

Scrutiny Committee - Children & Families Outcome Tracker 2024 - 25

Agenda items	Lead / Owner	Agreed Outcome	RAG Status
Joint meeting with Adults and Health Scrutiny on 25 October 2023			
Somerset approach to reducing smoking and youth vaping	Kate Anderson Rachel Handley	<p>The Committee received a presentation from Public Health Team and engaged in discussions and debate of the points raised. The presentation raised several important and informative points.</p> <p>The Committee agreed a recommendation that they wished to present to The Executive and unanimously agreed would write to the Executive in relation to electronic cigarettes, as follows:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Committee asked that the current government consultation (link to the consultation Creating a smokefree generation and tackling youth vaping: your views - Department of Health and Social Care (dhsc.gov.uk) be shared with all members who are encouraged to complete and promote locally in their divisions. The consultation runs to 6 December 2023. 2. The Committee asked that Licensing committee be asked to review and action stronger enforcement of the sale of these devices in line with the current legal position. 3. The Committee asked that the 'Quit tool not cool tool' slogan, as highlighted by the presentation be supported and promoted in the council. 4. The Committee requested that Council take a position with regard to seeking government to work at increasing legislation around electronic cigarettes, that included but not conclusive:- a ban of the use of single use devices with exception of use to support stopping smoking, a ban on child targeting (advertising and packaging), an introduction of plain packaging that would include a health warning, an introduction of an increasing age ban on sales of these devices in line with the change made to cigarette sales. 	On going
12 December 2023			

The focus for the Committee is – ‘what impact does this have on the children in Somerset?’

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Education, Health and Care Assessment and Plan 2022-2023 - Progress update	Dr Rob Hart	<p>The Committee considered a report and received a presentation providing a progress update on Special education needs & disabilities (SEND) – improvement activity and Education, health and care plans (EHCP), providing a summary of the data, improvements, impact and ongoing challenges in relation to how the local area has continued to respond to delivering EHCP’s across Somerset since the reinspection of SEND services in November 2022. The Accelerated Progress Plan was signed off by the DfE in May 2023, there are monthly progress reports to the SEND Partnership Board, six-month reviews with DfE and NHSE.</p>	<p>progress update in 6 months’ time</p> <p>(June '24)</p> <p><i>Response to questions from Cllr Nicholson–circulated on 18 March 2024</i></p>
		<p>The key headline is increase in numbers of plans and the number of annual reviews – there has been a decrease in number of tribunals registered (slide 5). Highlighted the situation re funding and placements and that following the recent funding consultation (presented to Scrutiny meeting in November '23) are developing proposals to allocate more high needs funding to schools without need for an EHCP and to make banding more equal between mainstream and special school (slide 6).</p>	<p><i>circulated on 18 March 2024</i></p>
		<p>Highlighted position re SEND in Somerset schools (slide 7) and since 2018 there has been 2.6% increase in total pupil numbers and 78% increase in pupils in specialist settings.</p>	

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	<p>Highlighted position re Annual Reviews / timeliness (slide 8) and referenced the LGCSO decision (slide 9). Performance against annual review timeliness will continue to challenge the LA as the number of EHC plans it needs to maintain continues to grow. The link to the Ombudsman report will be shared with the Committee.</p> <p>The Committee agreed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note the update on EHCPs and the ongoing challenges for teams across the Council and wider partners. 2. To note the activities underway to support improvements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Planning Meetings offered (and monitored) to every school across Somerset to identify children requiring support from specialist LA teams. • Clarify expectations with schools to ensure that appropriate advice and support in advance of meeting. • Notes the additional staff in place to process Annual Review reports in a timely way. • The scrutiny committee to receive an update in 6 months on impact / uptake / number of reviews completed and so on (KPIs & training). 	
<p>Children's Services Transformation Priorities 2023 - 2026</p>	<p>The Chair referred to the discussions at the last meeting of the Committee on the Children's transformation priorities and invited volunteers to focus on particular strands of the transformation priorities, to allow individual meetings with officers to gain a better understanding / learn more about one of the areas, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education for life • CLA Transformation • SEND Strategy • Connect Somerset <p>The following Committee members expressed an interest in the areas:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education for Life – Jo Simons; • CLA Transformation – Cllr E Potts-Jones, Cllr M Lovell; • SEND Strategy – Cllr S Carswell, Cllr F Nicholson; • Connect Somerset – Tobie Osmond, Ruth Hobbs. 	<p>On-going</p>

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13 March 2024			
Work plan		<p>Chair and Vice Chair to meet to discuss the Committees' forward work plan for 2024/25.</p> <p>Children's Services Transformation Priorities /Areas to be a single agenda item at a future meeting.</p>	To be arranged
Somerset system wide support for children & young people who self-injure	Patsy Temple and colleagues	<p>The Committee received a presentation on children's mental health and wellbeing in Somerset, the focus of the item was on the Somerset system wide support for children and young people who self-injure.</p> <p>Adults & Health committee members were invited to join the meeting for this item. The Chair thanked the presenters for the excellent presentation.</p>	Completed
2023/24 Children's Services - Budget Monitoring	Christian Evans	<p>The Committee received and noted the presentation on 2023/24 Children's Services budget monitoring position – month 10 (end January 24). This focused on – external placements, residential placements, Homes & Horizons, fieldwork spend, 23/24 DSG budget monitoring (High Needs, home to school transport and SEN transport).</p> <p>Query by Cllr Nicholson to be responded to after meeting.</p>	On-going
High Needs Block and SEND - DSG Deficit Management Plan (DMP)	Amelia Walker Jo Currie	<p>The Committee received a presentation on High Needs Block & SEND and the refreshed DSG Deficit Management Plan (DMP), outlining the actions to mitigate overspending and the DMP. The DMP has the following new elements – tackling design issues, devolving decision-making, universality, building consensus. The presentation also outlined the key risks, opportunities and next steps, including Education for Life projects which have identified priority areas for change.</p> <p>Happy to come back to the committee with information on supported internships.</p> <p>At the end of the discussion, the Service Director Education, Partnerships and Skills said she is happy to arrange a member training session on the DSG and DMP.</p> <p>The Committee noted the ongoing work and the DMP.</p>	Completed training session to be arranged

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Understanding Elective Home Education – outline / information	Rob Hart Julia Ridge	<p>The Committee received a presentation on understanding Elective Home Education – the purpose of the item was to education / inform members on issues around elective home education (EHE) and covered - the legal framework, the Council approach and responsibilities, EHE data, provided information on the partnership working in the Frome area.</p> <p>Also highlighted changes in legislation and guidance in the pipeline - this includes a mandatory register of children not in school, guidance on what is a 'suitable education,' including focus on literacy and maths, guidance about support available to EHE families and guidance to support more consistent approach across LAs to school attendance orders.</p> <p>The Committee welcomed and noted the presentation.</p>	Completed
Update from Education Standards Standing Panel	Evie Potts-Jones	<p>The Committee received an update from the Chair of the Education Standards Panel Cllr Evie Potts-Jones on the work of the Panel and the issues covered at recent meetings.</p> <p>Cllr Potts-Jones invited all members of the Committee to attend panel meetings and advised that the next meeting will be on 25 March 2024.</p>	Completed
Report back from committee members on Children's Services Transformation Priorities /Areas	Various	<p>Further to the meeting in December 2023, the Committee received a verbal report back from committee members on Children's Services Transformation Priorities /Areas:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education for Life – Jo Simons • CLA Transformation - Cllr Evie Potts, Cllr Martin Lovell • SEND Strategy – Cllr Simon Carswell, Cllr Frances Nicholson • Connect Somerset - Tobie Osmond, Ruth Hobbs <p>The Chair thanked members and officers for their on-going work and the Committee noted the update.</p>	On-going <i>Info from Jo Simons about the Education for Life Year 1 event circulated on 14 March</i>
15 May 2024			
Work programme		<p>Children's Transformation Plan for Childrens Services – deep dive on 26 June 2024 – Committee members to be approached to see if interested in being involved in any of the area; members involved previously to contact relevant officers in preparation for next meeting. The suggestions for items for work plan by Cllr John Hunt and Cllr Carswell – to be reviewed.</p>	On-going

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Update on short break provision / action plan	Louise Palmer	<p>Further to the meeting held on 10 January 2024, the Committee received a presentation which provided a progress update on short break provision. It was noted that the action plan had been shared with the Committee. The Committee discussed the proposals / model for new homes, budget, timescales and next steps.</p> <p>Discussed 2 new homes; engagement; Tell Local Councillor; the learning from Homes & Horizons work; budget, timescales and the need to move forward. The Committee was very supportive of the proposals and direction of travel and look forward to seeing the project as it moves forward.</p>	On-going
Education for Life Strategy	Amelia Walker	<p>The Committee received a presentation which provided an update on progress on the Education for Life Strategy and the actions and focus for years 2 – 5.</p> <p>Discussed localities & their geographical areas – around schools, SEND, Inclusion, FIS staff (not social workers), still working on details / early days – and won't be exactly aligned to LCN's as need to ensure map around schools; 'co-production' stressed and relationships being important (e.g. with MAT CEO's). View that school clusters better sometimes than geographical area. Other Members welcome to join the meetings of Education Standing Panel (the Vice Chair asked whether the panel can be renamed).</p>	On-going To be considered
update on DBS checks	Jamie Jackson	<p>The Committee received an update from the Scrutiny Manager, Jamie Jackson on the position with regard to DBS checks for Councillors.</p> <p>Discussed 'portability' of DBS's; awareness to candidates standing for election that there is expectation will complete a DBS; question asked about regularity of DBS check and expectation for second round in period of term of office and this to be checked.</p> <p>The Committee noted the position and requested further update in near future.</p>	On-going To be arranged

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care experience as a protected characteristic	Fiona Phur	<p>The Committee received a presentation on the care experience as a Protected Characteristic. The Council in May 2023 agreed to 8 recommendations to implement care experience as a Protected Characteristic and the Committee noted the actions arising. In March 2020 the Council signed the national Care Leaver's Covenant and Committee to meeting its five core outcomes. Noted the Somerset definition of 'care leavers and care experienced' and the proposed next steps / considerations for implementation.</p> <p>Discussed the ambition for children / Corporate Parent Board (CPB) role (not statutory requirement); Somerset definition now agreed by legal team; is quite wide-ranging definition; need to be clear on parameters; with definition can move forward / on journey; around influence & encouragement; do support beyond 25 if able (but not a lifelong service); role of CPB.</p> <p>Data provided and number of those who experience homelessness (slide on page 56 – slide 6) – (a) seek more information / breakdown of figures in more detail and the cttee could look at that at later date; (b) ask for update on care experience as protected characteristic at some point to a future meeting, (including views of those who are care experienced) (c) CPB is where can & do hold people to account.</p> <p>Mentioned the data dashboard produced for the CPB is interesting / information.</p> <p>(Big sleep out on 15 June – experience what it's like to sleep on the street).</p>	<p>On-going</p> <p>To be followed up</p> <p>To be arranged</p>
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The CYPP 2022 - 2025 had been produced following a multi-agency process. The CYPP had three priorities: keeping children and young people safe (priority 1); supporting physical and emotional health and resilience (priority 2); enabling young people to learn and thrive (priority 3)

[Somerset Children & Young People's Plan – SSCP \(safeguardingsomerset.org.uk\)](https://safeguardingsomerset.org.uk)

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.

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