

# Public Document Pack

**Tony Kershaw**  
Director of Law and Assurance

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27 May 2020

## Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee

A virtual meeting of the Committee will be held at **10.30 am** on **Thursday, 4 June 2020**.

**Note:** In accordance with regulations in response to the current public health emergency, this meeting will be held virtually with members in remote, audio-only attendance. Public access is via audio webcasting.

**The meeting will be available to listen to live via the Internet at this address:**

<http://www.westsussex.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

**Tony Kershaw**  
Director of Law and Assurance

### Agenda

- |          |    |   |
|----------|----|---|
| 10.30 am | 1. | <p><b>Declarations of Interests</b></p> <p>Members and officers must declare any pecuniary or personal interest in any business on the agenda. They should also make declarations at any stage such an interest becomes apparent during the meeting. Consideration should be given to leaving the meeting if the nature of the interest warrants it. If in doubt please contact Democratic Services before the meeting.</p> |
| 10.32 am | 2. | <p><b>Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee</b> (Pages 5 - 10)</p> <p>The Committee is asked to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 14 April 2020 (cream paper).</p>  |
| 10.35 am | 3. | <p><b>Urgent Matters</b></p> <p>Items not on the agenda which the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency by reason of special circumstances, including cases where the Committee needs to be informed of budgetary or performance issues affecting matters within its terms of reference, which have emerged since the publication of the agenda.</p>                        |

- 10.36 am      4.      **Responses to Recommendations**
- The Committee is asked to note the responses to recommendations made at the 4 March 2020 and 14 April 2020 meetings from: -
- a) The Director of Property and Assets (relating to Woodlands Meed)
  - b) The Head of Quality Assurance (relating to Children First Improvement)
  - c) The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills (relating to Small Schools)
- (a)      **Woodlands Meed** (Pages 11 - 12)
- (b)      **Children First Improvement** (Pages 13 - 14)
- (c)      **Small Schools** (Pages 15 - 16)
- 10.45 am      5.      **Forward Plan of Key Decisions** (Pages 17 - 30)
- Extract from the Forward Plan dated 20 May 2020.
- An extract from any Forward Plan published between the date of despatch of the agenda and the date of the meeting will be tabled at the meeting.
- The Committee is asked to consider whether it wishes to enquire into any of the forthcoming decisions within its portfolio.
- 10.55 am      6.      **Children First Improvement**
- Report by Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning.
- The report updates the Committee on developments in the Children First programme since its last update in March with a focus on neglect.
- (a)      **Service Update** (Pages 31 - 42)
- (b)      **Practice Improvement - Neglect** (Pages 43 - 72)
- 11.55 am      7.      **Possible Items for Future Scrutiny**
- The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills will provide a brief update on Woodlands Meed following Cabinet on 26 May 2020.
- Members to mention any items which they believe to be of relevance to the business of the Scrutiny Committee, and suitable for scrutiny, e.g. raised with them by constituents arising from central government initiatives etc.

If any member puts forward such an item, the Committee's role at this meeting is just to assess, briefly, whether to refer the matter to its Business Planning Group (BPG) to consider in detail.

12.05 pm      8.      **Requests for Call-In** (Pages 73 - 74)

There was one request for call-in to the Scrutiny Committee within its constitutional remit since the date of the last meeting - Small Schools proposals - Cabinet Decision ES 20/21.

The Director of Law and Assurance concluded that no valid grounds for a call-in had been provided in accordance with Standing Orders. The call-in request was therefore declined.

The Director of Law and Assurance will report any requests since the publication of the agenda papers.

12.06 pm      9.      **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 24 September at 10.30 am at County Hall, Chichester. Probable agenda items include:

- High Cost Residential Placements and Residential Homes
- Fostering and Adoption
- Children First Improvement Update

Any member wishing to place an item on the agenda for the meeting must notify the Director of Law and Assurance by 9 September 2020.

**To all members of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee**

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## **Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee**

14 April 2020 – At a meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee held at 2.00 pm at Virtual meeting with restricted public access.

Present: Cllr Barling (Chairman)

Cllr Lord	Cllr Hall	Cllr Wickremaratchi
Cllr Baldwin	Cllr Hillier	Mr Lozzi
Cllr Bridges	Cllr A Jones	Mrs Roberts
Cllr Burgess	Clr Lea	Mrs Ryan
Cllr Flynn	Cllr Sudan	Mr Cristin

Also in attendance: Cllr Fitzjohn, Cllr N Jupp, Cllr Magill, Cllr Marshall, Cllr O'Kelly and Cllr Russell

### **1. Declarations of Interests**

1.1 No interests were declared.

### **2. Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee**

2.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2020 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

### **3. Small Schools Proposals**

3.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Education and Skills. The report was introduced by Councillor Nigel Jupp, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills and Paul Wagstaff, Director of Education and Skills who highlighted the following points:

- The process began 18 months ago with the revised School Effectiveness Strategy 2018-22, which was approved by full council and endorsed by the Committee.
- The Education and Skills directorate commenced consultations with schools, staff, parents, governors and supporters of the five schools concerned. Discussion had also taken place with MPs, local members and the CYPSSC Task and Finish Group (TFG).
- The proposals for each school varied based upon their circumstances and were as follows:
  - Progress the federation plan for Stedham Primary school with Harting C of E Primary School
  - Progress proposals to secure a federation of Compton and Up Marden CE Primary school with one or more schools
  - Warninglid Primary School to relocate to Pease Pottage, Crawley by 2021
  - Issue closure notices for Clapham and Patching C of E Primary school

- Issue closure notices for Rumboldswyke C of E Primary school.
- A consultation period for the above proposals ceased on 16 March 2020. 711 responses were received, with additional input from traffic surveys, community risk assessments and a peer review.
- Whilst there had been calls to delay the closure decisions for Rumboldswyke and Clapham and Patching schools in view of the current Covid-19 situation, this would serve to extend anxiety, see declining enrolment and reductions in staff.
- The Education and Skills directorate and Cabinet Member recognised the difficulties faced by these prospective changes, particularly in respect of proposed closure and would work hard to ensure a smooth transition. The service would work carefully with parents to identify alternative schools for children and ensure that any choices were made in a measured way.
- For schools facing possible closure, there was a possibility of keeping school buildings open for children with complex needs to both minimize disruption and ease the process of transition to a new school.
- Interest had been shown towards Rumboldswyke and Clapham and Patching schools by trusts to academise. The County Council had the statutory responsibility for school place planning, ensuring adequate pupil places, avoiding surplus provision and negative impacts on existing schools.
- The offer for Rumboldswyke was to academise with Bishop Luffa school creating a new Primary school. This however would create surplus places at Key Stage 2 (KS2) which were not required.
- For Clapham and Patching, an offer had been made to academise the school by the South Downs Education Trust, however the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) would not accept a proposal to academise or issue an academy order until WSCC had completed its review of whether the school was viable or not.
- Schools causing concern guidance identified that Clapham and Patching CE Primary was unable to fill from the local community owing to few primary school age children in the area and costly house prices.

3.2 The Committee considered a verbal statement by the lead petitioner of the 'Keep West Sussex Small Schools open' campaign. The Committee heard the following from the petitioner:

- Closing schools was not in the interest of children.
- Closing schools during a major public health crisis was both non-essential and controversial causing undue added stress. This included the transition from isolation due to the Covid-19 situation to a new school, which would already be unsettling for children.
- Opportunities to academise should be further explored.
- It did not appear lessons had been learnt from the Commissioner's report and it did not feel that the Council was putting children first.
- The Council should be defending schools and defending children.

3.3 The Committee heard the following points from Councillor Deborah Urquhart on Clapham and Patching C of E Primary School:

- Clapham and Patching was a unique school with a significant caring and nurturing ethos, attracting pupils from a wide area, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP) and different needs.
- The most recent Ofsted inspection had rated the school as good. It was unclear why a good school was recommended for closure.
- Parents should not be forced to choose a new school for their child based only on a website, and therefore the proposal to maintain the building open for some SEND pupils in the Autumn term following closure was gratefully received, however a delay of the closure decision or an academy proposal were more favourable options. Concerns were raised about the impact of the school closure on the village community, including deterring families moving to the area and increased social isolation of young and elderly people.

3.4 The Director of Education and Skills responded to points raised by the petitioner and members as summarised below:

- There were a number of other caring and nurturing schools with provision for SEND/EHCP children, not only smaller schools were accommodating in this respect.
- Although Clapham and Patching was rated good by Ofsted, data outcomes had indicated that progress was below average, particularly in writing standards. Clapham and Patching also had problems with persistent absence.
- The academy proposals had been explored, however there were significant causes of concern in terms of approaches to leadership and head teacher roles, and general volatility of children moving in and out of the school. The Council was not convinced based on discussions with the Trust that academisation was the best route, particularly when considering the availability of other adequate places within the county.
- Members were concerned about the destabilisation and disruption to children, particularly in the context of Covid-19. The Special Educational Needs Assessment Team (SENAT) had been and would continue to work with parents and children to choose a new school, and support would be offered to manage the transition. The service was acutely aware of the sensitive and difficult nature of this. The Assistant Director for SEND and Inclusion added that transitions back to school would be supported after the lockdown period and there was a wellbeing curriculum in place.
- Community Impact Assessment responses had been significantly mixed, other schools in the area were happy to take over the community engagement work currently undertaken by Clapham and Patching.

3.5 The Committee heard the following points from Councillor Jamie Fitzjohn in respect of Rumboldswyke C of E Infant School:

- The report demonstrated a negative picture of Rumboldswyke school which was disappointing. Rumboldswyke had a positive environment and small schools nurtured children to flourish and build confidence.

- The School Effectiveness Strategy indicated a suitable distance for pupils under 8 to travel to school was two miles. This eliminated a number of schools for children in the Chichester area which did not appear to leave ample places if Rumboldswyke was closed.
- The proposals felt pre-determined with influence and persuasion used to achieve the desired outcomes and consultation results ignored.
- Bishop Luffa school had offered an academy proposal as an all-through Primary school for Rumboldswyke. Bishop Luffa should be permitted to adopt Rumboldswyke as an all-through Primary school.

3.6 The Director of Education and Skills responded to points raised by Councillor Jamie Fitzjohn and members as summarised below:

- Government guidance indicated that for Primary age children, travel from home to school should not exceed 45 minutes. Within Chichester City there were surplus places at both Lancastrian Infants School and Kingsham Primary School, and some children were currently passing Rumboldswyke to attend those schools.
- Rumboldswyke had an inadequate Ofsted rating. The Council had been working with the school for three years in a resource intensive way. The school could not sustain the improvement required without the support from the local authority.
- At a meeting, it was made clear to parents that the chances of finding a Trust to academise the school were slim.
- There had been no pre-determination in respect of Rumboldswyke, there was a very narrow range of options for the school due to the Ofsted outcome.
- The academy proposal from Bishop Luffa was for an all-through Primary model only, there was no need for additional spaces at Key Stage 2. The local authority had a statutory duty for school place planning and to ensure that any change of character to a school was not detriment to surrounding schools.
- The RSC would not consider academising the school without the permission of the local authority. The Council could only agree to a like for like academisation which was not the offer from Bishop Luffa.

3.7 The Committee heard from Councillor Kate O'Kelly for Stedham Primary School, and Councillor Mike Magill for Compton and Up Marden C of E Primary school who were supportive of the proposals for the respective schools. The Committee was also supportive of the proposals concerning Stedham, Compton and Up Marden and Warninglid C of E Primary School.

3.8 The Committee considered the proposal for Clapham and Patching C of E Primary School as set out in the draft decision report. A revised recommendation was put forward as follows:

- The Committee does not believe that the DfE threshold for closure of rural schools is met for Clapham and Patching C of E Primary School and that the Covid-19 crisis is placing unprecedented



pressure on the County Council, schools, teachers, parents and children. It therefore recommends that:

- Cabinet rejects the proposal to close Clapham and Patching C of E Primary School, Clapham, Worthing
- The Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) is asked to explore the academisation option with SDET as soon as is practical given the Covid-19 Crisis.

3.9 The proposed revised recommendation was carried based on a majority vote, with 9 members voting for, 4 against and 2 abstentions.

3.10 The Committee considered the proposal for Rumboldswyke C of E Infant School as set out in the draft decision report. A revised recommendation was put forward as follows:

- The Committee considers that as closure of **Rumboldswyke C of E Infant School, Chichester**, would make subsequent academisation impossible, and in light of the Covid-19 crisis, that now is not the time to close the school. The Committee recommends that the Cabinet should therefore decline the closure of Rumboldswyke C of E Infant School, Chichester.

3.11 The proposed revised recommendation was carried based on a majority vote, with 7 voting for, 5 against and 1 abstention.

3.12 Resolved – that the Committee:

1. Does not believe that the DfE threshold for closure of rural schools is met for **Clapham and Patching C of E Primary School** and that the Covid-19 crisis is placing unprecedented pressure on the County Council, schools, teachers, parents and children. It therefore recommends that:
  - Cabinet rejects the proposal to close Clapham and Patching C of E Primary School, Clapham, Worthing
  - The Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) is asked to explore the academisation option with SDET as soon as is practical given the Covid-19 Crisis.
2. The Committee considers that as closure of **Rumboldswyke C of E Infant School, Chichester**, would make subsequent academisation impossible, and in light of the Covid-19 crisis, that now is not the time to close the school. The Committee recommends that the Cabinet should therefore decline the closure of Rumboldswyke C of E Infant School, Chichester.
3. The Committee supports the recommendation to request County Council Officers to continue to work with Governors of **Stedham Primary School** and Harting CE Primary School to progress the Federation Action Plan towards a hard federation by January 2021. The Committee commented that there may be need for some flexibility in timing given the current Covid-19 crisis.

4. The Committee supports the recommendation to request County Council officers continue to work with governors to progress proposals for the federation of **Compton and Up Marden CE Primary School, Compton** with an appropriate partner.
5. The Committee supports the recommendation to issue prescribed alteration notices for the relocation of **Warninglid Primary School, Warninglid, Haywards Heath** to a new site in Pease Pottage Crawley, by September 2021 (subject to developers completing in June 2021) and implement the proposals submitted by Warninglid Primary School and at least one other partner to Federate.

#### **4. Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

- 4.1 The Committee considered an extract of the Forward Plan dated 1 April.
- 4.2 Resolved that the Committee notes the Forward Plan.

#### **5. Possible Items for Future Scrutiny**

5.1 The following issues were put forward by the Committee for consideration for the Business Planning Group:

- The establishment of a Children's Trust.
- The support for care leavers in the context of Covid-19
- Care Leavers Strategy
- Help for school governors.

5.2 Jackie Russell, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People advised the Committee the establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding in respect of the Children's Trust would be brought to the Committee at the appropriate time. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People also advised the service were working on a revised Children Looked After Strategy and this would include the introduction of a care leavers covenant. She added that the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) were dealing with the distribution of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to children's homes and other settings, and the executive team and Cabinet colleagues were lobbying for additional supplies of PPE.

5.3 Resolved that the items identified above be scheduled where necessary for consideration by the Committee's Business Planning Group.

#### **6. Date of Next Meeting**

- 6.1 The next meeting of the Committee would be held on 4 June 2020.

The meeting ended at 5.02 pm

Chairman

## Responses to recommendations

Recommendation	Response
4a - The Committee recommends the Director of Property and Assets apply for consent to Sport England and that the Committee receive a copy of this letter.	<p>Initial discussions have taken place with Sport England over the potential redevelopment of the Woodlands Meed School Site with feedback provided in August 2019 and a follow up meeting in September 2019. However, due to uncertainty over the ingress and egress to the site and the impact on the overall deliverability and layout this has not been progressed. This is to ensure that any feedback from Sport England reflects the overall proposal and takes into account any design changes.</p> <p>However, a suitable access route has now been identified and subject to Cabinet approval on the 26th May design can move forward.* At the earliest opportunity contact will be made with Sport England to agree its requirements.</p>

\* Outlined in paragraph 2.2 of the decision report to Cabinet on 26 May

[https://westsussex.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s16415/Item%204b%20-%20CAB0320.21\\_Woodlands%20Meed.pdf](https://westsussex.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s16415/Item%204b%20-%20CAB0320.21_Woodlands%20Meed.pdf)

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## Responses to recommendations

Recommendation	Response
4b - The Senior Improvement Lead considers how to facilitate member involvement in practice week	Member involvement will be managed through observations of practice through Child Protection conferences and Children Looked After Reviews. This will be facilitated by Quality Assurance to ensure we have consent and the members are spoken to about their role in this process. We have been formulating a list to obtain names of all those who wish to participate.
4b - The Committee receives an update on the experience and outcomes of practice week	Observations will be part of practice week, unfortunately the March session was cancelled due to Covid-19 and we are looking to make arrangements as part of our recovery plan to resume a practice week from 21 <sup>st</sup> September. This will be in line with social distancing and government advice and place holders will be arranged in the next few weeks. The outcome and findings of the week can then be shared at Scrutiny.
4b - The Committee would like to see more child-focussed measures in future reports	As the framework has been refreshed we will now be working to monitor outcome sand impact for children and we would be happy to share findings at future scrutiny as a QA update

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**BY EMAIL**

**Cllr David Barling**

**Chairman of the Children and Young People's Services  
Scrutiny Committee**

7 May 2020

Dear David

**Recommendations from the Children and Young People's Services  
Scrutiny Committee – Small Schools Proposals**

Thank you for your letter containing the recommendations of the Committee made at the virtual meeting on 14 April 2020 in relation to the small schools proposals. I can confirm that I made my Cabinet colleagues aware of these in advance of the Cabinet meeting on 22 April when we met virtually to determine the small schools proposals.

Please find below my responses to the points the Committee raised:-

1. *The Committee does not believe that the DfE threshold for closure of rural schools is met for **Clapham and Patching C of E Primary School** and that the Covid-19 crisis is placing unprecedented pressure on the County Council, schools, teachers, parents and children. It therefore recommends that:*
  - *Cabinet rejects the proposal to close Clapham and Patching C of E Primary School, Clapham, Worthing*
  - *The Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) is asked to explore the academisation option with SDET as soon as is practical given the Covid-19 Crisis.*

Cabinet gave extensive consideration to the information provided by officers in relation to whether the threshold for closure was met and to the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on those affected by the closure proposal in determining the decision. In relation to the impact of the Covid-19 crisis, for those seeking an alternative school place, most schools in the county are open with a reduced staff cohort and are able to conduct a telephone conversation with prospective parents and carers if required, undertake a virtual tour in some instances and information about each school is available on the schools' websites.

However in recognition of the current uncertainty, and to provide reassurance for those parents who were yet to find an alternative school place for their child, should schools not return to normal opening during the summer, Cabinet agreed that the school building should remain open for the Autumn half term to allow those children without suitable school places to be supported to transition to a new school.

In relation to the second point I understand that as the position of the local authority on the viability of the school has now been determined the school governing body and academy trust are able to pursue the academisation proposal themselves with the RSC.

2. *The Committee considers that as closure of **Rumboldswyke CE Infant School, Chichester**, would make subsequent academisation impossible, and in light of the Covid-19 crisis, that now is not the time to close the school. The Committee recommends that the Cabinet should therefore decline the closure of Rumboldswyke CE Infant School, Chichester.*

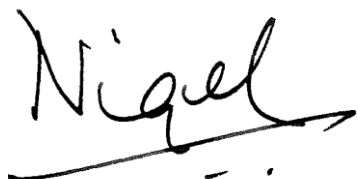
Cabinet acknowledged the uncertainty created by the Covid-19 crisis for parents and pupils at Rumboldswyke school and considered that it was appropriate to propose a similar approach to that suggested for Clapham and Patching school. In this respect should schools not return to normal opening during the summer the school building would be maintained open for the Autumn half term to allow those children without suitable school places to be supported to transition to a new school.

Similarly, as the position of the local authority on the viability of the school has now been determined, the school governing body and academy trust are able to pursue the academisation proposal themselves with the RSC.

I appreciate that closing these two schools is not the outcome the majority of the Committee would have hoped for but can assure you that the County Council will work with everyone who may be affected – staff, parents, carers and pupils in the coming weeks and months as preparations are made for the pupils to transfer to suitable alternative schools.

With regard to the final three recommendations set out in your letter I'd like to thank the Committee for their support for the proposals relating to– Stedham Primary School, Compton and Upmarden CE Primary School and Warninglid Primary School.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Cllr Nigel Jupp  
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills





## Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The County Council must give at least 28 days' notice of all key decisions to be taken by members or officers. The Plan describes these proposals and the month in which the decisions are to be taken over a four-month period. Decisions are categorised according to the [West Sussex Plan](#) priorities of:

- **Best Start in Life** (those concerning children, young people and schools)
- **A Prosperous Place** (the local economy, infrastructure, highways and transport)
- **A Safe, Strong and Sustainable Place** (Fire & Rescue, Environmental and Community services)
- **Independence in Later Life** (services for older people or work with health partners)
- **A Council that Works for the Community** (finances, assets and internal Council services)

The most important decisions will be taken by the Cabinet. In accordance with regulations in response to the current public health emergency, Cabinet meetings will be held virtually with members in remote, audio-only attendance. Public access will be via audio webcasting and the meetings will be available to listen to online via our [webcasting website](#). The [schedule of monthly Cabinet meetings](#) is available on the website. The Forward Plan is updated regularly and key decisions can be taken on any day in the month if they are not taken at Cabinet meetings. The [Plan](#) is available on the. [Published decisions](#) are also available via the website.

A key decision is one which:

- Involves expenditure or savings of £500,000 or more (except treasury management); and/or
- Will have a significant effect on communities in two or more electoral divisions in terms of how services are provided.

The following information is provided for each entry in the Forward Plan:

<b>Decision</b>	A summary of the proposal.
<b>Decision By</b>	Who will take the decision - if the Cabinet, it will be taken at a Cabinet meeting in public.
<b>West Sussex Plan priority</b>	Which of the five priorities in the West Sussex Plan the proposal affects.
<b>Date added</b>	The date the proposed decision was added to the Forward Plan.
<b>Month</b>	The decision will be taken on any working day in the month stated. If a Cabinet decision, it will be taken at the Cabinet meeting scheduled in that month.
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	How views and representations about the proposal will be considered or the proposal scrutinised, including dates of Scrutiny Committee meetings.
<b>Background Documents</b>	The documents containing more information about the proposal and how to obtain them (via links on the website version of the Forward Plan). Hard copies are available on request from the decision contact.
<b>Author</b>	The contact details of the decision report author
<b>Contact</b>	Who in Democratic Services you can contact about the entry

### Finance, assets, performance and risk management

Each month the Cabinet Member for Finance reviews the Council's budget position and may take adjustment decisions. A similar monthly review of Council property and assets is carried out and may lead to decisions about them. These are noted in the Forward Plan as 'rolling decisions'.

Each month the Cabinet will consider the Council's performance against its planned outcomes and in connection with a register of corporate risk. Areas of particular significance may be considered at the scheduled Cabinet meetings.

Significant proposals for the management of the Council's budget and spending plans will be dealt with at a scheduled Cabinet meeting and shown in the Plan as strategic budget options.

For questions contact Helena Cox on 033 022 22533, email [helena.cox@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:helena.cox@westsussex.gov.uk).

**Published: 20 May 2020**

## Best Start in Life

### Director of Property and Assets

<b>Award of Contract for the replacement of Modular Units at Southwater Infant and Junior Schools, Horsham - Phase 2</b>	
<p>In order to accommodate the demand for pupil places in the Southwater area of Horsham it is necessary to replace the modular teaching accommodation at Southwater Infant and Junior Schools. In January 2020 the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills approved the allocation of additional monies from Section 106 funds to enable this replacement work to take place(decision reference <a href="#">ES07(19/20)</a>). As part of this decision he also delegated authority to the Director of Property and Assets to award the contract for carrying out these works.</p> <p>The feasibility work and detailed design for the replacement of the four modular units have now been completed and planning permission granted. The work will be divided into two elements and tendered as two separate contracts:-</p> <p>Phase 1 - The Supply and Installation of Modular Units Package Phase 2 - Enabling Works</p> <p>The tendering process for Phase 1 is due to start shortly; a competitive tendering exercise for Phase 2 will also now commence. On completion the Director of Property and Assets will be asked to approve the award of the contract to the preferred provider to deliver the Enabling Works.</p>	
<b>Decision by</b>	Andrew Edwards - Director of Property and Assets
<b>West Sussex Plan priority</b>	Best Start in Life
<b>Date added</b>	12 February 2020
<b>Month</b>	May 2020
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	<p>School Parents and local residents Parish and District Councils</p> <p>Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Director of Property and Assets via the author or officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken</p>
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	Cabinet Member Decision ES07(19/20)
<b>Author</b>	Carol Bruce Tel: 033 022 23055
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

**Cabinet Member for Education and Skills**

<b>Provision of new school hall at Thorney Island Primary School</b>	
<p>The County Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places for all children who need a place. Over recent years there has been an increase in pupil numbers at Thorney Island Primary School and an enlarged school hall is now required to provide sufficient and suitable accommodation for the additional children.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills will be asked to approve the allocation of capital funding from the Basic Need Capital Programme to enable the project to proceed.</p>	
<b>Decision by</b>	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
<b>West Sussex Plan priority</b>	Best Start in Life
<b>Date added</b>	21 August 2019
<b>Month</b>	May 2020
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	<p>School Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources</p> <p>Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken</p>
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	None
<b>Author</b>	Leigh Hunnikin Tel: 033 022 23051
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders - Tel: 033 022 22553

**Cabinet Member for Education and Skills**

<b>Expansion of Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee School, Horsham</b>
<p>The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2019-2024 aims to provide high quality local education provision for children and young people with SEND and optimise value for money from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant. As part of the development of the SEND Strategy, the County Council has identified an increased demand for extra provision in Special Schools across West Sussex to meet increasing needs There is a requirement to both increase places at certain special schools and to ensure existing school accommodation meets the needs of the pupils on roll.</p> <p>Following a review of current numbers on roll and the existing accommodation at Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee School in Horsham the need for additional accommodation has been identified, to ensure suitable provision for the needs of the pupils currently on roll. The school caters for a wide-range of Special Educational Needs and Disability for pupils aged between 2 and 19, including children with severe learning difficulties, complex social and communication difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties and complex needs.</p>

<p>A proposed project to deliver an increase in space would enable the school to offer suitable accommodation and support spaces for 105 pupils.</p> <p>The feasibility work for the project to accommodate the pupils is now underway. Following detailed design and associated cost estimates the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills will be asked to approve the allocation of the funds required to enable the project to proceed.</p>	
<b>Decision by</b>	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
<b>West Sussex Plan priority</b>	Best Start in Life
<b>Date added</b>	19 February 2020
<b>Month</b>	May 2020
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	<p>Schools Parents and local residents Parish and District Councils Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources</p> <p>Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills via the author or officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken</p>
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	None
<b>Author</b>	Leigh Hunnikin Tel: 033 022 23051
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

#### **Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning**

<p><b>Award of contract for remodelling works at Cissbury Lodge Children's Home, Worthing</b></p>
<p>The children's in-house residential service is made up of six homes, of which three, including Cissbury Lodge, are currently closed and awaiting refurbishment whilst feasibility studies and design work are undertaken.</p> <p>A strategy for the residential service was approved by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People in October 2019 (decision reference CYP03(19/20)). It seeks to ensure that outcomes for vulnerable children are maximised and that long-term care costs are minimised. It is essential that the assets that enable support to children are redeveloped in order to support the delivery of this strategy as a part of the wider 'children first' improvement plan being driven forward by the Council.</p> <p>Cissbury Lodge's contribution to the delivery of this strategy will come through the remodelling of the home to ensure the most efficient use of the existing footprint of the homes whilst maximising the potential service offering of the site.</p>

As part of a separate decision process approval will be sought from the Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning for the commencement of a procurement to undertake these remodelling works. Once the procurement process has been completed the Executive Director will be asked to agree the award of contract to the preferred contractor for the delivery of works at Cissbury Lodge.

<b>Decision by</b>	Lucy Butler - Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning
<b>West Sussex Plan priority</b>	Best Start in Life
<b>Date added</b>	19 February 2020
<b>Month</b>	May 2020
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning via the author or officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	None
<b>Author</b>	Louise Warren Tel: 033 022 24653
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

### Cabinet

<b>Woodlands Meed College Site, Burgess Hill - Allocation of Funding for Project Delivery</b>	
<p>Woodlands Meed is a Special School and College for 2-19 year olds located in Burgess Hill. The existing accommodation at the College site has a number of condition issues meaning the College is unable to offer the full curriculum and unable to accommodate the full range of Special Educational Needs.</p> <p>In order to address this, in February 2019 the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills took a decision (ES18 (18/19)) to approve the allocation of £0.5m from the Capital Programme to enable a costed design to be produced for rebuilding and expanding Woodlands Meed College on its current site. This has involved the appointment of a full design team through the County Council's Multi-Disciplinary Consultant to undertake the design work required to develop the feasibility design into a formal proposal enabling costs to be sought for all elements of the proposal.</p> <p>A further survey of the existing building's condition and suitability to meet the needs of the College's students has now been undertaken. Following assessment of the outcome of this survey and exploration of access options Cabinet will be asked to agree the allocation of funds from the Capital Programme to enable the new investment at Woodlands Meed to proceed.</p> <p>.</p>	
<b>Decision by</b>	Cllr Elkins, Cllr Marshall, Cllr N Jupp, Cllr Russell, Cllr Urquhart, Cllr Lanzer, Cllr A Jupp, Cllr Hunt, Cllr Crow - Cabinet

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<b>West Sussex Plan priority</b>	Best Start in Life
<b>Date added</b>	1 July 2019
<b>Month</b>	May 2020
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	School Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee – 4 December 2019  Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Cabinet Member, via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	Cabinet Member Decision ES18(18/19)
<b>Author</b>	Leigh Hunnikin Tel: 033 022 23051
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders - 033 022 22553

### Cabinet

<b>Small Schools Proposals - Determination of Statutory Notices</b>	
<p>Following the decision by the Cabinet on 22<sup>nd</sup> April (<a href="#">CAB01(20/21)</a>) and in accordance with Section 15(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended), West Sussex County Council (WSCC) propose to issue notices on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2020 of their intention to discontinue Clapham and Patching C of E Primary School and Rumboldswyke C of E Infants' School on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020.</p> <p>WSCC will also give notice in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 3 of The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 ('the Prescribed Alterations Regulations') and in conjunction with Parts 2 and 3 and Schedule 3 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended by the Education Act 2011) of its intention to transfer Warninglid Primary School to a new site which is part of the new development known as Woodgate on land at Hardriding Farm, Brighton Road, Pease Pottage with effect from 31 August 2021</p> <p>Following consideration of any representations received during the 4 week period in relation to these proposals the Cabinet will be asked to determine the statutory notices.</p>	
<b>Decision by</b>	Cllr Marshall, Cllr N Jupp, Cllr Elkins, Cllr Russell, Cllr Urquhart, Cllr Hunt, Cllr Lanzer, Cllr A Jupp, Cllr Crow - Cabinet
<b>West Sussex Plan priority</b>	Best Start in Life
<b>Date added</b>	6 May 2020
<b>Month</b>	June 2020
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	Schools Governing Bodies

	<p>Diocese of Chichester Education Parents and carers</p> <p>Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.</p>
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	Cabinet Decision CAB01(20/21)
<b>Author</b>	Graham Olway Tel: 033 022 23029
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

### Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning

<b>Award of contract for remodelling works at May House and Seaside Children's Homes</b>	
<p>The children's in-house residential service is made up of six homes, of which three, including May House and Seaside, are currently closed and awaiting refurbishment whilst feasibility studies and design work are undertaken.</p> <p>A strategy for the residential service was approved by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People in October 2019 (decision reference <a href="#">CYP03(19/20)</a>). It seeks to ensure that outcomes for vulnerable children are maximised and that long-term care costs are minimised. It is essential that the assets that enable support to children are redeveloped in order to support the delivery of this strategy as a part of the wider 'children first' improvement plan being driven forward by the Council.</p> <p>To support the delivery of this strategy, the May House and Seaside sites will be remodelled to ensure the most efficient use of the existing space whilst maximising the potential service offering of each site.</p> <p>As part of a separate decision process approval will be sought from the Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning for the commencement of a procurement to undertake these remodelling works. Once the procurement process has been completed the Executive Director will be asked to agree the award of a contract to the preferred contractor for the delivery of works at May House and Seaside Children's Homes.</p>	
<b>Decision by</b>	Lucy Butler - Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning
<b>West Sussex Plan priority</b>	Best Start in Life
<b>Date added</b>	19 February 2020
<b>Month</b>	June 2020
<b>Consultation/Representations</b>	Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning via the author or officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.

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<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	None
<b>Author</b>	Louise Warren Tel: 033 022 24653
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

### Director of Property and Assets

<b>Award of contract for construction of new school hall at Thorney Island Primary School</b>	
<p>The County Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places for all children who need a place. Over recent years there has been an increase in pupil numbers at Thorney Island Primary School and an enlarged school hall is now required to provide sufficient and suitable accommodation for the additional children.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills will be asked to approve the allocation of capital funding from the Basic Need Capital Programme to enable the project to proceed and to delegate authority to the Director of Property and Assets to award the contract for the works.</p> <p>Following receipt of this approval from the Cabinet Member, the Director of Property and Assets will be asked to award the construction contract to deliver the enlarged school hall.</p>	
<b>Decision by</b>	Andrew Edwards - Director of Property and Assets
<b>West Sussex Plan priority</b>	Best Start in Life
<b>Date added</b>	27 April 2020
<b>Month</b>	June 2020
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	<p>School</p> <p>Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Director of Property and Assets via the author or officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.</p>
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	None
<b>Author</b>	Liam Hayward Tel: 033 022 22002
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553



**Cabinet Member for Children and Young People**

<b>Children Looked After and Care Leavers' Strategy 2020-2024</b>	
<p>The current Children Looked After and Care Leaver's Strategy (2018-21) is being updated following the Ofsted inspection of 2019 and the appointment of a Commissioner to work with West Sussex County Council</p> <p>The update is necessary to ensure a strategic approach and evidence our commitment to ensuring that children who are looked after by the authority are happy, healthy, and safe and have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.</p> <p>The proposed new strategy is the product of consultation with the Children in Care Council, Corporate Parenting Panel and partners. It will have an annually updated action plan to enable the service to measure delivery against the objectives outlined in the strategy and ensure resources are targeted so as to improve the quality of life for children and young people in the care of the local authority.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People is asked to support the adoption of the Children Looked After and Care Leavers' Strategy 2020-24.</p>	
<b>Decision by</b>	Cllr Russell - Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
<b>West Sussex Plan priority</b>	Best Start in Life
<b>Date added</b>	2 March 2020
<b>Month</b>	June 2020
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	<p>Corporate Parenting Panel - 12 March 2020</p> <p>Children in Care Council</p> <p>Health</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Local Safeguarding Partnership</p> <p>Staff and Young People living in County Council Children's Homes</p> <p>Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People via the author or officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.</p>
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	Cabinet Member Decision CYP04 (17/18)
<b>Author</b>	Louise Warren Tel: 033 022 24653
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

## Cabinet

<b>Scope of services for a proposed Children's Trust</b>	
<p>In order to meet the requirements of the Direction made by the Secretary of State, Department for Education (DfE) on 17th December 2019, the County Council will take steps for a range of its Children's Services to be delivered through an alternative delivery model (referred to as a Children's Trust). The detailed proposals for the establishment and operation of the Trust and its relationship to the County Council will be described in a Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the DfE.</p> <p>It is expected that this document will be concluded during July 2020, with a view to planning for the operation of the Trust to take effect in the Spring of 2021.</p> <p>The Cabinet will take a decision on the proposed scope of services to be included in the proposed Trust and the programme of work for the establishment of the Trust and other critical aspects of the project which need to be included in the Memorandum of Understanding.</p>	
<b>Decision by</b>	Cllr N Jupp, Cllr Marshall, Cllr Elkins, Cllr Urquhart, Cllr Russell, Cllr A Jupp, Cllr Lanzer, Cllr Hunt, Cllr Crow - Cabinet
<b>West Sussex Plan priority</b>	Best Start in Life
<b>Date added</b>	25 February 2020
<b>Month</b>	July 2020
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	None
<b>Author</b>	Lucy Butler
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

## Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

<b>Expansion of Palatine Primary School, Worthing</b>
<p>The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2019-2024 aims to provide high quality local education provision for children and young people with SEND and optimise value for money from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant. As part of the development of the SEND Strategy, the County Council has identified an increased demand for extra provision in Special Schools across West Sussex to meet increasing needs. There is a requirement to both increase places at certain special schools and to ensure existing school accommodation meets the needs of the pupils on roll.</p> <p>Following a review of current numbers on roll, projected needs and the existing accommodation at Palatine Primary School in Worthing the need for additional</p>

accommodation has been identified, to meet a projected increase in pupils from 153 to 178. The school caters for a wide-range of Special Educational Needs and Disability for pupils aged between 4 and 11, including children with moderate and severe learning difficulties, complex social and communication difficulties and profound and multiple learning difficulties.

A proposed project to deliver an increase in capacity would enable the school to offer suitable accommodation and support spaces for 178 pupils.

The feasibility work for the project to accommodate the pupils has been completed. Following detailed design and associated cost estimates the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills will be asked to approve the allocation of the funds required to enable the project to proceed.

<b>Decision by</b>	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
<b>West Sussex Plan priority</b>	Best Start in LIfe
<b>Date added</b>	1 April 2020
<b>Month</b>	July 2020
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	School, parents and local residents Parish and Borough Councils Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources  Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills via the author or officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	None
<b>Author</b>	Leigh Hunnikin Tel: 033 022 23051
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

### **Cabinet Member for Education and Skills**

#### **Change of status for Forest Boys' School, Horsham and St Andrews CE Boys' School, Worthing to co-educational schools**

The Director of Education & Skills has agreed to consult during June 2020 on the proposed significant change of character to alter Forest Boys' School, Horsham from a single sex boys' school to a co-educational school from September 2021 entry. At the same time the Governing Body of St Andrews CE Boys' School, Worthing will consult on changing from a single sex boys' school to a co-educational school from September 2021 entry.

The proposed changes would mean the schools will no longer admit only boys as pupils from September 2021 and each year of entry thereafter would be co-educational. There are no changes proposed to have co-educational provision for any of the existing year groups on roll at both schools. There are also no proposals to alter the single sex girls

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provision at either Millais School, Horsham or Davison CE High School for Girls, Worthing.

Following assessment of the outcome of the consultation the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills will be asked to consider whether to proceed in approving the significant change in character of both schools to co-educational schools from September 2021.

<b>Decision by</b>	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
<b>West Sussex Plan priority</b>	Best Start in Life
<b>Date added</b>	20 May 2020
<b>Month</b>	July 2020
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	<p>Members of the Public Parents of current and future pupils Diocese of Chichester Members District &amp; Borough Councils Governing Bodies of local schools</p> <p>Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.</p>
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	None
<b>Author</b>	Graham Olway Tel: 033 022 23029
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

### Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning

<b>Children's Trust Phase 2 Procurement</b>	
<p>In order to meet the requirements of the Direction made by the Secretary of State, Department for Education (DfE) on 17th December 2019, the County Council is taking steps for a range of its Children's Services to be delivered through an alternative delivery model (referred to as a Children's Trust) as set out in the agreed Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and the DfE (due to be agreed during July 2020).</p> <p>The Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning will be asked to approve the commencement of a procurement process to appoint a contractor to manage the process of establishing the West Sussex Children's Trust and the transfer of the agreed services to that Trust (as set out in the Memorandum of Understanding).</p>	
<b>Decision by</b>	Lucy Butler - Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning
<b>West Sussex Plan priority</b>	Best Start in Life

<b>Date added</b>	18 March 2020
<b>Month</b>	August 2020
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	Representations concerning this decision should be made to the Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning via the officer contact by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	None
<b>Author</b>	Lucy Butler
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

### Cabinet

<b>Adoption of the West Sussex Children First Strategic Approach</b>	
<p>In collaboration with partners across West Sussex the County Council is developing a West Sussex Children First Strategic Approach. This will set out the direction and commitment for how partners in West Sussex will deliver a shared vision for children and young people placing children at the heart of all we do.</p> <p>It will be a single over-arching strategic approach based on the West Sussex Plan, the Health and well-Being Strategy and Children's Services Practice Improvement Plan for Social Care as well as other key strategies where outcomes for children, young people and their families will be improved. It will set out how West Sussex will be a great place for children and young people, where all, including those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged, have the best possible start in life and are supported by the whole community to succeed.</p> <p>Cabinet will be asked to approve the adoption of the West Sussex Children First Strategic Approach.</p>	
<b>Decision by</b>	Cllr Marshall, Cllr N Jupp, Cllr Elkins, Cllr Urquhart, Cllr Russell, Cllr A Jupp, Cllr Lanzer, Cllr Hunt, Cllr Crow - Cabinet
<b>West Sussex Plan priority</b>	Best Start in Life
<b>Date added</b>	27 August 2019
<b>Month</b>	September 2020
<b>Consultation/ Representations</b>	<p>Internal (County Council) and external partners including Health and Well-being Board; Local Safeguarding Partnership; Community Safety; Schools (primary and secondary) Health; Police; Children and Young People; District and Borough Councils.</p> <p>Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee – 4 June 2020</p> <p>Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People via the</p>

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	officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken
<b>Background Documents</b> (via website)	None
<b>Author</b>	Ann Marie Dodds Tel: 033 022 29331
<b>Contact</b>	Wendy Saunders - Tel: 033 022 22553

<b>Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>4 June 2020</b>
<b>Children First Improvement – Service Update</b>
<b>Report by the Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning</b>

### **Summary**

This report updates the Committee on developments in the Children First Programme since its last meeting on 04 March 2020. It notes the key service objectives and the new leadership arrangements (Section 1); it summarises the service's response to the Covid-19 pandemic (Section 2); it provides the latest monitoring information on workforce development (Section 3); and it explains what service improvement work has been continuing during this period (Section 4); there is a summary of key future decisions (Section 5). A separate report on Neglect forms Part b) of this agenda item.

### **The focus for Scrutiny**

The Committee is requested to:

- a) consider the update on the improvement work as outlined in Sections 2, 3 & 4 of the report and whether this demonstrates sufficient progress on the improvement journey;
- b) consider the risks as set out in section 8 and whether the mitigating actions are robust.

The Chairman will summarise the output of the debate for consideration by the Committee.

## **1. Update on Service Developments**

### **Introduction**

- 1.1 This report reviews a period unprecedented in the service's history. An account is given in Section 2 below of the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on the delivery of the service. However, we continue to make progress and focus relentlessly on meeting the needs of vulnerable children, young people and their families, both in the course of our normal practice and in our response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Notwithstanding the challenges this has presented, the service has continued to hold fast to three central tenets:

- a) the safeguarding of children and young people must remain strong;
- b) staff must be properly supported and protected;
- c) the planned service improvement work must continue.

This report seeks to explain how all three of these have been achieved during the period under review.

### **Leadership and Management in Children's Services**

- 1.2 Lucy Butler, the new Director of Children's Services, and Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning commenced her role on 2 April. Louise Warren, Senior Improvement Lead is currently acting as the Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting pending permanent recruitment to this position. The new Children First Transformation Director, Vince Clark, started on 4 May.

## **2. Covid-19 Pandemic and Service Response**

- 2.1 This section summarises the service response to Covid-19 during the period up to the middle of May. The virus has presented the service with significant challenges, especially since it is recognised that 'lock-down' and social isolation have a disproportionate impact on families that are intrinsically vulnerable. It is essential that the service continues to have direct knowledge of and regular assurance about any children who may be potentially at risk, and the management focus has been on ensuring that staff are able to achieve this in a safe yet verifiable way. We have put in place a full set of Covid-19 arrangements to ensure our staff are working to keep our children safe, and they have been innovative in their use of digital technology to provide this.
- 2.2 The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's address to the County Council meeting originally scheduled for 22 May contains further detail about the service response. Prior to this, the Cabinet Member wrote to all members on 20 March outlining the initial approach to the challenge of safeguarding children during the crisis. This described a comprehensive risk assessment of children's vulnerability, and a programme of actual and virtual visits focussed on the clearly identified highest priorities.
- 2.3 To summarise the current position:
- High operational staffing levels (90% or more) have been maintained throughout the most serious period of the pandemic;
  - The service has adhered to all guidance received from government and professional social care and health bodies, and adjusted local policy and practice accordingly;
  - Staff have continued to receive the latest advice, guidance and support;
  - Supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) have remained satisfactory to meet all specified needs for face-to-face visiting;
  - Risk assessments and RAG rating has been undertaken on all open cases to children's social care to ensure that managers retain effective oversight of risk, enabling us to continue to offer help, protection and support, either virtually or face-to-face;
  - The face-to-face visiting policy now covers all children on child protection plans, those children not known to the service who need an assessment, and for progress visits where this is judged necessary. We are seeing a gradual increase in the number of face to face visits completed, increasing



from 108 visits (21.3% of all visits completed for the week ending 15 April 2020) to 485 (53.2% of all visits completed for the week ending 20 May 2020). During the month of April as a whole, 5,442 visits were completed, including 1,326 (24.4%) face to face visits and 2,896 (53.2%) virtual visits. A tick box on the visiting form was introduced on the 8 April 2020 to capture how the visit was completed, either virtually or face to face. Prior to this date 1,220 visits (22.4%) were undertaken where it isn't recorded how the visit was completed.

- Use of digital technology has been effective, and many young people have responded very positively to this approach, preferring to keep in touch with their social worker or personal advisor by text, WhatsApp, or video calls. We have noticed that many young people are much more responsive to this approach, so that visits are more productive and are able to be held more frequently, with staff able to keep in touch between formal visits. However, it is not suitable for all, especially younger children, but as part of our recovery plan we are carefully considering how we can take this learning into our new normal;
- A testing regime for Covid-19 is in place for social care staff and is providing greater assurance and a sounder base for continued operational practice;
- As experienced regionally and nationally, referrals to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) decreased sharply from an average of 235 contacts per day to an average of 92 contacts per day during the first week of lockdown, (a 60% reduction). In particular there has been a notable reduction in contacts from schools, accounting for 23% of all contacts in March, compared to 8% in April. Similarly, there has been a slight reduction in contacts from Health, reducing from 18% in March to 15% in April. However, we are pleased to see an improving picture; in the week ending 15 May 2020 there were an average of 148 contacts a day (a 37% decrease on pre-lockdown contacts). Together with our partners we are now planning for a surge in activity once lockdown begins to ease, so ensuring that we have the right capacity in place to meet likely demand.

### **Engaging the whole community to keep children safe**

- 2.3 At this time when vulnerable families may be under even greater pressure due to social isolation, financial worries and enforced inertia, and with a rise in incidents of domestic violence being reported nationally, it is more important than ever that the entire community is mobilised to keep children safe. This is the purpose of the recent press release [if-you-see-something-say-something](https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/news/if-you-see-something-say-something-to-protect-the-county-s-children/) (<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/news/if-you-see-something-say-something-to-protect-the-county-s-children/>) that was issued on behalf of the Cabinet Member, jointly with partners in Sussex Police and Health. Members are encouraged to promote this message, drawing attention to the reporting channels and the work of the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership.

### **3. Children's Services Workforce Update**

This section considers trends from February 2019 together with the latest Workforce information, dated 4 May 2020.

## Vacancy Gap

- 3.1 The service currently comprises approximately 511 FTE (full-time equivalent) social worker posts. The vacancy gap describes posts where permanent staff are absent, as well as other posts without agency worker cover. The following trends arise, measured from a baseline at February 2019:

▪ February 2019	18.5%
▪ May 2019	14.9%
▪ June 2019	8.8%
▪ July 2019	6.9%
▪ August 2019	5.2%
▪ September 2019	1.8%
▪ October 2019	1.7%
▪ November 2019	2.3%
▪ December 2019	2.2%
▪ February 2020	5.3%
▪ March 2020	5.1%
▪ April 2020	4.3%
▪ May 2020	1.9%

- 3.2 The vacancy gap has improved to 1.9% and is predicted to remain at a similar level over the summer. The position has benefited from some staff withdrawing their notice in response to the current crisis. The number of absent employees has decreased since last month and is currently 25.5 FTE (compared to 29.9 FTE in April); 17.5 FTE of these are due to career breaks or maternity leave. There are currently no staff suspended, and the 8 FTE on long-term sick leave is another monthly decrease, this time of 3.1 FTE compared with the previous month.

## Starters and Leavers

- 3.3 The table below shows the current full-time equivalent numbers of expected starters and leavers between May and July 2020. The Covid-19 crisis is clearly influencing behaviours, and some resignations have been deferred or withdrawn. It remains important that this situation is closely monitored and responded to, as it may mask future volatility. A number of short, medium and longer-term strategies are being explored to mitigate against the risk of an increasing vacancy gap.

Month	Pipeline Starters	Pipeline Leavers
May 2020	3.0	4.1
June 2020	6.0	3.0
July 2020	0	5.8
<b>Net minus for period</b>		<b>3.9</b>

## Agency Workers

- 3.4 The vacancy gap has been closed in part through the engagement of additional agency resource: this means that the agency proportion is likely to fluctuate between given months due to specific demand; the longer-term trend is intended to be downwards, but this depends on successful recruitment of permanent staff. The agency social worker contingent

covering unfilled vacancies or undertaking additional work to help reduce caseloads, currently equates to 17.7% of the total qualified social worker establishment; the recent detailed trend in terms of full-time equivalent agency workers, is as follows:

▪ May 2019	62.0 FTE
▪ June 2019	72.0 FTE
▪ July 2019	75.0 FTE
▪ August 2019	76.5 FTE
▪ September 2019	73.7 FTE
▪ October 2019	78.7 FTE
▪ November 2019	78.7 FTE
▪ December 2019	80.7 FTE
▪ January 2020	76.2 FTE
▪ February 2020	70.8 FTE
▪ April 2020	78.4 FTE
▪ May 2020	79.0 FTE

### **Recruitment & Retention Offer**

- 3.5 The take-up rate on the revised recruitment and retention offer refers to eligible social workers, (including some social workers within Early Help and Safeguarding, as well as Children's Social Care) committing to stay with the Council for 18 months. The data excludes the ASYEs (Assessed and Supported Year in Employment, for newly qualified social workers) that became eligible for the provisions in September, many of whom have indicated a wish to be included. The current scheme was launched in June 2019, and the trend in rate of take-up is as follows:

▪ July 2019	85.0%
▪ August 2019	88.5%
▪ September 2019	90.9%
▪ October 2019	90.9%
▪ November 2019	91.0%
▪ December 2019	93.0%
▪ January 2020	92.0%
▪ February 2020	92.0%
▪ March 2020	91.0%
▪ April 2020	92.0%
▪ May 2020	92.0%

### **Caseloads**

- 3.6 The Committee has previously noted the centrality of achieving manageable caseloads across the service. Caseload targets were set in 2018 and were determined by comparisons with other authorities, rated as 'requiring improvement'. Targets will vary between different staff cohorts: experienced social workers have a target of up to 18 cases. Newly qualified social workers (Assessed and Supported Year in Employment) have a protected caseload which steadily increases in their first year of qualified practice; for these workers caseloads commence at 10 and increase to 16/17 dependant on which part of the service they practice in.

- 3.7 Caseloads are monitored weekly. At present, the only service area that has an average caseload over 18 is Family Support & Protection North (18.4). While there has been a marked decrease in *average* caseload during recent months, it is acknowledged there are individual workers within teams whose caseload is above the target level of 18 cases.
- 3.8 It remains a priority to ensure caseloads are manageable across the service, whilst also ensuring that children receive the most appropriate service, in the right place and at the right time. Additionally, work continues within the service to identify ways to streamline processes and develop smarter, more efficient ways of working, which will support staff without compromising the quality of practice and the service delivered.

### **Workforce Summary**

- 3.9 To summarise, the current workforce situation is inevitably impacted by the Covid-19 crisis. Sustaining the positive effects previously reported will be challenging, especially in the face of increasing uncertainty for the workforce, and in the context of a continued national scarcity of experienced social workers. However, we continue to invest heavily in our Social Work Academy to attract newly qualified social workers. Staff behaviours in the aftermath of current restrictions are not fully predictable. Another factor could be a surge in customer demand that may follow a release of lock-down, and consequent impact on workloads.
- 3.10 Key to maintaining a low vacancy gap will be the retention of the existing workforce: some volatility is to be expected, and this remains an area of risk. Management remains fully committed to listening and responding to the views of staff, giving effective managerial and case-working support, helping to address the causes of under-performance, and providing the right training, administrative and IT facilities. This journey of improvement needs to continue over the coming months for the benefits to become fully realised.

## **4. Key Service Initiatives**

### **Children's Services Improvement Board & Ofsted Monitoring**

- 4.1 Oversight of the Improvement programme continues through the Children's Services Improvement Board, under the chairmanship of the Commissioner for Children's Services in West Sussex, John Coughlan. Concurrently, a Children's Improvement Partnership Board represents the full range of stakeholders of the service. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, a rescheduling of the programme of quarterly Ofsted Monitoring Visits is under consideration. The relationship with Hampshire County Council as West Sussex's Partner in Practice is proceeding constructively and to the benefit of the service.
- 4.2 As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, Ofsted has temporarily ceased normal inspection activity and in April made an offer to several local authorities to redeploy its inspectors. The purpose of this is to assist local authorities to deliver help and support to vulnerable children during these challenging times. West Sussex County Council currently has four of Her Majesty's

Inspectors (HMIs) seconded to the service, three of whom have education backgrounds and one with a social care background. They have been working with the County Council since 4 May 2020.

### **The Children First Practice Improvement Plan**

- 4.3 The detailed service development work now being undertaken is set out in a Practice Improvement Plan. The original plan was adopted in August 2019 and was closely aligned to the 12 main recommendations made by Ofsted in its inspection report of May 2019. These areas of endeavour remain entirely valid, but some detailed adjustment and refocussing was required, to recognise that this is a 'living document' and to reflect the programme of work accomplished to date. Accordingly, a refreshed Improvement Plan was adopted in March 2020, and forms a sound base for the next phase of improvement work.

### **Continued Practice Improvement**

- 4.6 Notwithstanding the challenges faced, the journey of service improvement has continued. Under the Improvement Plan, a bedrock of practice standards is being created, that will be progressively trained into the service; some key milestones that have recently been achieved, are as follows:
- The Quality Assurance Framework has now been revised and signed off with a streamlined audit tool, with the focus now on embedding audit as a tool to improve the quality of practice;
  - Work is taking place on a Practice Framework to promote a more strengths-based approach to work with children and families;
  - Work has been commissioned to support improved practice in Family Support & Protection;
  - Permanency improvement is moving forward, with supporting panels now introduced to ensure timely decisions to achieve permanence for children unable to live within their birth family;
  - Governance arrangements are now in place within the service to oversee learning, delivery and outcomes, e.g. the Policy and Practice Group and Performance Board.

### **Children's Residential Care**

- 4.7 The Council's residential provision for children is in a period of very positive development. High Trees in Ifield, Crawley is a children's home, providing residential short breaks or longer-term care for children and young people with a severe or moderate learning disability. Following a recent inspection, High Trees has formally been rated 'Good' by Ofsted in a report that is full of praise for the manager, Lianne Finch and her team. This follows on from the 'Outstanding' rating achieved by Orchard House last year, illustrating the growing quality of the Council's children's homes.
- 4.7 The agreed Children's Residential Strategy aims to ensure that outcomes for vulnerable children are maximized, while long-term care costs are sensibly managed. Under a programme of remodelling work now commencing, the

homes currently closed are expected to re-open early in 2021. **May House** in Worthing will provide emergency accommodation for children with complex needs; **Seaside** at Shoreham will offer placements for children at risk of entering the care system; and **Cissbury Lodge** in Worthing will once again care for vulnerable children, supporting those with a learning disability and complex health needs. All this is good news for the service and for delivering first-rate sustainable in-house facilities.

## **5. Key Future Decisions**

### **Children Looked After and Care Leavers' Strategy 2020-2024**

- 5.1 This Strategy represents a key aspect of improving the County Council's services to children and young people. An update of the current Strategy (2018-21) is necessary, following the Ofsted inspection, to ensure a strategic approach and evidence the commitment to ensuring that children who are looked after by the authority are happy, healthy, and safe and have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. The new Strategy is now expected for adoption in June. It is anticipated that the Corporate Parenting Panel will examine the strategy document prior to the decision by the Cabinet Member.

### **Children's Trust**

- 5.2 The Committee will recall that the County Council received a statutory direction from the Department for Education (DfE) to make provision for the setting up of a Children's Trust, in order to ensure that the necessary improvements to Children's Services could be achieved in an appropriate organisational environment. The effect of this would be to remove Children's Services from the County Council's direct control.
- 5.3 To progress this programme, the County Council is required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the DfE. This in itself does not finally commit the parties to a Trust model, but enables the Council to meet its legal obligations up to this point. As set out in the Council's Forward Plan, the next steps are:
- Cabinet is due to agree the proposed scope of services to be included in the proposed Trust, and the programme of work for the establishment of the Trust and other critical aspects of the project which need to be included in the MoU. This decision is provisionally scheduled for July 2020, and is intended to be the subject of scrutiny, jointly between this Committee and the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee, on a date to be agreed.
  - This would lead to a procurement process to appoint a contractor to manage the process of establishing the West Sussex Children's Trust and the transfer of the agreed services to that Trust.
- 5.4 The original timetable anticipated a Children's Trust being in place by December 2020. There will be some slippage in this timetable due to the current national situation, thought likely to be of 3-6 months. Discussions with the DfE are in progress to agree a revised timetable, and an update will be brought to this Committee in due course. It is likely that the revised timeline will also have an

impact on when the proposed scope of services will be agreed, and the governance timeline will be updated accordingly.

### **Children First Strategic Approach**

- 5.5 The Committee has previously been briefed on this strategic initiative, which will set out the direction and commitment for how partners in West Sussex will deliver a shared vision for children and young people, placing children at the heart of all we do. Its adoption is intended for a Cabinet decision in September 2020, and to be the subject of scrutiny jointly between this Committee and the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee, on a date to be agreed.

## **6. Issues for consideration by the Scrutiny Committee**

### **Detailed examination of key service areas**

- 6.1 The Committee has agreed to receive a regular sequence of specific updates covering social work areas that were subject to specific Ofsted recommendations. This process will allow members to gain in-depth knowledge of different aspects of the service; to provide challenge and questioning in relation to the programmes in hand; and to assure themselves that the Improvement Plan delivery is gathering momentum, with a clear trajectory for positive change. These updates will be supported by explanations from staff and stakeholders as relevant, and members are encouraged to test and challenge the material presented.
- 6.2 The topic for this meeting is the work recently undertaken on **Neglect**, which is presented in the report under Part b) of this agenda item. The Committee's request to receive more child-focussed measures has been noted, and it is hoped that this subject will be a step towards meeting this acknowledged need.
- 6.3 At the meeting on 4 March, the Committee expressed a wish to be involved in the Practice Week, an event then being planned. Due to the national situation, this particular event had to be postponed, but it is intended that replacement events will be rescheduled at a later date in September. The same consideration applies to the wish members expressed to be invited to a future meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

## **7. Consultation**

- 7.1 Not applicable – this is a report for information.

## **8. Risk Implications and Mitigations**

- 8.1 For an undertaking of the magnitude of Children's Services, it is natural that there will be a wide range of risks, both relating to the service improvement agenda and more widely. These have been heightened by the current crisis. A summary of the risk areas identified in the current risk log, and the associated mitigating actions is given in the table below:

Risk Area	Examples of Mitigating Actions
The Covid-19 Pandemic may impact the delivery of the service in various ways: safeguarding of children must be assured; staff need to be kept safe from infection; protective equipment must be sufficiently available to support face-to-face interaction with children and families, and in residential settings	These risks, their mitigation and the current delivery of the service are described in detail in this report (Section 2)
A possible surge in demand following the cessation of the current Covid-19 restrictions	Service planning is in place for this eventuality
Knowing that the service is safer for children	Every aspect of the improvement agenda is orientated towards this fundamental issue, from workforce through practice improvement, to performance management, governance, scrutiny and the use of technology: it is a whole-system issue. Specific measures include having a new quality assurance process, with a Head of Quality Assurance in post to ensure effective management oversight
Understanding and applying quality practice	Practice Improvement Project in progress to implement quality standards and assurance (see e.g. para 4.6 of this report)
Multi-agency capacity and capability	Partnership Engagement Project being delivered under Children First; Strategic Approach in preparation with partner involvement (see para 5.5)
Demonstrating to the Commissioner and DfE that the service can continue its improvement journey	Investment Plan in place; Practice Improvement Plan agreed by Ofsted; Improvement/Partnership Boards active; new leadership team fully functional; Workforce issues being resolved; Children First Strategic Approach in preparation; County Council engaged in very constructive relationship with DfE, Ofsted and Hampshire CC as Partner in Practice
Leadership capacity and capability	New leadership team in place and fully engaged
Organisational morale & retention of experienced social work staff, in the context of national market scarcity	Retention scheme successfully implemented with a range of benefits equal to that available elsewhere; new leadership in place, with proactive staff engagement; events and weekly messages delivered through dedicated communications officer; a programme



	of training, development and support in place; caseloads now being managed down to sustainable levels; Ofsted inspectors commented on improved morale during their December 2019 monitoring visit
Administrative support for social workers	Principle of freeing front-line staff agreed, and support plan in preparation
Data management supporting good practice	Using technology to improve service recognised as a priority; planning in hand to deliver project allied to quality improvement
Preparedness for cycle of Ofsted monitoring visits	Senior Improvement Lead planning and coordinating actions; close liaison with Ofsted; December 2019 visit and outcomes satisfactory

## **9. Other Options Considered**

9.1 Not applicable – this is a report for information.

## **10. Equality Duty**

10.1 The service recognises the primary importance of child safeguarding, sound family relationships, good parenting and the nurture of children to fulfil their potential. The provision of the service is based on need, as determined through formal assessment protocols. This need is not explicitly related to formally protected characteristics, but any such characteristic is and will continue (as now) to be respected in compliance with equality principles and taken into account in the way in which the service is delivered.

10.2 In terms of those with a protected characteristic, the service will ensure enablement and support across all relevant categories, and this will both continue and be enhanced through the Children First agenda.

## **11. Social Value**

11.1 The Children First agenda and measures for service recovery discussed in this report will directly support improved delivery of the West Sussex Plan priority to give every child the Best Start in Life. Enhancing the protection of young lives and support for family life will continue to build resilience and social capital and contribute towards stronger and more effective communities. The implementation of the service improvements will also respect sustainability principles in accordance with the County Council's strategic policies.

## **12. Crime and Disorder Implications**

12.1 There are positive implications for Sections 17, 37 and 39 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 in the prevention and reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour, and in reducing offending and re-offending by young people, all of which are affected by the progress activity discussed in this report.

### **13. Human Rights Implications**

- 13.1 The County Council has an overriding duty to safeguard the Human Rights of children in need, and this has been recognised in the Children First agenda. The Council is mindful of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights – The Right to Respect for Family and Private Life - and has taken relevant factors into consideration in preparing this report. The processing of personal and special category data is subject to the Council's Data Protection Act policies and procedures in relation to discharging the Council's and its partners' legal responsibilities.
- 13.2 The County Council is also mindful of Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child - which states that all children have the right to be consulted and to have their opinions heard on any decision that affects them. Hearing, understanding and acting upon the voice and experiences of the child is a key design principle of the Children First service improvements.

**Lucy Butler,**

Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning

**Contact:** Lance John, Business Manager – 03302 222511

**Background Papers** - None

<b>Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>4 June 2020</b>
<b>Practice Improvement - Neglect</b>
<b>Report by Executive Director for Children, Young People and Learning</b>

## **Summary**

Significant work has taken place in Children's Services to improve our response to children experiencing neglect. In line with the Practice Improvement Plan, the Neglect Strategy has been refreshed and relaunched, supported by the development of a Neglect Toolkit, Impact Framework and dataset. These developments were informed by consultation with children and young people and the views of multi-agency practitioners. A clear governance framework is in place, both at a partnership and individual agency level to oversee this work and drive the necessary improvements in practice.

The focus is now on embedding these changes in practice across the partnership. Children's social care, along with all partners has a dedicated neglect action plan which specifies the mandatory tools to be used by practitioners. The impact of this will be tested in a multi-agency audit scheduled for July and scrutiny event planned for September 2020.

### **The focus for scrutiny**

The Committee is invited to scrutinise the work undertaken, and to assure itself that the measures outlined will result in satisfactory outcomes in relation to the key improvement issues and performance indicators set out in Section 5 of the report.

The Chairman will summarise the output of the debate for consideration by the Committee.

## **Introduction**

### **1. Background and Context**

- 1.1 The impact of neglect on children and young people is significant and is a key priority for the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSSCP). Nationally and locally neglected children represent the largest proportion of children on child protection plans. (West Sussex: April 2020: 62.5%). Neglect is also a significant factor in children supported under early help and child in need plans.
- 1.2 The Ofsted inspection of children's services (February 2019) identified serious weaknesses in the provision of services to support, protect and care

for children, particularly those living in neglectful circumstances. Whilst the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Board (WSSCB) had developed a Neglect Strategy (2016) and identified neglect as a priority in its business plan (2016 -19), a review by the new Chair highlighted that there was limited evidence that key elements were embedded in practice and improving outcomes for children. Furthermore, there was no detailed assessment of the impact of the work undertaken by the Board. The Board review and Ofsted findings in February 2019 led to a shared agreement that there was an urgent need to drive multi-agency improvement using the Partnership as the vehicle to achieve this. A multi-agency Neglect Working Group was established, chaired by the Independent Chair, to oversee this work.

- 1.3 The quality of social work practice and the local authority response to children experiencing neglect has been a key component of the Practice Improvement Plan; this has been the driver to inform work completed within children's social care (CSC), including collaboration with the WSSCP in the launch of the Neglect Strategy and the development of a neglect action plan specific to improving practice in children's social care.
- 1.4 The updated Practice Improvement Plan outlines 3 key improvement areas in relation to neglect:

1.3	With the Safeguarding Children Partnership (formally Children Safeguarding Board) update and launch of Neglect strategy, including a focus on prevention and Early Help.	April 2020	<b>Deputy Director of Children's Services</b>
1.4	Social Care to have a dedicated neglect action plan to address key areas including implementation of mandatory tools for neglect.	March 2020	<b>Deputy Director of Children's Services</b>
1.5	Undertake a multi-agency audit of neglect cases to result in an agreed range of actions across the partnership. Audit to address: the promptness of identification, the use made of historical information, the extent to which there is an analysis of the impact of neglect on the child and the robustness of actions to improve outcomes.	July 2020	<b>Assistant Director Safeguarding, Quality and Practice</b>

1.5

## **Narrative of Work undertaken on Neglect to date**

### **2. Project Workplan**

- 2.1 Given the importance of this work, a Neglect Working Group was established in June 2019, chaired by the Independent Chair. The project workplan includes five key strands:
- *Hearing the Voices of Children and Young People*
  - *Hearing from Practitioners*
  - *Refreshing the Neglect Strategy and Developing Agency Action Plans*
  - *Developing a range of Agreed Practice Tools*
  - *Developing a Dataset and Impact Framework to Measure the Impact of the Work*
- 2.2 Single agency action plans were signed-off by each agency's director or equivalent and all agencies have established their own internal governance mechanisms to drive forward and evaluate the effectiveness of their actions. Formal reporting on a quarterly basis to the Neglect Working Group ensures ownership and accountability, with additional peer on peer scrutiny and challenge provided by the group and independent Chair. There has been an excellent demonstration of commitment and a real energy to achieve change and improve the response and practice for children and their families.

### **Workstream Updates**

#### **2.3 Hearing the Voice of Children and Young People**

- i) This element of the project involved speaking directly to children, young people and their families who had been the subject of a child protection plan for neglect, about their experiences of services and how these can be improved.
- ii) The key findings highlighted young people's views about the importance of the role of social workers in protecting them. Also, the importance of schools, particularly as a safe place for them to share their worries and feelings. However, it also highlighted the disruption caused by multiple changes of social worker, with some young people not knowing the name of their social worker and describing how they felt "left" when a social worker left their role with the child. Most significantly, the project uncovered that many of the young people did not know they had been the subject of a child protection plan and they had not been involved in or aware of planning to keep them safe.
- iii) The summary report was presented to the Neglect Working Group and agreed by the Steering Group in March 2020. The findings from this report will be published by the WSSCP and are being shared at the Neglect Strategy launch events. Two flyers have also been designed to highlight key messages, one for social workers and one for multi-agency professionals.
- iv) Each agency has been asked to update their action plans where required, to evidence how they are addressing the findings. In short, all agencies must evidence how they are communicating with children and young people and when they are subject of a child protection plan, where age appropriate, ensure they are empowered to take part in safety planning.

## **2.4 Hearing from Practitioners**

- i) Consultation with practitioners involved hearing from a range of professionals to capture their views on barriers to effective interventions and ideas about how to improve responses to neglect.
- ii) Their views about the failure to embed the previous strategy, Howe model and the Neglect Identification Measurement Tool (NIMT) were invaluable and helped to inform the development of the new strategy, tools and agency action plans. Additionally, it informed the rollout of the strategy and toolkits and led to agencies appointing “Neglect Champions” to assist in promoting the expectations and improvements required, embedding good practice and providing practice leadership. Most importantly, it directly led the Partnership to stop the use of the NIMT and develop a new toolkit focused on capturing, understanding and assessing the lived experience of the child.

## **2.5 Refreshing the Neglect Strategy and Developing Agency Action Plans**

- i) This element focused on developing the Partnership Neglect Strategy, with the aim of setting out clear expectations of how social workers and other professionals should work with children to understand the child’s lived experience. It required each agency to develop an individual action plan to improve their response to neglect using 4 strategic objectives:
  - Recognise
  - Respond
  - Quantify
  - Evaluate
- ii) Each agency is required to “RAG rate” progress against their action plan. All agencies provided their first action plan summary report and RAG rated action plan to the February 2020 meeting of the Neglect Working Group.
- iii) The Strategy, Neglect Matrix and Practice tools were signed off at the January 2020 Partnership Steering Group and published on the WSSCP webpage to ensure their accessibility to all staff. The partnership commenced the rollout of the strategy and tools in February 2020, with the aim of reaching over 800 multi-agency practitioners. Each agency also committed to additional rollout events within their own agencies to ensure workforce wide awareness of expectations.

## **2.6 Developing a Range of Practice Tools**

- i) A review was completed of the NIMT and other tools used by both CSC and wider professionals.
- ii) Practitioner and agency feedback led to a decision to stop the use of NIMT and replace it with more suitable child-focused tools, that provide detailed information about the child’s lived experience. It was agreed that all professionals would adopt the “day in my life” tools to elicit what day to day life is like for children. A needs analysis tool entitled, “so what do we know, next steps”, has been specifically developed to assist professionals to analyse the information gathered using the tools.
- iii) The importance of the chronology has been reinforced as a critical tool to gain an understanding of the family’s history. It is expected that all

professionals working with children, where they have an ongoing involvement with the family, will complete a chronology and use the information analytically to inform assessments, plans and reviews.

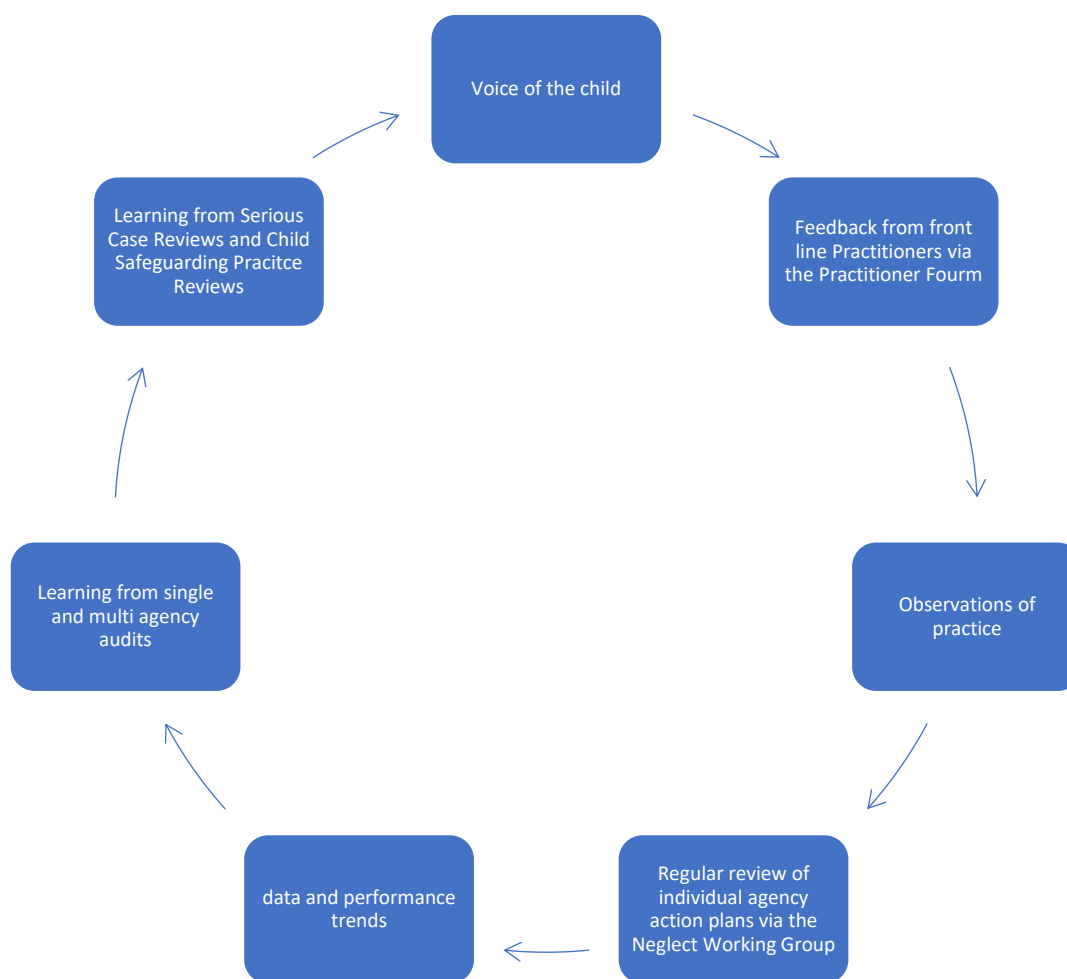
iv) It is mandatory for social workers to use a chronology, the appropriate day in my life tool, an assessment checklist and a parent child observation tool (which helps form a view about children's relationships), when assessing and reviewing children's circumstances. Additionally, where the need is identified, a strengths and difficulties questionnaire must be completed to assess mental health.

## **2.7 Developing a Dataset and Impact Framework to Measure the Impact of the Work**

i) A specific dataset and Impact Framework have been designed to track and measure improvements in practice, (Appendices 1 and 2). The Impact Framework includes the formal updates on progress of individual agency action plans, including the RAG rating.

ii) The dataset was informed by a review of the work undertaken by other Safeguarding Children Partnerships, in particular the work of Cheshire West and Chester Safeguarding Partnership. In 2017, Cheshire West and Chester's neglect practice was inspected under the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) framework and their neglect dataset was acknowledged as good practice by Ofsted. In addition, other indicators have been added by partner agencies that were highlighted as priorities for practice improvement. Efforts have been made to ensure the dataset was collaboratively designed and that it aligned to the measures in the Improvement Plan.

iii) The purpose of the dataset is to provide a quarterly view of the impact of the strategic work on front-line practice and the experiences of children and their families. It is the intention that regular review of the dataset by the Neglect Working Group, will be complemented by the scrutiny events outlined in the Impact Framework. The Framework will form the basis for the pilot of the Partnership's first detailed scrutiny event and will focus on evidencing whether the desired impact has been achieved by gathering information and evidence from the following sources:



iv) This scrutiny process will commence in July 2020 with a multi-agency audit and will culminate in a multi-agency scrutiny event in September 2020, led by the independent Chair and Scrutineer. The plan is to embed this scrutiny approach into the Council's Partnership Quality Assurance Framework, which is currently being updated. It will also form the model for ongoing scrutiny of our key business priorities as set out in the 2020-2022 business plan.

### 3. Children's Social Care Update

The CSC action plan has ensured a renewed focus and drive, with achievements including the following:

#### 3.1 Neglect Champions

i) A group of 24 neglect champions has been established across the whole service to support and embed the implementation of the strategy and use of the four mandatory tools. The champions were included in the testing process for the toolkit and have led the development of neglect workshops, team briefings as well as providing tailored support to individual teams and practitioners.



### 3.2 Development of Toolkit and Practice Standards

i) With the recent introduction and implementation of CSC Practice Standards and a revised Quality Assurance Framework in April 2020, the service now has a clear benchmark which will inform and steer good practice. This is integral to supporting improvements in practice and achieving better outcomes for children and young people.

iii) The development of the CSC neglect toolkit has been modelled on good practice in other local authorities, ensuring it is fit for purpose and will support practitioners in improving the quality of assessments. A mandatory toolkit consisting of an assessment checklist, chronology, a day in the life of the child and parent / child observation has been introduced.

iv) The toolkit has recently been added to the Mosaic case recording system enabling a reporting mechanism on its use. As at 22/05/2020, the toolkit had been used in 191 cases. Feedback from staff in respect of the toolkit has been positive, with good examples shared of how it has helped practitioners to identify and understand areas of concern:

“With the younger children I encouraged them to draw pictures, for example, we spoke about who wakes them up in the morning and where their uniform is ....”

“With the older children the tool was used to understand their roles and responsibilities in the family. It became evident that they were young carers ....”

v) In the December 2019 Monitoring Visit, Ofsted commented that this tool is well embedded. However, as with all the neglect tools further work is required to ensure practitioners understand how their use should inform planning in respect of children.

vi) In March 2020, the impact chronology was revised and re-launched within the service. Performance data shows increasing use of the impact chronology with 1,256 being completed the week ending 18 May 2020, compared to 150 the week ending 24 April 2020.

vii) Celebrating good practice is also being recognised and a link has been developed on the CSC ‘Point’ where good practice examples can be shared.

### 3.3 Training and Implementation

i) The planned WSSCP neglect conferences were the intended launch of the Neglect Strategy, with follow-up workshops planned specifically for CSC staff, led by the neglect champions.

ii) The WSSCP neglect events undertaken so far have predominantly been attended by the neglect champions who also attended an event in February 2020, facilitated by Research in Practice on adolescent neglect. The latter was also attended by residential staff.

iii) Prior to the WSSCP briefings being cancelled children’s services accounted for 42% of the attendees. Virtual training events are now planned from 1 June and managers from across CSC have been identified to attend to support them in embedding the Neglect Strategy and toolkit within their teams.

iv) Feedback gathered from the service in April 2020 identified a lack of confidence in using the neglect toolkit. Unfortunately, Covid-19 has impacted on the numbers of staff being trained. However, the roll-out of a mandatory e-learning course commenced on 1 May 2020 to replace the face to face workshops that had been planned. A training event is also being delivered on

the effective use of chronologies. There will be a focus on how to bring learning back into reflective discussions within supervision to ensure learning is embedded in practice.

v) To ensure a continued focus on workforce development a Children First rolling programme of training was launched on 1 April 2020, with an emphasis on 'what good looks like'. This will be included in the Children's Services Learning Pathway for all new staff and links will feature in the induction handbook. The aim being to strengthen practice for all children, including those experiencing neglect.

### **3.4 Quality Assurance Audit**

i) An audit focused on neglect was completed in August 2019. Analysis from the 49 children's case files audited identified a few areas requiring improvement, including drift and delay influenced by a lack of robust management oversight.

ii) A more recent audit has been undertaken (December 2019) focusing on children subject to child protection plans for 15+ months. Whilst not specific to neglect, it is pertinent that 18 of the 27 children audited were in this cohort.

iii) A difference in the auditing tool used creates some challenge in clear comparison. However, analysis in the December audit demonstrated that key areas of improvement were comparable to the August audits. Whilst drift remained prevalent in some cases, (particularly historically), there was a marked improvement (across all 27 of the audits) in the progression of more recent plans.

iv) The Council's quality assurance scrutiny continues to demonstrate that neglect must remain a priority, with the continued focus of all managers in driving practice improvement.

### **3.5 Legal Process**

i) The response to neglected children subject to pre-proceedings and care proceedings will be tracked by a newly appointed Court Progression Officer, to ensure that they don't experience drift. The approach to pre-proceedings has been revised and is scheduled for implementation in May 2020.

### **3.6 Pre-birth Guidance**

i) Pre-birth guidance specific to CSC has been updated and was agreed in April 2020. A West Sussex multi-agency Pre-Birth Protocol has also been developed and each partner agency is currently taking it through their governance structures for sign-off.

### **3.7 Voice of the Child**

i) Voice of the child workshops are being delivered across the service as part of the wider workforce development programme and the application of 'what good looks like'. The auditing process will help measure this through the audit itself and, where appropriate, direct feedback from the child. The key messages from the Voice of the Child work will be reinforced with staff and a flyer has been developed to support this. The importance of continuity of

social worker is recognised and the recruitment and retention of social workers remains a priority.

ii) Improved case transfer processes between teams within children's social care is a current priority. A Step Across Panel with Early Help is minimising the risk of families experiencing a 'start again approach'. The shared use of the 'day of the life' tool across the partnership will also offer a consistent approach when working directly with children, enabling exploration of their lived experience and the impact of this.

#### **4. Resources**

- 4.1 The work described has been undertaken within the existing resources of the Practice Improvement team in Children's Services, in collaboration with a range of stakeholders of the service.

#### **5. Issues for consideration by the Scrutiny Committee**

##### **Key Improvement Issues (including actions being addressed)**

- 5.1 Agencies have stepped up to demonstrate their commitment to improving multi-agency practice in relation to neglect. To summarise, the Partnership has:
- Worked with multi-agency frontline practitioners to hear their feedback and used this to inform all aspects of the strategy, toolkits and rollout of training.
  - Revised and relaunched the Neglect Strategy in January 2020.
  - Devised and launched a mandatory toolkit for social workers and other professionals to improve the recognition, response and assessment of neglect.
  - Ensured individual agency action plans exist to drive forward the work.
  - Ensured progress against action plans is reported quarterly using an impact-based reporting template and RAG rating.
  - Undertaken the voice of the child project, published the findings and developed flyers to spread the key messages.
  - Developed a multi-agency roll out of the strategy, toolkits, voice of child findings and learning from a neglect focused Serious Case Review, supported by multi-agency training and mandatory e-learning for all staff in CSC.
  - Developed a dataset to measure progress and highlight emerging themes.
  - Developed an Impact Framework to measure the impact of this work.
  - Scoped a neglect audit in July 2020 and a scrutiny event in September 2020, to be led by the Independent Scrutineer involving multi-agency audit, data analysis, observation of practice and the voice of children and young people and practitioners.
- 5.2 It is equally important to reflect on the work being undertaken by individual agencies as reported in their RAG rated Action Plan Summary Reports:
- Most of the lead agencies are using their neglect champions to develop training, awareness and practice improvement.

- Several agencies have already completed practice audits within their own agencies.
- Education has already trained over 200 school designated safeguarding leads specifically in the use of the Howe model and the neglect tools and these leads have been mandated to cascade this training to all staff in their own settings. They have also raised awareness of neglect in drama productions in schools to aid recognition.
- The Police have circulated 60 second briefings to all staff on recognising the signs of neglect and the required response and have undertaken work to ensure neglect is being appropriately addressed as a crime across Sussex. All staff are expected to record the views of children and young people as part of any contact and this is monitored and audited.
- Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust has highlighted to all staff the need to improve the recognition and response to neglect. It is scaling confidence in working with neglect and has a clear package to provide specific neglect ½ day sessions for each locality.
- West Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group has developed a new case discussion form for neglect cases.
- Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust has undertaken a baseline initial analysis of practitioner's confidence in working with neglect and amended its Level 3 training (all clinical staff) and Level 3 specialist (ChYPS) has been amended to include more specific work on neglect.
- In Early Help staff training records evidenced that 64% of the Early Help Workforce have attended a 1-day neglect training course, an increase of 22% since the beginning of the year. The service has completed a repeat thematic audit for neglect and is disseminating the findings. There has been positive written feedback from staff about how the tools have assisted their assessments.
- The Community and Voluntary Sector has been engaged in specific interactive sessions on recognising and responding to neglect.

### **Challenges**

The following areas are proving challenging, particularly due to the impact of Covid-19. However, there is a clear plan to address this.

### **5.3 Rollout and Training in Respect of the Strategy and Toolkit**

- i) The multi-agency rollout and training was planned to train 800 staff initially, starting in February 2020, with the wider workforce being trained by individual agencies as outlined in their action plans. All multi-agency sessions were fully booked. Unfortunately, at the point Covid-19 hit, only 4 sessions had occurred, so the Partnership had trained only 180 of the planned 800 staff.
- ii) It is important to note that, the sessions that have occurred have been rated highly and the feedback has been extremely positive. Mentimeter was used in each of the sessions to provide real time data on reported confidence and knowledge levels at the beginning and end of each session. Additionally, there was a facility for participants to offer any other feedback.
- iii) Of the participants that voted all showed:

- An increase in their awareness of the Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- An increase in confidence in recognising and responding to neglect.
- Awareness of where to find the tools.
- Increased confidence in using the tools.

iv) Staff commented that:

*"Having used the tools elsewhere it is good to see them being integrated into multi agency working and the joint responsibility we have"*

*"Useful to have it outlined how all agencies can work together to build a more thorough assessment"*

*"The tools are going to be really useful to use with families and children"*

v) Plans to continue to deliver the Neglect Strategy launch sessions virtually have taken a little time to organise due to the need for these to be interactive but these are due to commence on 1 June. Neglect champions and frontline managers will be prioritised for the virtual training and supported to deliver to their teams and help frontline practitioners embed the neglect tools into their practice.

#### **5.4 Populating and Using the Dataset to Measure Impact**

i) The dataset recently agreed by the Partnership, (Appendix 1) has proved challenging to populate. The adoption of "the day in my life tools" in January 2020 has required changes to the case recording system to capture data regarding use of the toolkit. This will be available from May 2020. Additionally, some agencies are struggling to provide data for this quarter due to operational demands as a result of Covid-19. Where there are gaps in reporting, assurance has been sought from the relevant agencies, that the key data will be available for the next quarter.

#### **5.5 Key Performance Indicators**

See attached dataset, (Appendix 1). Pressure on some agencies has prevented a full update on a number of the indicators. This is explored in the report. The most recent review of the dataset has highlighted the following emerging themes:

- 35.7% of children on child in need (CIN) plans for neglect have been open for more than 12 months. This could potentially be a sign of drift and delay in the planning and interventions for this cohort of children.
- There has been a slight (4%) rise in the number of children that have been the subject of repeat child protection (CP) plans due to neglect in the past three years. This could be a sign of drift and delay for children on CP plans.
- There has been a decrease in numbers and percentages of children on child protection plans due to neglect and this requires further examination.
- The mean number of referrals between Dec 2019 - Feb 2020 was 3,024. Therefore, the low figure of 350 referrals where neglect is the presenting factor, is not representative. This requires further exploration.

- The increase in the number of CIN plans for more than 12 months requires further scrutiny, as does the rise in the numbers of children that have been the subject of repeat CP plans due to neglect in the past three years.
- These themes will be placed on the agenda for the next Improving Practice and Governance (IPAG) sub-group meeting to consider and agree next steps to explore these themes.
- Focused improvement work has commenced in the Family Support & Protection Teams and will continue until July 2020, which will provide a detailed analysis of practice, alongside coaching and mentoring of managers and social workers, emotionally and practically to improve practice and management. The findings of this work will be reported to the Improvement Board.

## **5.6 Evidence of Impact**

- i) There is evidence of significant structured work occurring within agencies under the key strategic objectives, particularly "Recognise" and "Respond". There has also been extremely positive feedback from agencies and their staff about the tools and quantifiable evidence of improved awareness and confidence of staff in responding to neglect.
- ii) However, having scrutinised the first quarter agency Neglect Action Plan summary reports and RAG rating at the end of February, it is also evident that many agencies were still establishing and finalising baselines to allow them to effectively measure the distance travelled and the impact of intervention for children. Equally, others were still collating and measuring the early impact of their work. For example, Community Health was collating the responses to its staff scaling questionnaire that it will use to test the levels of staff confidence in dealing with neglect and to chart progress over time. Moreover, Early Help has submitted a proposal to add 'neglect' as a category on Holistix to allow it to explicitly measure the distance travelled for children experiencing neglect.
- iii) Additionally, the Neglect Working Group recognises the need to further develop messaging around this work across communities and a wider range of bodies in West Sussex to ensure appropriate identification and reporting of neglect. Sessions have been undertaken with the community and voluntary sector, with district and borough representatives and plans developed to engage community dentists, but the group is planning to communicate the strategy and key messages to an even wider audience
- iv) In summary, while there is emerging evidence of the impact of the Partnership improvement work on the awareness and confidence of staff across the partner agencies, the impact on practice is still to be tested and the real difference for children and young people will need to be fully evidenced by audit, robust data and the scrutiny event outlined in the attached Impact Framework.

## **6. Consultation**

- 6.1 Consultation is as set out in the Narrative section of this report (Section 2).

## **7. Risk Implications and Mitigations**

- 7.1 As set out in the Introduction to this report (Section 1), significant risk arises from the failure to identify and respond appropriately to children

experiencing neglect. This report outlines a comprehensive set of actions to mitigate this risk and improve the quality of practice.

## **8. Other Options Considered**

- 8.1 The imperative to respond to criticisms contained in the Ofsted report is explained in the Introduction. The approach set out in this report has benefited from substantial consultation and analysis as set out in Section 2.

## **9. Equality Duty**

- 9.1 The service recognises the primary importance of child safeguarding, sound family relationships, good parenting and the nurture of children to fulfil their potential. The provision of the service is based on need, as determined through formal assessment protocols. This need is not explicitly related to formally protected characteristics, but any such characteristic is and will continue, (as now) to be respected in compliance with equality principles, and taken into account in the way in which the service is delivered.
- 9.2 In terms of those with a protected characteristic, the service will ensure enablement and support across all relevant categories, and this will both continue and be enhanced through the Children First agenda.

## **10. Social Value**

10.1 The Children First agenda and measures for service recovery discussed in this report will directly support improved delivery of the West Sussex Plan priority to give every child the Best Start in Life. Enhancing the protection of young lives and support for family life will continue to build resilience and social capital and contribute towards stronger and more effective communities. The implementation of the service improvements will also respect sustainability principles in accordance with the County Council's strategic policies.

## **11. Crime and Disorder Implications**

11.1 There are positive implications for Sections 17, 37 and 39 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 in the prevention and reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour, and in reducing offending and re-offending by young people, all of which are affected by the progress activity discussed in this report.

## **12. Human Rights Implications**

12.1 The County Council has an overriding duty to safeguard the Human Rights of children in need, and this has been recognised in the Children First agenda. The Council is mindful of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights – The Right to Respect for Family and Private Life - and has taken relevant factors into consideration in preparing this report. The processing of personal and special category data is subject to the Council's Data Protection Act policies and procedures in relation to discharging the Council's and its partners' legal responsibilities.

12.2 The County Council is also mindful of Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child - which states that all children have the right to be consulted and to have their opinions heard on any decision that affects them.

Hearing, understanding and acting upon the voice and experiences of the child is a key design principle of the Children First service improvements.

**Lucy Butler,**

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**Appendices**

Appendix 1. Partnership Neglect Dataset

Appendix 2. Neglect Impact Framework

**Background Papers** None



AGENCY	RECOGNISE				Performance Tables					
	Measure	Neglect Measures (SB)	Performance Improvement Plan Ta	Source of data	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	RAG rating	Direction of travel
Police	1	Number of neglect cases crimed		Sussex Police - This data is not collected regularly. This would need a targeted audit in order to collect and report this data. Time parameters would need to be set and a request made to the Police to carry out this audit. (E.g. Number of neglect cases crimed in the last 6 months)						
Children's services	2	Numbers and % of staff trained in recognising and responding to neglect		Children's services		103				
Education	3	Numbers and % of staff trained in recognising and responding to neglect (Education) NOTE: also investigating possible data to show which schools are engaging with this training and which are running their own training.		Education : DSL training data from Jez Prior. DSL Introductory Training to 163 staff DSL Refresher training to 326 staff DSL Networks (10 meetings) attended by 383 staff (average per meeting = 38) Responding to The Voice of the Child training = 107 members of staff DSL and Safeguarding Lead Governor Partnership training = 33	Intro: 163 Refresher: 326					↑
Health	4	Numbers and % of staff trained in recognising and responding to neglect		SPFT, SCFT, WFSHT - targets taken directly from Provider Neglect Action Plans						
Health	5	Numbers and % of staff trained in recognising and responding to neglect		CCG measure for Primary Care Training (% of GP surgery staff attending training)						
Police	6	Police Practitioners and Managers are able to recognise the signs of neglect		Police	94%					
Police	7	Staff to ensure that Body Worn video is always deployed at attendances regarding possible neglect, to ensure the conditions are captured.		Police	46%					
Health	8	Quarterly Professional Meetings are attended by all Named Nurses and have NEGLECT as a standing item on the agenda		CCGs						
All partners	9	Number of Day in my life used		All partners to report on use						

RESPOND					Performance Tables					
Agency	Ref	Neglect Measures (SB)	Performance Improvement Plan Ta	Source of data	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	RAG rating	Direction of travel
Police	10	Police to ensure that when neglectful circumstances are recognised and judged to present a significant risk, they consult with SIU and supervision, and take positive action.		Police: SIU supervisors to monitor when receiving referrals and report in to Neglect Working Group. (Dave Payne/Jane Wooderson)	75%					
Health	11	CCG supervision of providers shows that provider organisations are using the correct agreed partnership tool , are using Chronologies effectively and making referrals (relating to NEGLECT) appropriately.		Jenny Whyte (CCGs)						
Children's services	12	% and number of CIN plans where neglect is a feature (open over 12 months)	To be agreed	Children's services	47/618 7.6%	59/630 9.4%	57/614 9.3% Apr-20			↓
Children's services	13	Number and % of repeat CP plans for Neglect in the last 3 years	To be agreed	Children's services	14/159 8.8%	21/163 12.9%	4/81 4.9% Apr-20			↑
Children's services	14	% and number of children that have been the subject of a repeat plan for neglect in the last 3 years and a completed neglect tool at the point of first review.	Target 70% by June 2020	Functionality activated in March 2020 - no quarterly data available						↔
Police	15	When repeated SCARF relating to poor living conditions are received by the SIU, consideration should be given to carrying out a joint visit to establish if there is evidence of offences such as neglect or indications of other offences that may not be apparent to patrol officers when attending incidents.		Police	50%					

Police	16	Neglect Referrals to Police: If the officer receiving the referral makes a decision for no further Police action, that decision should be subject of a review by an officer not below the rank of Detective Sergeant based within the Safeguarding Investigations Unit.		Police	60%					
Children's services	17	Number and % of children with CP Plans for Neglect with the agreed partnership tool used by the 2nd review	Target: 40% by June 2020	Functionality activated in March 2020 - not quarterly data available						↔
Children's services	18	(excluding Children with disabilities) % and number of children on CIN plans for in excess of 12 months where there has been an updated assessment	Target: 40% June 2020; 70% September 2020	Children's services+B4	486/628 77.4%	484/648 74.7%	518/694 74.6% Apr-20			↓
QUANTIFY					Performance Tables					
Agency	Ref	Neglect Measures (SB)	OfSTED Improvement Plan Targets	Source of data	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	RAG rating	Direction of travel
Children's services	19	Number of referrals where neglect is the presenting factor		Children's services	No data	350	82 Apr-20			
WSHFT	20	Number of consultations where neglect is a factor in acute services		Acute services						
Early Help	21	Number of early help plans where neglect		Early Help						

Children's services	22	Number of CFAs where neglect is a presenting factor		Children's services	434/2463 or 17.6 %	319/2179 or 14.6%	159/909 or 17.5% Apr-20			↓
Children's services	23	Number and % of CIN plans where neglect is a factor		Children's services	255/1176 or 21.7%	310/1181 or 32.7%	308/1223 or 25.2% Apr-20			↑
Children's services	24	Number and % of children on a CIN plan for neglect with a disability		Children's services	10/548 or 1.8%	10/533 or 1.9%	8/529 or 1.5% Apr-20			↑
Children's services	25	Number of children and % of children and young people on child protection plans due to neglect		Children's services	546/859 or 63.6.%	516/826 or 62.5%	511/842 or 60.7% Apr-20			↓
Children's services	26	Of these children aged unborn - 4 years		Children's services	183/546 or 33.5%	181/516 or 35.1%	192/511 or 37.6% Apr-20			↔
Children's services	27	Of these children aged 5 - 9 years		Children's services	156/546 or 28.6%	145/516 or 28.1%	141/511 or 27.6% Apr-20			↔
Children's services	28	Of these children aged 10 - 15 years		Children's services	178/546 or 33%	167/516 or 32.4%	152/511 or 29.7% Apr-20			↔
Children's services	29	Of these children aged 16 and over		Children's services	29/546 or 5.3%	23/516 or 4.5%	26/511 or 5.1% Apr-20			↔
Children's services	30	% of CIN plans with management oversight or supervision (in a 8 wk period) where the primary need code is neglect	Target: 90%	Children's services	212/252 84.1%	276/310 89.0%	284/308 92.2%			↑
Children's services	31	% of CP plan with management oversight or supervision (in a 8 wk period) where the primary need code is neglect		Children's services	423/458 92.4%	384/423 90.8%	427/455 93.4%			↑
Police	32	Staff to ensure that, where appropriate given the circumstances of the referral, the Voice of the Child is captured and evidenced.		Jane Wooderson. Measure monitored via Police Supervisors. Measure from Police Neglect Action Plan	65%					

## **Neglect Impact Framework (WSSCP)**

### **1. Purpose of the Impact Framework**

1.1 The West Sussex Safeguarding Board highlighted concerns about the Impact of its previous Neglect Strategy and identified that further work needed to be undertaken. The Ofsted inspection in February 2019 and subsequent findings of the Commissioner showed that there were key areas of improvement required for children, especially those experiencing neglect. As a result, the WSSCP has identified neglect as a business priority.

1.2 The overarching purpose of the Impact Framework is to measure the impact and effectiveness of the Partnerships' neglect work. The Neglect Impact Framework is a framework, agreed by all the partners, to perform a range of functions:

1. Provide a baseline from which progress can be tracked and monitored over a period of time.
2. Evaluate the impact of partner's interventions on children and their families.
3. Measure changes in the recognition of and response to, child neglect in front line practice.
4. Ensure that there is "join up" and a shared understanding between front line practitioners and strategic managers about the impact of strategic action planning on the lived experience of children.
5. Will provide the structure to support the Neglect Scrutiny Events throughout the business year.

### **2. Scope of the Neglect Impact Framework:**

2.1 The Neglect Impact Framework applies to the services provided by all the agencies that have signed up to the 2020 – 2023 Neglect Strategy. These include:

- CCG
- SPFT
- SCFT
- WHSFT
- Schools
- Police
- Children's Social Care
- Early Help

2.2 The impact of the Partnership Neglect Work will be evaluated between July 2019 and June 2023.

2.3 Whilst the Strategy scope is between 2020 to 2023, the Neglect Working Group, practitioner feedback, consultation with children and action plan development commenced in July 2019.

### 3. Information underpinning the Neglect Impact Assessment:

3.1 In order to understand the impact of strategic actions on front line practice and service user's experience, it is important to draw data or information from a range of sources. The WSSCP has agreed that information from partners will be drawn from sources shown in figure 1.

**Fig 1**



### 4. The Voice of the Child

4.1 The initial Voice of the Child project commenced in June 2019 and produced a base line of information on how services are experienced by children and young people in West Sussex. Views were sought about services offered by all the partners. Children were asked:

- What did adults do to make you feel safe and make sure you were being looked after well?
- What didn't help to make you feel safer or make sure you were well looked after?
- What could we do differently to make it better for other children like you?

4.2 Adult parents or carers were asked:

- What worked well and how did this reduce the risk to your child?
- What didn't work as well and why?

- What could agencies do differently to improve how they support families?

4.3 As part of this framework, feedback will be sought from children and their parents/carers where the children had been the subject of a child protection plan due to neglect. There were specific challenges with the first project that are outlined in the report stemming from that work. Therefore, further consideration needs to be given about how best to engage with children and young people to test whether the necessary improvements have occurred.

## **5. Feedback from Frontline Practitioners and Neglect Champions**

### **Practitioners:**

5.1 Feedback will be sought bi-annually to establish the impact of the strategic work of the Partnership and the operational work of the individual agencies.

Feedback will be requested in terms of the following:

- Knowledge of the Partnership Neglect Strategy
- Use of and any barriers to the use of the agreed assessment tools?
- Barriers to the use of the Howe model?
- Barriers to success in intervening for children experiencing neglect.
- Views about operational changes that could improve interventions for children living in neglectful circumstances.

5.2 This feedback will be sought bi-annually by remote consultation, to test if the experiences of practitioners is in line with the aspirations of the action plans and is having an impact on front line practice.

Again, it will be important that the same questions are asked in order to elicit comparable feedback.

### **Neglect Champions:**

5.3 Neglect champions hold a vital role in driving forward improvements in practice, offering peer support and providing feedback on the impact of changes to front line practice.

5.4 Neglect Champions sit in the range of agencies and perform slightly different roles, dependent on the service provided. Each agency will be asked to generate feedback from the champions to test out the effectiveness of the Partnership activity as well as inform actions where barriers are highlighted. Regular updates will be fed into the WSSCP Neglect Working Group so that successes can be celebrated, as well as any barriers any barriers highlighted that may impact on improvements.

5.5 Examples of successes could be; an increase of the use of tools in some areas of the partnership, an increase in the uptake of advice from the Neglect Champions. Examples of risks or barriers could be; difficulty in recruiting Neglect Champions for the service, barriers to accessing specialist training for the Champions, ongoing examples of poor practice.

## **6. Regular review of individual actions plans:**

6.1 Each agency has an individual agency Action Plan to address the actions being undertaken in their agency to improve practice and performance in relation to neglect. Progress on these action plans is monitored through each agency's own governance and performance structures, as well as through the WSSCP. The individual agency action plans have a RAG rating to provide an easily accessible visual way of showing progress and barriers. In addition, a Neglect Action Plan Summary Report will be completed on a quarterly basis by each agency. These reports will set out the evidence of the impact of the actions being taken by each agency. The template for this reporting is shown in Appendix 3.

## **7. Data trends and performance information**

7.1 A neglect Partnership dataset has been drawn up to include some key indicators of improvement. These indicators are in respect of all agencies that are required by statute to safeguard children.

7.2 A screenshot of the data set is shown in Appendix 2. The Partnership dataset shows quarterly progress against key indicators for example:

- % of CP plan with management oversight or supervision (in a 4 week period) where the primary need code is neglect
- Number of assessments where neglect is a factor
- Quarterly Professional Meetings are attended by all Named Nurses and have neglect as a standing item on the agenda
- Staff to ensure that Body Worn video equipment is always deployed at attendances regarding possible neglect, to ensure the conditions are captured.
- Number of staff trained in the Neglect Tools

7.3 The dataset will provide quarterly progress against several indicators and show direction of travel in respect of strategic performance measures across the partnership. The indicators have been developed from the dataset of another authority where Ofsted have praised their approach to monitoring improvements in services for children experiencing neglect (Ofsted praised the Cheshire Safeguarding Children Board in their identification of key indicators for neglect in November 2017 in the Neglect JTAI. Found at <https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50000233> ).

7.4 The dataset is designed to be reviewed at each of the WSSCP Neglect Working Group meetings to review positive or negative trends and ensure that successes are celebrated, or remedial action is taken.

7.5 It will be important to capture the impact of this early work and feedback to provide a comparative base line for July 2020.



## **8. Learning from single and multi-agency audits.**

8.1 Findings from single and multi-agency audits in relation to neglect, will be tracked by the Partnership Board Manager. Twice a year, evidence of good practice and lessons learnt will be drawn together into a document and shared with the Neglect Working Group.

By collating findings this will give an opportunity for the Partnership to ensure that learning has been acted upon and examples of good practice have been acknowledged and shared.

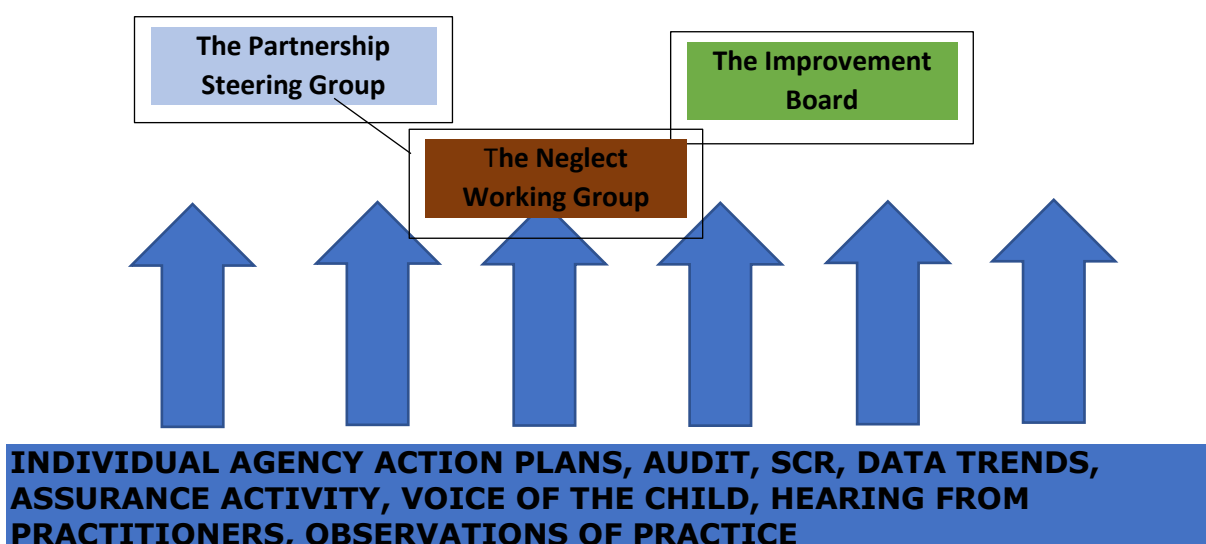
## **9. Learning from serious case reviews and child safeguarding practice reviews**

9.1 Reviews show areas of good practice and areas of practice in need of improvement. In order to optimise the learning from reviews it is important to share learning as it emerges, rather than await the final report. The WSSCP staff will be an important conduit to share the learning from reviews into the Neglect Working Group.

9.2 Although, lessons learnt from reviews and the resultant actions will be monitored by the Case Review Group the themes from reviews will also be considered in the Scrutiny events that will occur as part of this neglect impact framework.

The scrutiny events will also need to consider any learning identified that could improve practice in working with neglect. Importance sources will include Ofsted feedback on progress in Children's Services, Pan Sussex Learning, Ofsted feedback from inspections of other Local Authorities and wider academic research and learning.

## **10. Governance and accountability**



10.1 The WSSCP Neglect Working Group, the Steering Group of the WSSCP and the Improvement Board play a pivotal role in monitoring the progress and the impact of the Strategy and the supporting agency action plans.

The WSSCP Neglect Working Group currently meets bimonthly and the purpose of the meeting will be to:

- track the progress of agencies against their plans
- show any barriers or risks to improvements to safeguarding children
- evaluate the impact of the action plans
- review the dataset and evaluate trends
- consider the findings of quarterly assurance activity
- ensure learning relevant to neglect is considered by agencies and the required actions are incorporated in the agency action plans.
- consider the outcomes of biannual audits
- plan the scrutiny events that will provide assurance about progress to improve responses to neglect.

## 11. Bringing the picture together

11.1 A Neglect Scrutiny event will take place annually. The event will be chaired by the Independent Chair of the Partnership and will be supported by representation from partner agencies.

11.2 The standard and effectiveness of services to support children and young people experiencing neglect will be tested out, by considering all the sources of information cited above. This information will inform the key lines of enquiry. For example, children told us that they didn't know they were on a child protection plan due to neglect. A line of enquiry may be "had the child protection plan been shared with the child?".

11.3 Key lines of enquiry will be tested and will include a multi-agency audit. will be undertaken to test the practice on a randomly selected group children who have either:

- Been referred to children's social care in the three months prior to the event
- Been closed to children's social care in the three months prior to the event
- On a child protection plan for neglect

11.4 The findings of the Scrutiny Event will be captured and summarised in a report to the Partnership Steering group. The actions arising from the scrutiny activity will be added to the partnership and individual agency action plans. The proposed outline multi-agency audit tool is shown in Appendix 4.

## Appendix 1 - Capture of information for the scrutiny

<b>Data/information to inform Impact</b>	<b>Governance (where will this be fed into and scrutinised)</b>	<b>Where will concerns about barriers/risks or practice escalated to?</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Capture point</b>
Voice of the child	WSSCP Neglect Working Group	WSSCP Steering Group	Annually	Annual WSSCP QA report
Practitioner Consultation	WSSCP Neglect	Improvement Board/Steering Group	Bi-annually	Annual WSSCP QA report

	Working Group			
Neglect Champion feedback	WSSCP Neglect Working Group	Improvement Board/Steering Group	Bimonthly	Minutes of the WSSCP Neglect Meeting Minutes/Scrutiny event
Regular review of individual action plans	WSSCP Neglect Working Group	Improvement Board/Steering Group	Quarterly	Minutes of the WSSCP Neglect Meeting Minutes
Data and performance trends	WSSCP Neglect Working Group	Improvement Board/Steering Group	Bimonthly	Annual WSSCP QA report/Scrutiny event
Single and multi-agency audits	IPAG	Steering Group	Monthly	WSSCP annual report/Scrutiny event
Learning from reviews	CRG	Improvement Board/Steering Group	Monthly	WSSCP annual report/Scrutiny event

## Appendix 2 – A screenshot of the agreed Dataset

AutoSave  Rationalised Partnership Neglect Dataset 24.01.2020 - Ex...  Search <span>siobhan burns</span>															
File Home Insert Page Layout Formulas Data Review View Help															
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
1	RECOGNISE (9 Measures)				Performance Tables										
2	AGENCY	Ref	Neglect Measures (SB)	Performance Improvement Plan	Targ	Source of data	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	RAG rating	Direction of travel	COMMENTS		
3	Police		1 Number of neglect cases crimed			Sussex Police - This data is not collected regularly. This would need a targeted audit in order to collect and report this data. Time parameters would need to be set and a request made to the Police to carry out this audit. (E.g. Number of neglect cases crimed in the last 6 months)									
4	CSC	2a	Numbers and % of staff trained in recognising and responding to neglect			Single agency data from Local Authority/Police/Health									
5	Education	2b	Numbers and % of staff trained in recognising and responding to neglect (Education) NOTE: also investigating possible data to show which schools are engaging with this training and which are running their own training.			Education : DSL training data from Jez Prior. DSL Introductory Training to 163 staff DSL Refresher training to 326 staff DSL Networks (10 meetings) attended by 383 staff (average per meeting = 38) Responding to The Voice of the Child training = 107 members of staff DSL and Safeguarding Lead Governor Partnership training = 33	Intro: 163 Refresher: 326						<p>In the last 3 years a DSL network has been built from scratch and now provides CPD (including neglect) to over 180 DSL's every term. There is now also an annual conference attended by over 100 DSL's which has looked at neglect and voice of the child in the last 2 years. Statutory DSL training is now delivered by WSCC and numbers attending have increased in numbers by about 50% - a key aspect of this training is recognising and responding to neglect.</p> <p>As at NOV 2019: feedback from training is about 98% excellent (the only ones that weren't were due to booking issues).</p>		
6	Health	2c	Numbers and % of staff trained in recognising and responding to neglect			1) Health targets taken directly from Provider Neglect Action Plans							SPFT Target = 95%		

**Appendix 3 – West Sussex safeguarding children partnership neglect action plan summary report**

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Organisation</b>	
<b>Date of report</b>	

**Please RAG rate your plan and attach to this summary report for collation**

**1. Evidence of progress against the action plan:**

*(report any successes and any areas that are rag rated as red)*

**2. Evidence on barriers or risks to achieving the actions identified in the action plan:**

*(what barriers have prevented you from achieving the actions you planned? Are they organisational barriers, staff barriers, how have you identified these barriers?)*

**3. What difference have we made to children and how do you know this?**

*(what has changed in practice as a result of the actions in the action plan or other changes since the last meeting)*

**4. What difference have we made for front line practitioners and how do you know this?**

*(what has changed for front line practitioners? Vacancy rate dropped or increased, more staff trained, more reported awareness?)*

**5. Next Steps or agreed actions in response to barriers or risks:**  
*(what do you plan to do in response to the barriers or risks identified above)*

<b>Overall Progress</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>G</b>	<i>(Does your action plan show mainly reds? ambers or greens?)</i>
				<i>What does this show in terms of direction of travel)</i>

**Appendix 4 –Outline Multi-agency audit form for a scrutiny event**

<b>Auditor</b>	
<b>Date of the audit</b>	
<b>Child's name</b>	
<b>Age of child</b>	
<b>Does the child have any individual needs relating to their circumstances? (for example, their ethnicity or a disability)</b>	

<b>Was referral for action timely for the child?</b>	
<b>Is risk identified, understood and prioritised? Does the child appear to be safe?</b>	
<b>Has decision-making matched the priority risks and needs? Has this resulted in the child getting the help they need?</b>	
<b>Where an assessment has been completed, are risks, needs and strengths clear?</b>	
<b>Is there a plan? Is it sufficient to address risk and need? Is it making a difference and improving the child's well-being?</b>	
<b>Has the child been involved/engaged at all stages?</b>	
<b>Have family/carers been involved at all stages?</b>	

<b>Have individual needs and circumstances been taken into account? Please provide examples</b>	
<b>Do the agencies work together effectively to protect the child and make sure that they get the services they need to improve outcomes?</b>	



## **Call-in Reasons for Rejection**

A call-in request relating to the Small Schools proposals <https://westsussex.moderngov.co.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=891> has been considered and rejected by the Monitoring Officer.

The Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the reasons for the rejection of the call-in request as set out below.

## **Reasons for rejection**

The Monitoring Officer confirms that the request for a call-in of the decision of the Cabinet in relation to Small Schools Proposals received on 30 April 2020 has been rejected.

The key factors in determining whether to accept a call-in request as outlined in Standing Orders are as follows:

1. The item has already been considered by the relevant Scrutiny Committee
2. Significant new information has become available since previous Scrutiny Committee consideration;
3. It is a decision that the Committee can or would expect to preview;
4. A delay in making the decision would be likely to significantly damage the interests of the County Council.

## **Monitoring Officer's Assessment**

I have considered the content, rationale and purpose of the decision, the grounds given for call-in and the information and advice considered by both the Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet ahead of the decision that was taken. None of the factors set out in Standing Order 8.01 were referred to in the request. The Scrutiny Committee considered the proposals and the Committee's recommendations were referred to in the call-in request, demonstrating that the proposals have been fully scrutinised. The request does not reference that any new information has come to light since the Scrutiny Committee considered the proposals on 14 April. The Cabinet listened to the recommendations raised by the Scrutiny Committee during its debate, and the concerns raised through scrutiny were addressed in the decision.

I have therefore concluded that no valid grounds for a call-in have been provided in accordance with Standing Orders and as nothing has changed since the proposals were scrutinised a call-in cannot be justified.

For these reasons the request is declined

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