation.
- The average timescale for resolving a complaint during the year was 26 days. Whilst this exceeds our local 10 day target, it does represent improvement on the previous year (29 days).
- The main reasons for complaints is consistent with last year – communication, service provision and attitude/behaviour of staff. There has been an improvement from 29% to 15% in terms of complaints about attitude/behaviour of staff but complaints about communication have risen from 17% to 22%.
- Recommendations have been made to review the complaints

policy and associated processes with a view to improving communication with the customer and resolution timescales.

2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

- 2.1. The committee is asked to review and provide any appropriate comments on the information contained within the report.
- 2.2. The committee is asked to make comment and suggestion regarding improvement actions in relation to the findings of this report.

3. Background

3.1. SCC and Customer Feedback

SCC is committed to encouraging and using customer feedback. All customer feedback is viewed positively as an opportunity to learn and improve customer experience.

SCC defines customer feedback as follows:

Complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction, which isn't resolved immediately, with the actions or inactions of the Council or its agents, either by a member of the public directly affected or by someone acting on their behalf.

A complaint can be made about any of the functions provided by the local authority under the Children Act 1989. For example, a complaint may arise as a result of:

- An unwelcome or disputed decision;
- concern about the quality or appropriateness of a service;
- delay in decision making or provision of services;
- delivery or non-delivery of services including complaints procedures;
- quantity, frequency, change or cost of a service;
- attitude or behaviour of staff;
- application of eligibility and assessment criteria;
- the impact on a child or young person of the application of a local authority policy;
- assessment, care management and review.

Compliment: An unprompted expression of satisfaction or praise regarding the services or actions of the Council.

Comment: A positive or negative remark or statement about the Council's services, policies and practices. Comments might make suggestions about the services being delivered or the ways in which they are delivered them.

SCC complies with statute and adopts a three stage complaints process for Children's Social Care complaints.

4. Implications

- 4.1.** The Authority has a statutory duty to establish and publicise its procedure for dealing with representations and complaints about its services.

5. Background papers

- 5.1.** The full Children and Young People's Services Customer Feedback Report 2016-17 is attached as Appendix A. Somerset's County Council's policy and procedural guidance referring to complaints, representation, compliments and comments for Children's and Young People's Services is also published on the corporate website:

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/have-your-say/complaints-comments-and-compliments/complaints-comments-compliments/>

Customer Service Charter is also available

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/have-your-say/complaints-comments-and-compliments/complaints-comments-compliments/>

Customer Feedback policies can be found at

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/have-your-say/complaints-comments-and-compliments/complaints-comments-compliments/>

Note: For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author.

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Somerset County Council

Children's Social Care Customer Feedback Report

1st April 2016 – 31 March 2017



Lead Director: Julian Wooster, Director Children's Services

Author: Rebecca Martin, Service Manager – Customer Access & Experience

Date: 01/09/2017

Version: FINAL v1.0

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Introduction

Somerset County Council is committed to encouraging children and families to register their feedback and to then use that learning to improve services and the customer experience.

This is the annual report of customer feedback received by Children's Social Care during the year 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017.

As well as this annual report, the Director of Children's Services and nominated deputies regularly reviews customer feedback data to ensure lessons are learned, insight is gained and improvements are made.

Context

Data used in this report is taken from the corporate iCasework system which, since September 2015, has been the single system for recording and managing customer feedback within the council. It should be noted that there has been a considerable increase in feedback recorded since the introduction of iCasework. This is thought to be a result of more consistent recording and better reporting. For this reason, at this stage in the life of the relatively new process, it would be unwise to draw too firm a conclusion regarding annual trends and the Customer Experience Team will continue to regularly monitor the volume of feedback received and provide regular updates to service leads.

SCC defines customer feedback as follows:

Complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction, which isn't resolved immediately, with the actions or inactions of the Council or its agents, either by a member of the public directly affected or by someone acting on their behalf.

A complaint may arise for a number of reasons, for example as a result of:

- The standard of service received
- Our response to a request for service
- Our actions or inactions
- The behaviour of a member of staff
- Perceived harassment, bias or unfair discrimination

Compliment: An unprompted expression of satisfaction or praise regarding the services or actions of the Council.

Comment: A positive or negative remark or statement about the Council's services, policies and practices. Comments might make suggestions about the services being delivered or the way in which they have been delivered.

Customers are able to give feedback by telephone, internet, mail and in person and full details of the SCC complaints process is available on our website:

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/have-your-say/complaints-comments-and-compliments/complaints-comments-compliments/>

1.1 Summary

Children's Social Care received 426 pieces of logged customer feedback during the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017. This comprised 267 complaints, 124 compliments, 16 comments and 19 member enquiries.

Of those complaints received, virtually all were dealt with at the initial stage (Stage 1) with only four cases escalated into a formal or Local Government Ombudsman investigation.

More than half of the complaints were either withdrawn or not upheld at the initial stage, around one third were partially upheld and 9% were upheld.

The reasons for complaints being partially or totally upheld come in three main areas – communication, staff behaviour and service improvements.

The county council has set a target resolution timescale of 10 working days for initial complaints and children's social care complaints have been in excess of that target at an average of 26 days, previously this was 29 days.

In terms of compliments, the feedback was roughly in line with the previous annual report with 124 received and the largest number for the leaving care team.

The reasons for compliments were where services had made a difference, quality of information and advice and customer care. A break down by area is included in the report.

More detail on this summary can be found in the following analysis.

1.2 Learning & Improvement

Over half of the complaints received recorded primary causes as falling under the communication, service provision or attitude and behaviour of staff categories which is consistent with the previous 12 months. However, it is encouraging that complaints about the 'attitude and behaviour' of staff have fallen from 29% of the total to 15%, indicating a significant improvement in this area.

Complaints about communication have risen on the previous year from 17% of the total to 22% and represent the biggest single 'theme'. It is often the case that communication failure plays a part in customer dissatisfaction, sometimes during the management of a complaint, even where there primary cause of a complaint is not the communication in itself.

The experience of the Customer Experience Team is that complaints often escalate when communication with the customer is absent, infrequent, incomplete or unclear. This can lead to persistent contact, increased customer dissatisfaction (compounding the original 'mistakes'), unacceptable customer behaviour, the need for costly investigation, scrutiny from the Local Government Ombudsman and

potential for compensation payment. This is an area for improvement for Children’s Social Care and across other Somerset County Council services and is addressed in the recommendations below.

There have been a number of cases in the past year where customer behaviour has been viewed as unacceptable or unreasonably persistent. These handful of cases have demanded disproportionate levels of staff effort which has had an impact on the ability of services (CSC, Customer Experience Team and the Contact Centre) to support other customers. Consistent management of these customers is an area for improvement and is addressed in the recommendations below.

Below is a summary of recommendations resulting from this report. These recommendations will be taken forward by the Customer Experience Team for consideration by the appropriate services/managers.

Recommendation 1
Work with Children’s Social Care to establish blocks and barriers experienced in the service to working effectively within the complaints process.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the existing complaints process, including stages, timescales and roles to establish blocks and barriers to effective complaints management. • Feed in to corporate review and options appraisal of complaints process.
Recommendation 2
Consider how the complaints process, the Customer Experience Team and the iCasework system can better support communication with the customer during the handling of complaints.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring customer communication is a key consideration in the complaints process options appraisal. • Making better use of iCasework to minimise delays & identify ‘inaction’ on cases. • Consider the addition of a ‘QA’ role to the process to ensure clear and comprehensive responses at Stage 1 (reduce escalation and avoidable contact). • Consider the structure of the iCasework system, how it can support a revised process and changes that can be made to encourage/enforce completeness in recording (e.g. equalities data etc).
Recommendation 3
Improve management of customers who display unacceptable behaviour and/or are unreasonably persistent.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision of current policy to include impact assessment for restriction of access. • Consistent use of policy in all cases.

2.1 Previous Year Comparison

Figures for 2016/17 show an overall decrease in total feedback received when compared with figures recorded in the 12 months prior:

Feedback Type	+/-	%
All Feedback	Decrease	4.7
Complaint	Decrease	11.8
Compliment	Decrease	8.1
Comment	Increase	77.7
Member Enquiries	Unknown	-

2.2 Escalation Overview

257 Children’s Social Care complaints were resolved during the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017. 253 cases (99%) were resolved at ‘Stage 1’ of the process. Two cases escalated and were resolved at Stage 2 with no cases investigated and closed at Stage 3 and 2 by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) during the year. This is a slight improvement on the previous period 12 month (96% resolved at Stage One).

2.3 Performance Overview

Somerset County Council’s complaint procedure sets a target resolution timescale of 10 working days for Stage 1 complaints. The average resolution time for Children’s Social Care complaints in 2016/17 has been 26 working days. This is a slight improvement on the previous year (29 days) but still exceeds the current policy target.

2.4 Outcomes Overview

Over half of the complaints resolved during the year (58%) were not upheld, withdrawn/rejected or resolved upon receipt. Just 9% of complaints were upheld and a further 33% partially upheld, therefore for 2016/17 some fault was found in 42% of cases which represents an increase on the previous year (32%).

2.5 Causes Overview

The majority of complaints (56%) result from three themes: communication, service improvement and attitude and behaviour of staff. This is in line with the results for the previous year though there has been a percentage decrease for complaints about the attitudes and behaviour of staff but an increase in complaints where the cause was identified as communication related.

Section 3 Detailed Analysis

3.1 Volumes and Comparisons

Feedback Type	1 April 2014 – 31 March 2015	1 April 2015 – 31 March 2016	1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017
CSC Complaints	273	303	267
CSC Compliments	Unknown	135	124
CSC Comments	Unknown	9	16
CSC Member Enquiries	Unknown	Unknown	19
Total Feedback	273	447	426

3.2 Resolution Stages and Times

The table below shows the number and percentage of complaints that were resolved at each stage of the process during the year. Previous year data is given for comparison.

Resolution Stage	1 st April 2015 – 31 st March 2016		1 st April 2016 – 31 st March 2017	
	No.	%	No.	%
Stage 1	291	96%	253	99%
Stage 2	10	3%	2	1%
Stage 3	0	0%	0	0
LGO	2	1%	2	0
	303	100%	257*	100%

* The number of resolved complaints for the year is not equal to the number received. This is because some complaints take longer to resolve and may span across two financial years.

The current SCC policy sets a target for resolution of Stage 1 complaints of 10 working days though this can be extended in agreement with the customer if it is not possible to complete the investigation in that timeframe. The table below shows the current average resolution times for Children's Social Care complaint cases.

Average Resolution Times		
Resolution Stage	1 st April 2015 – 31 st March 2016	1 st April 2016 – 31 st March 2017
Stage 1	29 working days	26 working days
Stage 2	N/A	114 working days
LGO	N/A	319 working days

3.3 Complaint Outcomes

The table below shows the outcome of the 257 cases that were closed during the year

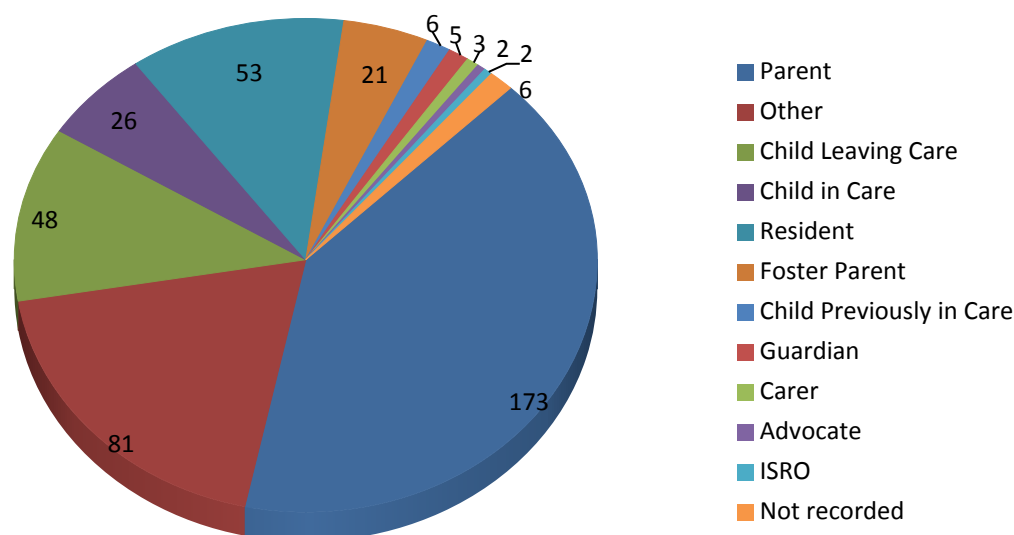
Outcomes	1 st April 2015 – 31 st March 2016	1 st April 2016 – 31 st March 2017		
		Cases	%	+/-
Upheld	10%	25	9%	-
Not Upheld	48%	89	35%	-

Partially Upheld	22%	85	33%	+
Resolved Upon Receipt	8%	20	8%	Neu
Case Withdrawn/Rejected	12%	38	15%	+
	100%	257	100%	

3.4 Customer Profiles

Children’s Social Care feedback comes in through a variety of sources. 47% of all feedback received in 2016/17 came from people identifying as parents, guardians, carers or foster parents. Feedback received directly from children (those in care, previously in care or leaving care) represents 19% of the total. Of the remaining 34%, 1% of feedback came from an advocate or Independent Safeguarding Reviewing Officer with the remaining 33% listed as ‘other’ or ‘resident’.

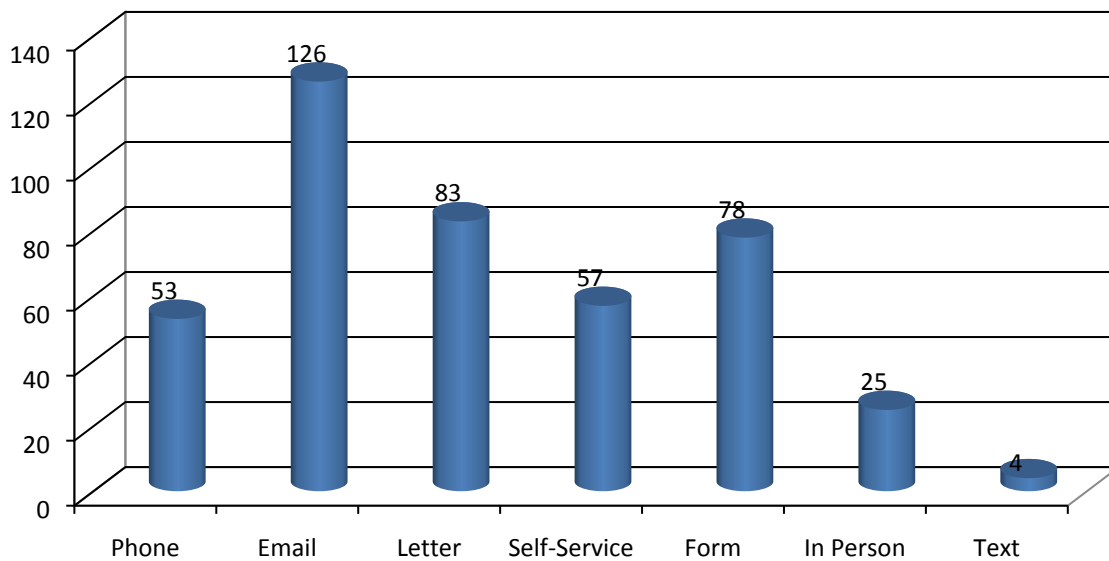
Complaints Source



Whilst the iCasework system is able to record ethnicity and age data in relation to customer feedback, it is evident from the data that this is not consistently happening. In 97% of cases, ethnicity is not recorded or recorded as ‘prefer not to say’. In terms of age, again there was no data recorded in 54% of cases, 39% were aged over 18 and 6% under. 1% of customers preferred not to supply age data.

Customers are able to provide feedback through a number of channels. The chart below shows that email continues to be the preferred channel for feedback (30%) followed by letter (20%) and form (18%). Figures suggest that there is a small shift towards digital self-service and away from telephony in comparison to the previous 12 months.

Feedback by channel type

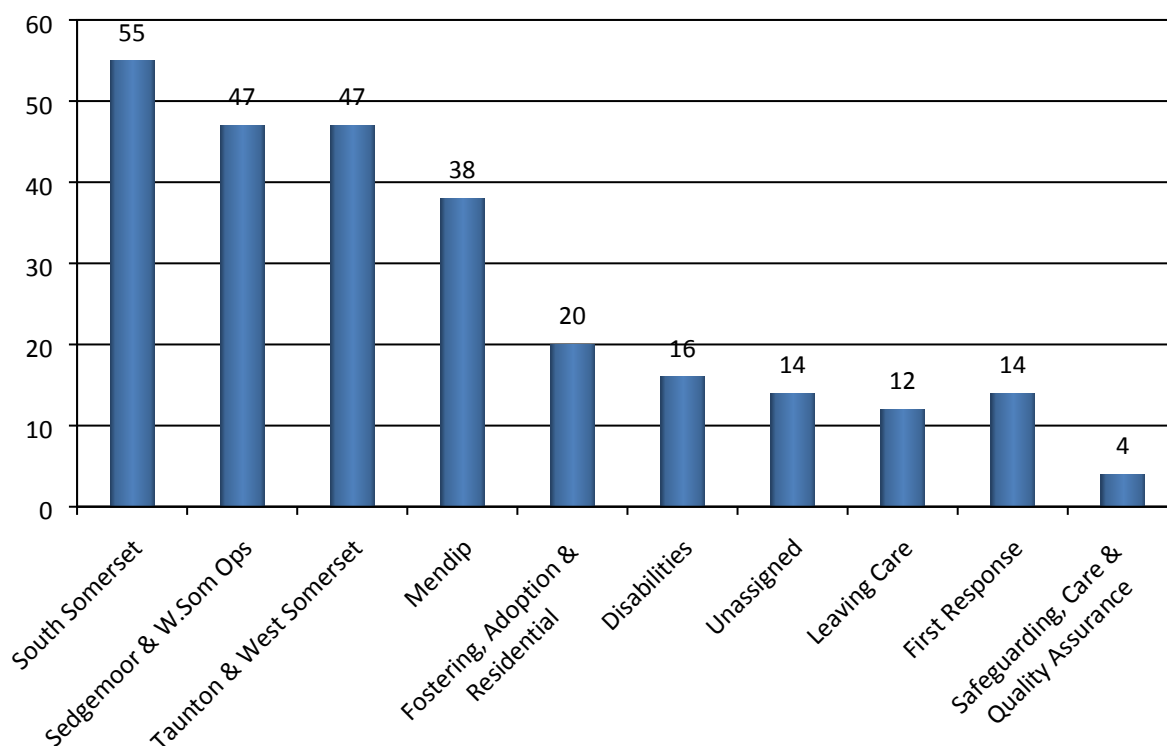


Contact Channel Used	1 Apr 2015 – 31 Mar 2016	1 Apr 2016 – 31 Mar 2017	+/-
Phone	18%	12%	-6%
Email	33%	30%	-3%
Letter	21%	20%	-1%
Self-Service	6%	13%	+7%
Form	14%	18%	+4%
In Person	8%	6%	-2%
Text	0%	1%	+1%

3.5 Complaints by Service/Team/Area

The chart below shows that the majority of complaints – 70% - are assigned to the geographical teams, with the percentages ranging between 20% and 14% of the total across the four areas. Of the other services, Fostering, Adoption & Residential receive the highest number of complaints with around 7.5% of the total.

Complaints by Service Area



The table below shows the average resolution times across service areas for Stage One complaints resolved during the period to 31 March 2017:

Service Area	Average Resolution Time (working days)
First Response	54
Fostering, Adoption & Residential	49
Unassigned	38
Safeguarding, Care & Quality Assurance	35
Disabilities	31
Taunton & West Somerset	27
Sedgemoor	25
Leaving Care	24
Mendip	22
South Somerset	20

3.6 Reasons for Complaints

The table below shows a breakdown of the primary causes which have been recorded against each complaint made in the year. The second table and chart groups those causes by theme. The three largest themes for causes of complaints remain the same as the previous 12 months: communication, service provision and attitude and behaviour of staff. That said, complaints about attitude and behaviour of staff have fallen from 29% of the total to 15%. The share of complaints relating to communication has risen from 17% to 22%, being the biggest single theme. The top three account for more than half

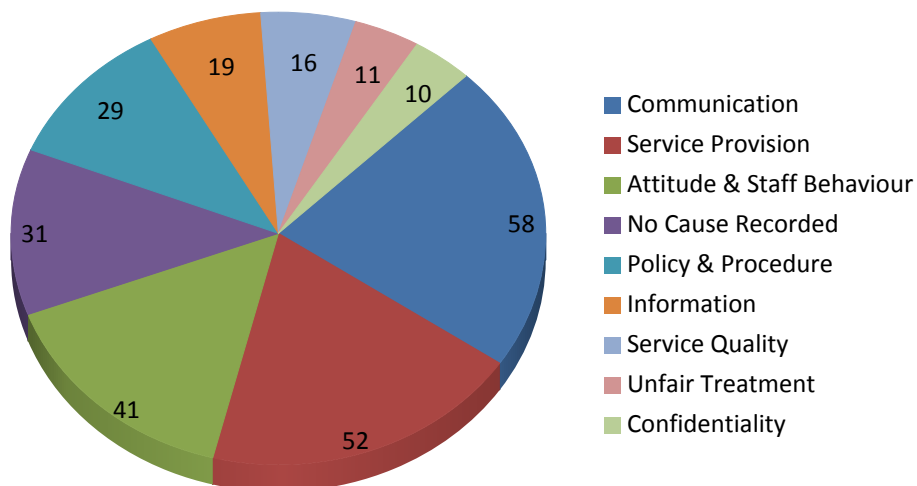
the complaints received (56%). 11 complaints were categorised under the theme of unfair treatment (bullying & harassment, discrimination) this year whereas none were recorded under this theme at all in the last period.

Primary Cause	Total	%
Professionalism	39	15
Quality of communication	32	12
Not recorded	31	12
Timeliness of communication	24	9
Plan	21	8
Accuracy of Information	19	7
Contact arrangements	15	6
Result of assessment	11	4
Arrangements for daily diving	10	4
Procedures	10	4
Implementation of procedures	8	3
Confidentiality	7	2
Bullying & Harassment	6	2
Implementation of policies	6	2
Timeliness of service provision	6	2
Discrimination	5	2
Privacy & Confidentiality	3	1
Service availability	3	1
Decision	2	1
Policies	2	1
Communication by the Service	2	1
Other policy/procedure cause	1	<1
Failure to deliver a service	1	<1
Refusal to do something	1	<1
Other service Failure Cause	1	<1
Failure to do something	1	<1
	267	

Category	Number	%
Communication		
• Quality of communication	58	22
• Timeliness of communication		
• Communication by the service		
Service Provision		
• Result of assessment	52	19
• Contact arrangements		
• Plan		
• Failure to deliver a service		
• Service availability		
• Other service failure cause		
Attitude & Behaviour of Staff		
• Professionalism	41	15
• Refusal/failure to do something		
No cause recorded	31	12

Policy and Procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision • Implementation of procedures • Implementation of policies • Policies 	29	11
Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accuracy of information 	19	7
Service Quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangements for daily living • Timeliness of service provision 	16	6
Unfair Treatment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying & Harassment • Discrimination 	11	4
Confidentiality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breach of confidentiality • Privacy & Confidentiality 	10	4
Total	267	

Complaint Cause Themes



3.7 Stage Two Investigations

2 Stage Two investigations were concluded during the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 in relation to Children’s Social Care (one Mendip and one Sedgemoor). Of the 2 cases, 1 was partially upheld and 1 upheld.

The root causes associated with the upheld elements of the partially upheld case were as follows:

- Result of assessment
- Professionalism
- Quality of communication

For the upheld case, the root causes are shown as follows:

- Implementation of procedures
- Implementation of policies

For the investigation of the upheld complaint, an external investigating officer and independent person were employed at a total cost of £9,551.

3.8 Local Government Ombudsman Investigations

Two Children's Social Care investigations were concluded by the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) within the year. Both cases were upheld.

In the first case, the Ombudsman found that the Council had mishandled its CSC involvement with the family. The Council accepted this decision and paid recommended costs. A recommendation was also made that some documentation be provided to the customer and the Council were found at fault later in the year for delay in supplying this information. A review of the case was undertaken with appropriate managers. Whilst the LGO decision on this case came during the 2016/17 year, the incidents on which it centred related back to late 2013.

In the second case, the Ombudsman found that the council were at fault in their involvement in the complainant's wife leaving the country with his children, without his knowledge. It was recommended that the council pay costs involved in returning the children to the UK and a payment in respect of the distress of the complainant. A public notice was issued in regards to this case. Whilst the LGO decision on this case came during the 2016/17 year, the incidents on which it centred related back to late 2012.

The Local Government Ombudsman (now the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman) produces an annual review for each council and the Somerset County Council 2017 review can be found at <http://www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre/councils-performance/council/Somerset%20County%20Council>

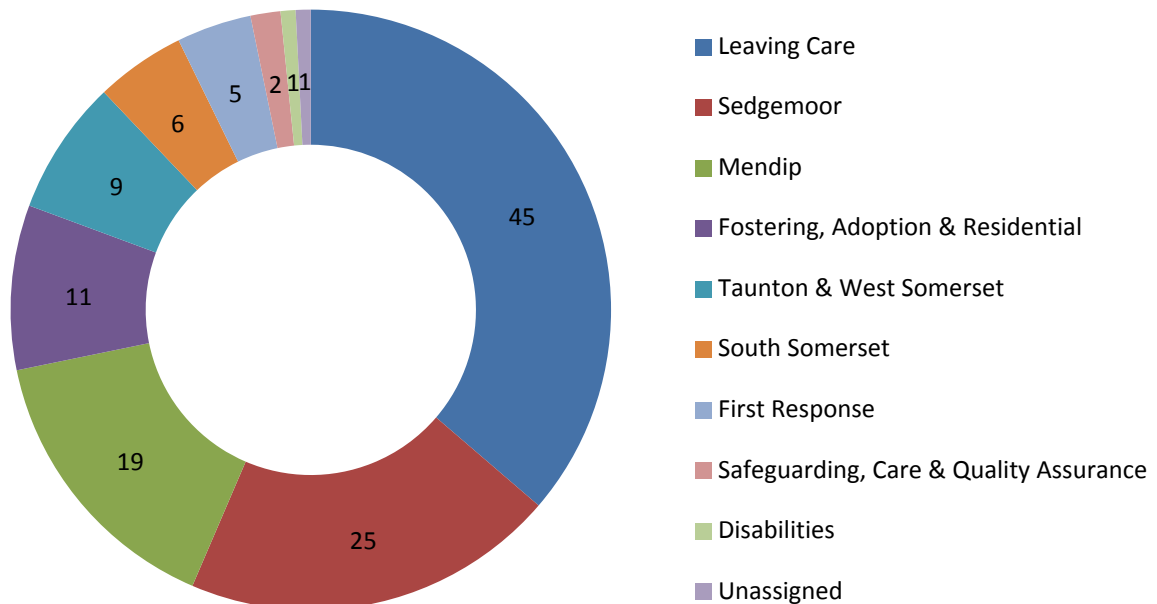
Section 4 Compliments

Children's Social Care received 124 compliments during the year to 31 March 2017. This represents a minor reduction when compared with the previous period (135).

The table below shows the spread of compliments across service areas and teams and the chart shows the split by function.

Service Area/Team	No. of Compliments	%
Leaving Care	45	36
Sedgemoor	25	20
Mendip	19	15
Fostering, Adoption & Residential	11	9
Taunton & West Somerset	9	7
South Somerset	6	5
First Response	5	4
Safeguarding, Care & Quality Assurance	2	2
Unassigned	1	1
Disabilities	1	1
	124	100%

Compliments received



The recorded reasons for compliments given are shown below:

Service	Cause of satisfaction	No.	%
Leaving Care	Service made a difference	25	36
	Quality of service	11	
	Customer care	5	
	Quality of information and advice	3	
	Not given	1	
Sedgemoor	Quality of information and advice	15	20
	Service made a difference	4	
	Staff Knowledge	3	
	Quality of service	2	
	Prompt Communication	1	
Mendip	Quality of service	7	15
	Service made a difference	6	
	Customer care	3	
	Staff conduct other	2	
	Service quality other	1	
Fostering, Adoption & Residential	Quality of service	6	9
	Service made a difference	4	
	Quality of information and advice	1	
Taunton & West Somerset	Service made a difference	3	7
	Customer care	2	
	Quality of service	1	
	Staff conduct other	1	
	Staff knowledge	1	
	Not given	1	
South Somerset	Quality of service	4	5
	Quality of information and advice	1	
	Availability of service	1	
First Response	Quality of information and advice	4	4
	Quality of service	1	
Safeguarding, Care & Quality	Service quality other	2	2
Disabilities	Quality of information and advice	1	1
Unassigned	Not given	1	1
		124	

Section 5 Comments

16 comments were recorded in relation to Children's Social Care during the year 1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017.

A number of the comments made were incorrectly classified and should have been recorded as a compliment or for another service. Of the correctly recorded comments, the following themes were included:

- Suggestion not to send out booklets/magazines to children in care (the customer felt it was an unwelcome reminder that they are in care and feels very sensitive about their situation).
- Comment suggesting that there was insufficient support for adopters.
- Concerns regarding the nature of a first visit for fostering. Felt that some of the rules and regulations that were spelled out were off putting and would deter people from pursuing. The strict nature of the rules discussed would prevent a family from providing 'normality' for a child.
- Anonymous expression of dissatisfaction of being in foster care.
- Comment by a former leaving care customer that the support received was good but that keeping in touch was sometimes difficult.

Section 6 Member Enquiries

19 member enquiries were received in connection with Children's Social Care cases during the year. The table below shows the areas and services these enquiries related to and the average response times. The breakdown is as follows:

Service	Number	Ave. Response (Working days)
Disabilities	2	12
Fostering, Adoption & Residential	5	18
Mendip	2	8
Sedgemoor	4	15
Taunton & West Somerset	6	9
	19	13

Somerset County Council
Policies for Children and Families Scrutiny Committee
– 15 September 2017

Update on the Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) Team

Lead Officer:	Julie Skorupka – Strategic Manager for Children Looked After and Leaving Care
Author:	Julie Skorupka
Contact Details:	JSkorupka@somerset.gov.uk

1. Background and progress update

- As of 30 August 2017, Somerset County Council is responsible for 30 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children UASC. 14 of these children have arrived as part of the National Transfer scheme over the last year. The remaining 16 have travelled individually over a much longer period and are therefore outside the remit of the transfer scheme.
- Somerset prioritised the transfer of male UASC in their later teenage years as we could quickly access appropriate supported accommodation, which the Home Office advised would best suit these young men's needs.
- Somerset social workers have facilitated access to appropriate churches and mosques and culturally relevant food, with regular trips to Bristol to provide a wider cultural group.

2. Issues for consideration

- 50% of the UASC who have arrived individually, have arrived since June 2017, via south west ports as a result of displacement activity following the closure of the Calais camps. All have been young men, assessed as being over the age of 15.
- Most of the UASC have arrived in Somerset expecting to live in a large urban environment. They have, almost universally, not wanted to remain in Somerset, once they understood that they were not in or near a major city. For these young men, their ambition is to move to live in London or the West Midlands to be part of a larger, more international community with greater access to other people of a similar religion and culture.
- Access to education, support, appropriate churches and mosques and culturally relevant food has not helped these young men settle in Somerset or dampened their desire to move to other parts of the country.
- The inability to feel settled has, for some young men, affected their emotional health adversely. Alongside the trauma of their journeys to this country and the loss of their family, the need to live alongside their compatriots has become an increasing focus.
- For those young men, where we have been able to find family members or people of significance (such as godparents), in other parts of the country, and

supported the UASC to move nearer these people, their emotional health has quickly improved. To a lesser, but still significant extent, a move to living in a culturally varied and urban environment (mainly London or the West Midlands) has been positive for those young men who have chosen to do this, when they reach 18.

- These young men would be better served by a social work service, local to the area they now live in. However this is not within the parameters of the transfer scheme, so responsibility for these UASCs' welfare remains with Somerset Children's Social Care.

3. Recommendations and next steps

- Despite the best efforts of a dedicated social work team, to support the UASCs placed here, Somerset does not have the cultural diversity or large urban environments that UASC in the older teenage age group feel comfortable with.
- In consideration of a younger age group of UASC who may be able to settle better into a rural county, the authority has run fostering recruitment campaigns targeting carers for UASC in the last 12 months, but few, if any carers, have come forward to offer exclusively UASC placements. As there are currently insufficient foster placements for children already in the care of the council, it is not pragmatic to accept younger UASC at this time.

The Council is therefore considering and the Committee are asked to consider and comment on:

- Whether there are any other means of increasing the sufficiency of foster carers in the County with a view to considering whether foster placements can be offered to younger UASC.
- The suitability of a largely rural area, where the UASC we have so far received, from the Transfer Scheme, feel isolated from other young people from similar cultural backgrounds.

Update on Syrian Families

Lead Officer: Dr Orla Dunn

Author: Dr Orla Dunn

Contact Details: odunn@somerset.gov.uk; 07795286935

Cabinet Member: Cllr Frances Nicholson and Cllr Christine Lawrence

Division and Local Member: ALL

1. Summary

- 1.1. In the period September 2016 – August 2017, Somerset County Council has resettled 9 Syrian family groups, 3 in Mendip, 2 in Sedgemoor, 1 in South Somerset and 3 in Taunton Deane. Two more families are due in September 2017 and October 2017. A further family has arrived being supported by a community group who have worked in partnership with the Council. Progress is in line with the Council aspiration to resettle 30 families over a three year period subject to capacity in relevant services.
- 1.2. There has been much progress on integration and resettlement. All families have been enrolled in adult English classes; all children are either in school / nursery and are making progress. Two males from within the first six families to resettle are in work after first year. There has been facilitation of links and integration with local communities including Brownies, Saturday football, and local allotments.

2. Issues for consideration

- 2.1. Overall the lack of support services and culturally relevant services is an enduring challenge to the programme. Difficulties continue in accessing halal foods, mosques and distance from other Syrian or Arabic speaking families have contributed to some of the recent families to have resettled to each area feeling isolated. Two of the original six families have moved out of Somerset to a larger city and others have wanted to move within Somerset. Unsurprisingly many express a preference to be in larger urban areas with larger numbers of other Syrian or Arabic speaking families and closer proximity to related resources. To address this we have re-considered suitable resettlement locations in the county and have taken steps to try ensure a critical minimal number of families in each area and to reject offers of resettlement in areas where the prospect of bringing in other families is less likely or will take longer.
- 2.2. Sourcing accommodation is probably the most limiting factor in expansion. As further funding has come through from the Home Office we have been able to explore more creative approaches to rental accommodation with the Council paying rent in advance for a period to reassure Landlords. We have also been grateful for a number of 'philanthropic landlords' who have come forward willing to rent properties at below market rates and also flex with the inherent uncertainty that the resettlement programme involves with agreeing to rent to a family not yet present in the country. In Taunton, in conjunction with Taunton Welcomes Refugees volunteer group we have also set up a Housing Action Group dedicated to sourcing properties and liaising with prospective landlords.
- 2.3. Setting up suitable English classes has also been a challenge. Many refugees

have come with such limited levels of English and sometimes unfamiliarity with education that they have been unable to access the beginners' provision currently available and this has been limited in scope in most areas compared to a Home Office aspiration of 8 hours a week. We have used additional Home Office funding to commission more suitable bespoke English classes in some areas. This remains a work in progress and in the next year we aim to expand provision. The rate of improved participation is limited in some areas by a lack of numbers to make classes financially or structurally viable. Volunteers have been able to support this by providing English classes. We recognise the value of comprehensive English provision to facilitate integration to the resident communities and provide social networks between resettled families.

- 2.4.** The Syrian Resettlement Programme is continuing to operate successfully and within the budget constraints. The Committee is asked to consider and comment on the aspirations for the programme for the forthcoming year September 2017- August 2018:
1. Resettle approximately ten further families across the county subject to service and support capacity;
 2. Strengthen English class provision in each area;
 3. Concentrate on volunteering and assistance into work for those resettled for a longer period of time;
 4. Strengthen workforce and other support services.

3. Background

- 3.1.** From September 2015- August 2016, Somerset worked on plans to prepare and resettle its first six Syrian families. Based on the early success of this resettlement a decision was approved by Council in August 2016 to aspire to resettle a further 30 families over a three year period. The costs of the scheme have remained within the Home Office funding which provides funding for five years post arrival, on a tapered basis, recognising a diminishing level of support required over time as families acquire English language and familiarity with UK services and norms.
- 3.2.** As the scheme intake has expanded, funds have become available to expand the workforce. This currently encompasses three Arabic speaking Resettlement Workers, with other support outsourced to getset and Yeovil4family for vulnerable family support and via the main council contract with DALanguages for interpreter services. A Consultant in Public Health provides overall strategic direction with local input from getset senior management, the Clinical Commissioning Group, District Council colleagues and volunteer groups. There are vacancies for: an additional resettlement worker to support additional families yet to arrive; a Resettlement Officer to take on more of the day-to-day operational issues; and a Business Support role to cover finance. These have been approved and are in the process of being recruited.
- 3.3.** The scheme receives input from colleagues across partner organisations and volunteer groups in Somerset as well as engaging and sharing good practice with other councils across the South West. The families have also shaped resettlement plans including input to household furnishing, welcome grocery provisions and the 'need to know' essential early skills.
- 3.4.** We have received wonderful support from volunteers across the county. These groups are more formally structured in Taunton and Frome but we have

welcomed support from many dedicated individuals across the County: Bridgwater, Glastonbury / Street, Langport, Wells, Wincanton and Yeovil. This has been especially important as refugee numbers have increased, to make commissioned services more viable and to plug the gaps where professional services have been stretched or cover areas which are helpful but outside our funding envelope. These volunteers have truly provided the welcome to the communities of Somerset as well as augmenting the basic funded provision that the Council has been able to provide.

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Update on In-Year (2017/18) MTFP Savings for Children's Services

Lead Officer: Kevin Nacey, Director of Finance and Performance

Author: Kevin Nacey, Director of Finance and Performance

Contact Details: kbnacey@somerset.gov.uk; 01823 359014

Cabinet Member: Cllr Frances Nicholson, Cabinet Member for Children and Families Division and Local Member: All

1. Summary

- 1.1. During the months of September 2016 through to February 2017 there were a number of MTFP savings developed under a themed approach. For Children's Services most of the savings that applied to their budgets were under the umbrella of the service redesign theme, with one under the transport theme.
- 1.2. The main thrust of the redesign was around reducing some of the service expenditure for high cost services closer to the national benchmark cost. The main area this applies to is in Children's Placements.
- 1.3. The other savings were part of the overall target to reduce building running costs across the Council and there was a saving aimed at reducing high cost SEN routes. Progress is reported below.

2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

2.1. Placement Cost Savings

The target saving in the MTFP for this work is £1.046m and to date there has been good progress to date that provides confidence this saving will be achieved in full although overall placements spend is increasing. In the Members' information sheet issued in July this saving was described as Service redesign of Children's placements spend, reviewing process, increasing capacity in the market for SCC use so that there is choice in allocation of cases and therefore many will cost less than before without affecting quality in an adverse way.

2.2. Activities included in this work include:

- A SWAP Audit was conducted to assist target process improvements.
- Recommendations were then taken forward and placement processes were reviewed and altered.
- Provider meetings and events were held to highlight Somerset's children's needs
- Exploration of regional commissioning opportunities
- An Edge of care service has been scoped
- Review of residential Individual Placement Agreements underway.
- Communication and roll-out of processes and procedures to staff.

A SWAP follow up audit will then be commissioned to assess progress and

improvements and to assess controls to ensure future compliance with processes.

2.3. Reduced Building Running Costs

This saving is part of a bigger target of £1.091m described in the Members' information sheet issued in July as Savings aimed at reducing our building running costs across the council portfolio of assets. This will require consultation with service users in children's centres, libraries and in our mental health accommodation. Savings will come from reduced running costs rather than service activity.

- 2.4. The element of the target that is currently assigned to Children's services budgets is approximately £600,000. This must remain a provisional target until the work has been carried out to review which building running costs can be reduced. This is all wrapped up into the work redesigning getset services and creating family hubs. A paper explaining the work proposed was brought to the committee in July and presented by Philippa Granthier. There has been some slippage in the timeline. It remains to be seen whether we can recover lost ground across the whole target saving. The total value of the saving is not at this stage in question but it is unlikely to be delivered in full in 17/18.

2.5. Transport Savings

The savings in transport will come from a review of high cost SEN routes aimed at saving around £1.45m in total from the current cost. This is going to require a considerable piece of work looking at existing policies, compliance with them and options on how to design the service differently. Work is under way but due to the intensive work required it is unlikely to deliver significant savings in this financial year given the lead in time in consultation work and for the implementation notice required to be ready for term starts. So far, work has concentrated upon incentivising parents for single occupancy journeys and reviewing high cost multi occupancy journeys including use of in-house fleet. Around £150,000 is assured as a saving but it is difficult to see how the remainder can be achieved without policy changes.

2.6. Summary Table

Saving	Target	Probable
Placement cost reductions	£1.046m	£1.046m
Building running costs reductions	£0.600m	£0.600m
Transport costs reductions	£1.450m	£0.150m

3. Background

3.1. Covered in update and summary sections.

4. Consultations undertaken

4.1. N/A

5. Implications

5.1. Any shortfall in delivery of MTFP savings will increase overspends for Children's Services.

6. Background papers

- 6.1. Link to Theme Documents from February Cabinet: [Click Here](#)
- Service Redesign (page 191)
 - Transport (page 205)

Note For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author

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Somerset County Council
 Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families
 Committee
 – 15th September 2017

Family Support Services

Lead Officer: Director of Public Health & Director Children’s Services

Author: Alison Bell & Philippa Granthier

Contact Details: AZBell@somerset.gov.uk PGranthier@somerset.gov.uk

Cabinet Member: Christine Lawrence, Public Health & Well-Being & Frances Nicholson, Children & Families

Division and Local Member: N/A

1. Summary

1. The creation of ‘early help hubs,’ which we have renamed Family Support Services as a working title, is set out in the Children and Young People’s Plan (CYPP) 2016-2019 which outlines the vision for improving outcomes and services for children and their families in Somerset.

The CYPP was approved by Cabinet and endorsed by Full Council in May 2016, and was a directive from the Department for Education as part of Somerset County Council’s Children’ Services Improvement Programme.

One of the key priorities from the CYPP is to “establish early help hubs in local communities offering multi-agency integrated services that identify and support children and families who need additional help and can intervene quickly”.

High level timeline – moving towards more integrated Family Support Services.

August 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract extension for Public Health Nursing Service.
September 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 week consultation regarding services and where they are delivered from starts. • Discussion with providers regarding future options for delivering these services.
December 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation regarding services and where they are delivered from ends. • Options appraisal of how service could be delivered completed.
January 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future Family Support Services decisions - what; where; how?
February 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed project planning to secure more integrated services for April 2019.

2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

- 2.1. A regular progress update to Scrutiny Committee has been agreed and the scope of work involved is currently progressing as set out below. The Committee are asked to consider and comment.

Activity	Scope	Progress	RAG
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Public Health Nursing service	The PHN contract currently runs until the end of March 2018. Approval has been given for a contract extension of 12 months with the current provider, as part of the work to establish an integrated family support service by April 2019.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting held with current provider to discuss and offer the contract extension. This is awaiting signed contract extension documentation from current provider. 	
Options Appraisal – Mechanism for service delivery	In order to establish an integrated family support service for April 2019 we need to review the best option as to how this can be delivered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A refined draft is being worked on and corporate support is in place to progress this. 	
Consultation – Design of service	In order to establish an integrated family support service, we need to speak to our customers about what they value and where makes most sense for them to access services. A 10-week consultation period will gain the views of key stakeholders on the proposals for children’s centres and the services delivered by Public Health Nursing in Somerset.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation documentation and plan prepared. An independent facilitator is being procured to help with open days, discussion groups and the analysis of the consultation outcomes. 10-week consultation launch ready for 18th September. 	
Potential Procurement of Service	Depending on the outcomes of the options appraisal a procurement process will be required for the delivery of family support services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A soft market testing event is planned for 26th September to gain views from the market on how these services can be delivered in the future and inform the options appraisal. 	

3. Background

- 3.1. In order to progress the considerations around where services should be delivered from and what services should be delivered a consultation period is due to commence in September 2017.

4. Consultations undertaken

4.1. A consultation pack, supporting data and questionnaire is in development.

It is intended that the consultation process will run for a 10-week period.

There will be an online presence during this period for communities and service users to provide their feedback on proposals.

In addition, there will be 5 district level open days for members of the public to drop in as part of the consultation exercise.

A further 10 discussion groups across Somerset will take place with groups that are already in existence and using services such as young parents' groups, breastfeeding groups and domestic abuse service users.

The overall aim of the open days and discussion groups is for the general public to have the opportunity to discuss proposals contained within the consultation and where necessary have the completion of a questionnaire facilitated. An independent company is currently being procured to facilitate this.

It is anticipated that the discussion groups will need to be facilitated in such a way that conversation is prompted and stimulated in order to solicit what is really important to the group and therefore for inclusion in their response to the consultation.

It is anticipated that the open days are more free form and will consist of display boards of information and questionnaires on hand alongside staff from the company to help to facilitate.

All information gathered as part of the consultation will be analysed and reported back to both Cabinet and Scrutiny. The analysis will also be carried out by the independent third party.

5. Implications

5.1. Any proposals put forward as part of consultation will be based on a range of available data. However, the consultation with service users, communities and staff will help provide further clarity for future design and location.

5.2. There will be an Equalities Impact Assessment maintained for each district throughout this process.

All outcomes of options, consultation and impact assessments will be carefully considered before any final decisions are made.

6. Background papers

6.1. <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allId=42521> Somerset Children's Trust Children and Young People's Plan

<http://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/documents/s4234/Family%20Hubs%20Scrutin>

[y%20-%20July%202017%20V0.6.pdf](#)

July 2017 Family Support Services Overview to Scrutiny Paper

Note: For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author