

Public Document Pack

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22 December 2020

Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee

A virtual meeting of the Committee will be held at **10.30 am** on **Thursday, 7 January 2021**.

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

The meeting will be available to watch 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. **Declarations of Interests**
- 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.
- 10.32 am 2. **Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee** (Pages 5 - 16)
- The Committee is asked to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 5 November (attached, cream paper).
- 10.37 am 3. **Urgent Matters**
- 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.

- 10.39 am 4. **Responses to Recommendations** (Pages 17 - 34)
- The Committee is asked to note the responses to the recommendations made at the 5 November 2020 meeting from:
- a) The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
 - b) The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People.
- 10.49 am 5. **Children First Improvement Update** (Pages 35 - 52)
- Report by Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning.
- The report updates the Committee on the developments and progress made in the Children First Programme since its last update in November.
- 11.34 am 6. **Early Help Redesign** (To Follow)
- Report by Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning.
- The report outlines the proposals for a new Early Help Service model and the proposed plans for consultation and engagement.
- The Committee will adjourn for a 30-minute break.
- 1.34 pm 7. **Strategic Budget Savings - Pre decision scrutiny** (To Follow)
- Report by Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning.
- The Committee is invited to consider any strategic savings proposals relevant to its portfolio area and to examine how and when scrutiny of those proposals can best be achieved in light of plans and timelines indicated (reports to follow in early January).
- 2.14 pm 8. **West Sussex Reset Plan and Key Performance Indicators** (Pages 53 - 54)
- Report by Chief Executive.
- The Committee is asked to consider the Draft Reset Plan and Key Performance Indicators relevant to the portfolio area, as set out in the appendices (to follow).
- 2.49 pm 9. **Work Programme Planning and Possible Items for Future Scrutiny** (Pages 55 - 78)
- The Committee is asked to review its current draft work programme for the remainder of the County Council term. The

work programme attached reflects the outcome of discussions at the committee's Business Planning Group meeting on 23 November 2020.

The Committee is asked to review the Forward Plan entries relevant to its remit (Appendix A) and mention any items which they believe to be of relevance to the business of the Scrutiny Committee. If any member puts forward an item for scrutiny, the Committee's role at this meeting is to assess, briefly, whether to refer the matter to its Business Planning Group (BPG) to consider in detail).

2.54 pm 10. **Requests for Call-In**

There have been no requests for call-in to the Scrutiny Committee and within its constitutional remit since the date of the last meeting. The Director of Law and Assurance will report any requests since the publication of the agenda papers.

2.59 pm 11. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 10 March 2021 at 10.30 am at County Hall, Chichester. Probable agenda items include:

- Themed Session on Inclusion
- Children First Improvement Programme Update

Any member wishing to place an item on the agenda for the meeting must notify the Director of Law and Assurance by 26 February 2021.

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

5 November 2020 – At a virtual meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee held at 10.30 am.

Present: Cllr Hillier (Chairman)

Cllr Lord	Cllr Hall	Mr Lozzi
Cllr Baldwin	Cllr A Jones	Mr Cristin
Cllr Bridges	Cllr Oxlade	Mrs Ryan
Cllr Brunsdon	Cllr Pendleton	
Cllr Burgess	Cllr Wickremaratchi	

Also in attendance: Cllr N Jupp and Cllr Russell

27. Declarations of Interests

27.1 No declarations of interest were declared.

28. Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee

28.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2020 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

29. Urgent Matters

29.1 No urgent matters were raised.

30. The Impact of Covid-19 on Schools and the Educational Outcomes of Children and Young People in West Sussex

30.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Education and Skills setting out the support provided to schools and children during the lockdown and the return to school in September.

30.2 The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills introduced the item confirming that there had been considerable effort by the Education and Skills service, school's leadership, governors and headteachers, particularly in communications, in what had been uncharted territory. He thanked them all for their hard work.

30.3 The Director of Education and Skills introduced the report saying that the period since March had been unprecedented, with practice, policy and procedures having to be created from scratch and from the ground up, around a rapid response to an ever-changing situation. More recently challenges had been dealing with the return to school and the health and wellbeing of student, headteachers, teachers and staff. The impact of the work by all partners was reflected in the high levels of school attendance throughout the period and the management of positive Covid-19 cases had been dealt with robustly by schools meaning there had been no surge of cases.

30.4 The Youth Cabinet report at Appendix 1 was introduced by Harley Collins. He reported that a survey had been taken among young people on the impact of lockdown and the return to school. The following are answers to questions raised by the Committee Members:

- It was agreed that 16-18 year olds needed career guidance and upskilling to deal with any future unemployment gap.
- Students did experience difficulty in completing course work during the first lockdown.
- Whilst young people were not in classrooms together during lockdown many used social media to communicate with their peers.

30.5 The Committee then heard from witnesses from the schools within West Sussex.

a) Mr Phillip Potter, Headteacher at Oak Grove College, who made the following points:

- There had been woefully inadequate information from the Department for Education (DfE) on special school guidance.
- Staff, teaching assistants, business staff, support staff, medical staff including therapists, cleaners, caterers and teachers etc had done an incredibly good job over this period by completely changing the way in which they worked.
- Converting to home learning had been challenging for the special school. Packs had been delivered or posted to families. Online work had not been considered.
- DfE guidance on PPE had been confusing. PPE is reasonably well sourced now but remains an ongoing challenge particularly from a financial view.
- Some young people who require aerosol generating procedures had not been able to return to school. The County Council was working with special schools and Public Health England to escalate this issue.
- The County Council's leadership advisory team had been incredibly supportive and responsive to the school during the pandemic.
- An ongoing challenge existed around laptops and access to learning for students who had not been in school.

a) Mr Mark Anstiss, Headteacher at Felpham Community College secondary school, who made the following points:

- The County Council had provided excellent communications, particularly the daily emails from the Director, and support from general advisers, the secondary link adviser and the area educational adviser. It would be useful to have greater speed in decision making and the release of templates and policies to schools.
- There had been a positive attendance rate since the return to school in September (94% attendance the previous week)

and students had returned with a healthy and positive attitude.

- The full impact of the pandemic on the mental health of students was likely to unfold over the coming months.
- Key challenges moving forward included the increase in attainment gap (20-30% of students did not complete home learning during lockdown), the increased financial costs to adhere to Covid guidelines and the risk of low staff levels due to self-isolation or illness.

b) Ms Nicola Waters, Chair of Governors, William Penn Primary School, who made the following points:

- Guidance from central government lacked clarity and therefore the school relied on the County Council for advice and direction.
- Appreciated the communications from the County Council and the inclusion of Governors Chairmen on the circulation. The letter templates were also very helpful to help provide clarity to concerned parents. Due to evolving guidance there was a large volume of communications, which was not always relevant to governors and therefore could take time to unpick.
- A significant positive was the relationships that have developed both with the link adviser and with the locality schools. The Chair's locality group had strengthened, providing support by meeting virtually on a regular basis to share best practice and knowledge. This enabled the governors to provide a cohesive locality-wide approach that was appreciated and by schools and parents.
- The key issues moving forward included helping children to catch up on the missed learning during lockdown, the challenge of providing future home learning especially in a small school with limited resources and the wellbeing of school staff.

c) Mr David McKeown-Webster, Headteacher, Harlands Trust primary school, who made the following points:

- The school had adapted to respond to the pandemic, supporting pupils, families and colleagues. The reassurance provided to parents was reflected in the high attendance numbers since September.
- There had been good support from the County Council's link adviser and through a headteacher support group. The link adviser was easily contactable, and social workers and the MASH were always available to help support vulnerable children.
- The school and staff were proud of the work it undertook during lockdown to keep in touch with those pupils working at home as well as providing support to key worker children in school.

- The completion of the risk assessment had been challenging, and an alternative format or model may be easier to use in the future.
 - The main concerns moving forward included the increase of lower level mental health problems in pupils due to disruptions at home and the impact of the current constraints on being able to deliver an enriching curriculum and make school improvements.
- d) Mr Tim McCarthy, Chief Executive Officer, Aurora Academies Trust and Chair, West Sussex Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Alliance, who made the following points:
- The level and frequency of communication from the Director of Education and Skills had provided assurance to schools and parents which was reflected in the high attendance levels since the return to school in September.
 - The pandemic was having an impact on school recruitment.
 - The main concerns moving forward included the widening attainment gap between disadvantaged children and their peers due to lost learning, the wellbeing of staff and pupils and the clarity of advice for staff advised to shield or work from home.
- e) Mr Lozzi, parent governor representative on the Committee, gave feedback from a school and a nursery:
- The information from the DfE was often late and unclear and therefore made it much harder for both the schools and the County Council.
 - The executive headteacher's working group set up during the pandemic and the regular communications from County Council officers were very helpful.
 - The County Council could have provided greater confidence and clarity around some areas where schools were under pressure or struggling to keep up with requirements, for example staying open during holidays.
 - The key concerns moving forward included the lost learning of pupils and the increased attainment gap, the potential financial pressures on schools and the mental health of vulnerable students and staff.
 - Feedback from the nursery was that they had felt well supported with frequent contact from the County Council.
 - Further support on staffing, and those that could be affected by shielding arrangements would be helpful.
- f) Mr Cristin, Director of Education for the Diocese of Chichester, who made the following points:
- DfE guidance was often difficult to interpret and the Education and Skills team gave communications that were clear and open throughout, leading to clarity and support to schools.

- Being provided with a designated point of contact helped headteachers and the open dialogue developed a sense of partnership.
- g) Ms Ryan, Director of Education for the Catholic dioceses, who made the following points:
- Schools appreciated the efforts and attention of the local authority, particularly the link adviser.
 - The amount of communications initially from the DfE was overwhelming and schools appreciated the County Council reducing the number of e-mails. Information could have been summarised more and with more signposting for head teachers.
 - Schools understood the need for the County Council to take a cautious approach but on occasion the schools felt they had to make a decision before a confirmed position was given, for example with the risk assessment.

30.1 The Committee members then fed back items from schools within their constituency. The Committee recognised and welcomed the amount of work that had been carried out during this unprecedented time to support schools and children. The following answers to questions and comments were made:

- The national DfE scheme providing laptops to isolated or disadvantaged children is still running. The County Council had claimed and distributed around 900 laptops to children with social workers and children in Year 10. They were also working on securing more equipment from the scheme to share with children.
- Teacher recruitment had always been a challenge. Newly qualified teachers were starting with schools this year. The County Council had looked at support for schools by coupling them with other schools with secondments.
- Initial briefings with headteachers had given a mixed picture on the impact of lockdown on the gaps in learning for children. It had been reported that some children had lost some of their independence to apply knowledge to problem solve since returning to school in September.
- When lockdown first occurred, remote learning had been a challenge, but all schools met what was expected nationally. The development of online work and remote lessons had taken a lot more time and resource than normal lesson planning.
- The County Council has no direct access to families who have elected to educate their children at home unless there was a safeguarding concern. The team are focussing on providing guidance and support to new children being home educated.

- The Government had provided some funding for Covid expenses but there was no clarity on whether that would continue. It was recognised that there would be schools which would face financial challenges as a result of the additional expenditure. The County Council's finance team was working with schools on preparing three-year budgets to get a better picture schools' finances moving forward.
- The County Council, headteachers and students all had concerns about what would happen to GCSE and A-levels examinations in 2021 and whether there would be changes to the kind of questioning that would be included. Pressure was being put on the Government to delay the national assessments at Key Stage 1 and 2 until later next year, rather than run them at the same time.
- Guidance had been sent to schools on the support available for contacting vulnerable children who were not in school. School attendance for children looked after had risen from about 13% to almost 70% over the summer and that had been achieved through discussion between headteachers, officers and social workers to make sure support was maintained as the country entered a second lockdown.
- All Government funding for eligible three- and four-year olds had been passed on to nursery schools, based on headcount, for the past two terms. For private nurseries outside of the furlough scheme and the various small business tax reliefs there had not been much support. There was some concern that the basic rate funding was not enough, and lobbying was taking place for funding for holiday schemes and after school clubs.
- The County Council had worked with Unions and professional associations to get a consistency of information provided to schools on shielded and vulnerable staff.
- The wellbeing of headteachers and their staff was recognised as a key area of importance and focus. A bespoke package of management and well-being support from an external provider had been arranged to provide a support mechanism to headteachers. The Committee welcomed the work being progressed to support headteachers, recognising the significant impact of the pandemic on their wellbeing and agreed that this was a key area of work to progress at pace and would be interested in receiving an update on this work at a future meeting of the Committee's Business Planning Group.
- The Committee recognised and welcomed the robust levels of communication and support that the County Council had put in place, and continued to provide, to schools, parents and carers and recognised the positive impact this had had on attendance levels since the return to school in September. Mr Wagstaff confirmed it had often been difficult to get clarity on information from the DfE. The Directorate would continue to provide

information to schools, seeking to differentiate the information needed by Governors, headteachers, etc, where possible.

- The County Council is working with colleges of further education on supporting school leavers following changes in the economy as a result of the Covid pandemic. This would involve supporting young people in their choices with careers advice and working with colleges to see what they are able to offer in terms of vocational education. The most vulnerable children are being supported by the County Council's post-16 team.

30.2 The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills thanked the Education and Skills department for the work they had carried out in the last few months to support the schools and children of West Sussex during the ongoing pandemic. He also extended his thanks to headteachers, governors and school staff. The testimonies from the Youth Cabinet, headteachers, governors and professionals at the meeting demonstrated how the Education team had stepped up to the challenges over the last few months and he thanked the team for that.

30.3 Resolved that – the Committee:

1. Expresses its thanks to County Council officers, senior leadership teams, teachers, staff, governors, students and parents for all of their efforts to keep children learning during this unprecedented and very challenging time.
2. Requests that the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills writes to the Department of Education to highlight the following:
 - The need for better timed and coordinated communication and guidance for schools moving forward, the need for early clarity over all examination testing procedures moving forward;
 - The need for further funding to support schools on the additional expenses they continue to incur and the loss of income opportunities as a result of the ongoing pandemic;
 - Welcomes that schools will remain open during the current lockdown and requests that further closures be considered only as a last resort, and if required be minimised both in number and length of time.
3. Understand the impact of the current pandemic on the emotional health and wellbeing of young people and asks the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills to consider carrying out an online survey with parents and children on the impact of Covid-19 in order to gather qualitative and quantitative data that can be used to best direct support and resources, and to repeat at intervals as the pandemic continues.
4. The Committee recognises the additional pressure on school staff, particularly senior leadership teams, and suggests that a similar survey as outlined in recommendation 3 is carried out with schools at key points during the pandemic to inform

the County Council's ability to develop and respond to any potential changes to the support it provides to schools.

5. Requests that the service urgently reviews the support it provides to school leaders during the pandemic and that this information is provided to the business planning group.
6. Highlights the key challenges moving forward on school recruitment, increased attainment gap for all children, particularly the most disadvantaged, access to technology for remote learning for all children and career support for post 16 young people and will refer these items to the Business Planning Group to monitor as potential areas for future scrutiny.
7. Requests that a report on the financial stresses on schools as a result of the pandemic is presented to a future Business Planning Group for consideration.
8. Requests that the service considers the content of future communications to schools and governors to ensure they are supportive and relevant considering the ongoing pressures they face.
9. Agrees to collate any further feedback from schools following the Committee Meeting and pass on to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills for consideration when working with schools moving forward.
10. Asks that the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills writes to the Secretary of State to highlight the need to resolve the issue of enabling those children who require aerosol generating procedures back into school to minimise their time away from learning.

1.38pm Cllr Bridges left the meeting.

1.41pm Mr Christin left the meeting.

31. Children First Improvement Programme Update

31.1 The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning. The item was introduced by Cllr Russell, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, who told the Committee that:

- The establishment of a Children's Trust had been agreed by Cabinet on 20 October and she thanked the Committee for their input on this matter.
- The findings of the focussed visit by Ofsted would be available on 4 December.
- The report showed that the transformation work was continuing at pace despite the Covid-19 pandemic.

31.2 Mr Clark, Children First Transformation Director, introduced the report and highlighted the following key areas:

- Following the Cabinet decision in October on the Children's Trust, work was progressing with Mutual Ventures on detailed workstreams to establish the Trust. The Trust was due to be in operation by 1 October 2021.
- The three-week Ofsted focussed visit looking at leadership, the service response to Covid-19, looked after children and care and protection had taken place and the outcome was expected on 4 December.

31.3 Summary of responses to Committee members' questions and comments:

- Good multi agency working arrangements were essential and the safeguarding model was about building and expanding those links. It was also hoped the ways of working in the Pause project could be expanded and embedded in the service. The Committee were reminded that the Children First Board had 30-35 members encompassing all areas of partnership including district and borough councils.
- Demand on service was being monitored and since the return to school the numbers of referrals had risen back in line with where they would be expected to be. Resource had been taken up with more complex cases leading to higher levels of intervention. The service was able to move staff to support front line service teams where needed.
- There are still levels of risk in the service, but the service is doing its best to keep children safe. Work includes internal auditing of cases as well as external auditing by Hampshire County Council where highlighted issues of practice can be attended to.
- Around 450 staff had taken part in staff engagement sessions to outline plans for the transformation work including the Children's Trust, and it had given staff an opportunity to provide their views and insights. It was hoped to build a more mature and open dialogue with staff enhancing the cascading information and regular feedback from staff. A staff engagement policy was being developed and Mr Clark would look at giving the Committee the opportunity to review some of the feedback from staff.
- Work was progressing on the Family Safeguarding Model. In-depth work was taking place to explore how teams are set up and how staffing resources could be changed to position and locate teams in the best way. It was expected that the new Model would to be in place by October 2021.
- The Mind of My Own (MOMO) app has had an increased uptake by children, young people and staff and increased marketing was planned this year to further increase uptake. It was agreed to share information on the app with all Councillors asking them to promote within their communities.

31.4 Cllr Russell reminded the Committee that the service was making progress but there was still a long way to go to get the service where it wanted to be. Good foundation blocks had been laid with the appointment of a permanent leadership team and progress was being made.

31.5 Resolved that – the Committee:

1. Is satisfied that the evidence provided demonstrates progress is being made on the improvement journey and improving outcomes for children and young people.
2. Highlights the importance of partnership working to ensure the best outcomes for children and families and requests that this continues to be a key area of focus and recognised area of risk.
3. Requests further data and information on the number of referrals, children under child protection plans and coming into care since the start of the pandemic and the impact this is having on the service is included in the update report presented at the 7 January Committee meeting.
4. Writes to the Chairman of the Corporate Parenting Panel to suggest that the Panel provides their view on the quality of health support for children looked after.
5. Supports that co-production work with children and young people is carried out as part of the transformation agenda to ensure the voice of the child is at the centre of the development of the service.
6. Requests that updates on staff engagement work are included in future update reports to the Committee.

2.20pm Cllr Oxlade left the meeting.

2.50pm Mr Lozzi left the meeting.

32. Appointments to Business Planning Group

32.1 Resolved – that the Committee agreed the appointments to the Business Planning Group as outlined in the report by the Director of Law and Assurance.

33. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

33.1 The Committee reviewed the Forward Plan dated 2 November 2020 and Members raised:

- Woodlands Meed: The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills confirmed that the project was going ahead as programmed, that the architect's designs were in the public arena and that members of the public would have the opportunity to review

them before the planning application was submitted on 20 November.

34. Possible Items for Future Scrutiny

34.1 No further items were raised for future scrutiny.

35. Requests for Call-In

35.1 There had been no requests for call-in to the Scrutiny Committee within its constitutional remit since the date of the last meeting.

36. Date of Next Meeting

36.1 The next meeting of the committee will be held on 7 January 2021.

The meeting ended at 3.15 pm

Chairman

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Cllr Nigel Jupp
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

12 November 2020

Dear Nigel

Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee – Impact of Covid 19 on schools and educational outcomes for children and young people

At the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee meeting on 5 November 2020 members considered the above item. The Committee was asked to consider the support being provided to schools, early years provision and special educational needs to keep children safe during the pandemic, the key lessons learned, areas of good practice, and any areas that were considered to require further attention to deal with the ongoing pandemic. The Committee were also asked to comment on the key challenges that had been identified for the forthcoming months, identify any further areas of focus and any areas for potential future scrutiny.

On behalf of the Committee I wish to thank you for the comprehensive report provided to the Committee and the breadth of work being carried out to continue to support our schools and children during the ongoing pandemic.

Following the debate and hearing from a range of witnesses, the Committee made a series of recommendations for your consideration and response:

1. Expressed its thanks to County Council officers, senior leadership teams, teachers, staff, governors, students and parents for all of their efforts to keep children learning during this unprecedented and very challenging time
2. Requested that the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills writes to the Department of Education to highlight the following:
 - The need for better timed and coordinated communication and guidance for schools moving forward,
The need for early clarity over all examination testing procedures moving forward.
 - The need for further funding to support schools on the additional expenses they continue to incur and the loss of income opportunities as a result of the ongoing pandemic
 - Welcomes that schools will remain open during the current lockdown and requests that further closures be considered only as a last resort, and if required be minimised both in number and length of time.

3. Understood the impact of the current pandemic on the emotional health and wellbeing of young people and asks the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills to consider carrying out an online survey with parents and children on the impact of Covid-19 in order to gather qualitative and quantitative data that can be used to best direct support and resources, and to repeat at intervals as the pandemic continues.
4. Recognised the additional pressure on school staff, particularly senior leadership teams, and suggests that a similar survey as outlined in recommendation 3 is carried out with schools at key points during the pandemic to inform the County Council's ability to develop and respond to any potential changes to the support it provides to schools.
5. Requested that the service urgently reviews the support it provides to School Leaders during the pandemic and that this information is provided to the business planning group.
6. Highlighted the key challenges moving forward on school recruitment, increased attainment gap for all children, particularly the most disadvantaged, access to technology for remote learning for all children and career support for post 16 young people and will refer these items to the Business Planning Group to monitor as potential areas for future scrutiny.
7. Requested that a report on the financial stresses on schools as a result of the pandemic is presented to a future Business Planning Group for consideration.
8. Requested that the service considers the content of future communications to schools and governors to ensure they are supportive and relevant considering the ongoing pressures they face.
9. Agreed to collate any further feedback from schools following the Committee Meeting and pass on to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills for consideration when working with schools moving forward.
10. Asked that the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills writes to the Secretary of State to highlight the need to resolve the issue of enabling those children who require aerosol generating procedures back into school to minimise their time away from learning.

The Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee is next meeting on Thursday 7 January and therefore I would be very grateful if you could provide any written response you wish to make to this letter by Friday 18 December 2020 to Katherine.delamora@westsussex.gov.uk, so that it can be considered by the Committee at that meeting.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Stephen Hillier
Chairman of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee

CC Paul Wagstaff, Director of Education and Skills
Ellie Evans, Assistant Director Compliance and Pupil Entitlement

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Cllr Stephen Hillier
Chairman
Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee

7 December 2020

Dear Stephen

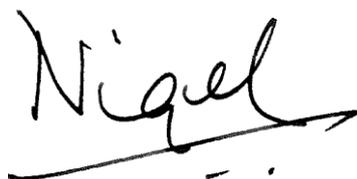
Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee – Impact of Covid 19 on schools and educational outcomes for children and young people

I refer to the recommendations made by the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee at the meeting on 5 November 2020 in relation to the above item. Please see below my reply to your numbered recommendations: -

2. I have written to the Secretary of State for Education highlighting the points made by the Committee. I enclose a copy of that letter for which I await a response.
3. I have considered your request to carry out an online survey with parents and children on the impact of Covid-19. This would be an extremely resource intensive task as the number of parents totals over 300,000, and that figure would increase substantially if pupils were surveyed too. There is not capacity within the Education and Skills department to undertake a survey of such a large cohort and ensure that the data is assessed in a meaningful way. In addition, there are already mechanisms in place for parents and young people to raise concerns and provide feedback.
4. The three Headteachers' Executives provide the best forum for the Education and Skills service to engage with Heads representing the different sectors – Primary, Secondary and Special School. The Local Authority's approach to supporting and communicating with schools during the pandemic has been shaped in liaison with and taking on board feedback from the different Executives. I firmly believe this is the most effective method for working with and hearing from the senior leaders in our schools and would suggest that this continues rather than undertaking a separate survey.
5. As mentioned at the Scrutiny Committee meeting, the Education and Skills service are in discussions with the provider of the County Council's Employee Assistance Programme to develop a bespoke offer of support that Headteachers could access to benefit their emotional wellbeing. In the meantime, whilst this offer is being finalised, school leaders are encouraged to contact their school link advisor to discuss any concerns they may have. Once the offer of support is in place the details can be shared with the Business Planning Group (BPG).
6. I note the areas to be monitored by the BPG.

7. A report on the financial stresses on schools as a result of the pandemic can be provided to a future BPG meeting. Please let the Director of Education and Skills know the date of the meeting this is required for.
8. Following feedback received from schools and the West Sussex Governor Association the Education and Skills service have already made alterations to the communications circulated to schools and governors. In response to requests that the communications do not get sent on a Friday the service ensure these are sent out Monday to Thursday only, unless exceptional circumstances dictate. In addition, the format has been changed so it is clearer which part of the communication is for school staff to read and act on and which part is directed to governors.
9. I await receipt of any further feedback.
10. See response to 2 above.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nigel". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Cllr Nigel Jupp
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Enc – Letter to Secretary of State for Education

The Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP
Secretary of State for Education
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT
[Sent via email]

27 November 2020

Dear Secretary of State

Experiences of schools and the local authority in managing the impact of the pandemic

At a recent meeting of the County Council's Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee I was provided with a welcome opportunity to hear feedback from Headteachers, Governors and members of our Youth Cabinet on their experiences of the impact of the pandemic on Schools and young people's education.

Both the Scrutiny Committee and I recognise the enormous efforts made since March by our County Council officers, senior leadership teams, the teachers, staff, governors, students and parents to keep children learning during this unprecedented and very challenging time.

Through the course of discussion at the meeting it became clear that there were instances where both the Local Authority and schools encountered difficulties in putting into practice the measures advised within government guidance due to the late receipt of information. Some of the guidance also led to confusion as it could easily be interpreted in a number of different ways. Following reflection of the experiences of officers and schools I would be grateful for your response on the following issues:-

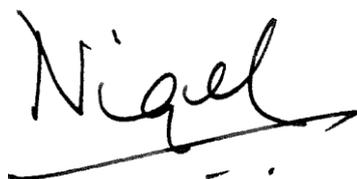
1. The need for better timed and coordinated communication and guidance for schools moving forward, some of which has not always been timely. For example, guidance on Aerosol Generated Procedures (AGP) has only just been received and guidance on school transport arrangements was late in arriving for schools to plan their risk assessments and return to school plans during the summer;
2. The need for early clarity over all examination and testing procedures for 2021. Whilst statements have been made about external examinations,

- there is still a lack of clarity on how students will be assessed fairly where gaps in the coverage of certain subjects will vary across the country; and
3. The need for additional funding to be made available to support schools on the additional expenses they continue to incur, and the loss of income opportunities as a result of the ongoing pandemic.

I welcome the clear message from Government that schools should remain open during the current lockdown and would request that further closures be considered only as a last resort, and if required, this be minimised both in number and length of time.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts on these points.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nigel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke underneath the name.

Cllr Nigel Jupp
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

12 November 2020

Cllr Jacquie Russell
**Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Chairman of the
Corporate Parenting Panel**

Dear Jacquie,

**Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee – Children
First Improvement Programme.**

At the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee meeting on 5 November 2020 members considered the above item. As at each meeting, the Committee was considering the progress made on the improvement journey and whether the evidence provided demonstrated sufficient progress and assurance that outcomes are improving for our children and young people.

The Committee made a series of recommendations for your consideration and response:

1. Is satisfied that the evidence provided demonstrates progress is being made on the improvement journey and improving outcomes for children and young people.
2. Highlights the importance of partnership working to ensure the best outcomes for children and families and requests that this continues to be a key area of focus and recognised area of risk.
3. Requests further data and information on the number of referrals, children under child protection plans and coming into care since the start of the pandemic and the impact this is having on the service is included in the update report presented at the 7 January Committee meeting.
4. Would welcome a view from the Corporate Parenting Panel on the quality of health support for children looked after.
5. Supports that co-production work with children and young people is carried out as part of the transformation agenda to ensure the voice of the child is at the centre of the development of the service.
6. Requests that updates on staff engagement work are included in future update reports to the Committee

Agenda Item 4

The Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee is next meeting on Thursday 7 January and therefore I would be very grateful if you could provide any written response you wish to make to this letter by Friday 18 December 2020 to Katherine.delamora@westsussex.gov.uk, so that it can be considered by the Committee at that meeting.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Stephen Hillier
Chairman of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee

CC Vince Clark, Children First Transformation Director

2 December 2020

Cllr Stephen Hillier
Chairman
Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee

Dear Stephen,

**Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee – Children
First Improvement Programme**

Thank you for your letter of 12th November 2020, with the recommendations from the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee (CYPSSC) meeting on 5th November.

I would like to take this opportunity to say how much both I and the service value your Committee's scrutiny of the progress being made on the Children First Improvement programme and the feedback and recommendations that emerge. Having been in regular attendance at the Committee's meetings, I feel that the Scrutiny function is being undertaken in a searching and robust manner and that the concerns originally expressed on this subject in the Commissioner's report are being addressed.

Your public assessment of progress will provide important assurance that we are on the right track and also identify areas requiring further attention. The role of Scrutiny will continue to be essential as the service redesign phase of the improvement journey unfolds and I look forward to your continued participation in this process. I am always mindful that it is in relation to the impact on the safety and wellbeing of children and young people that all our efforts should be judged.

I now respond to each of the Committee's recommendations in turn:

1. Scrutiny Committee is satisfied that the evidence provided demonstrates progress is being made on the improvement journey and improving outcomes for children and young people.

The Committee's overall endorsement of the progress being made is extremely welcome. Your view supports my own perception, although as I stressed at County Council recently, there is still a lot of work to do in order to build the service we all wish to see. We will shortly receive a formal view from Ofsted following their recent visit, which will add further substance to our internal assessment and I look forward to discussing this with the Committee.

2. The Committee highlights the importance of partnership working to ensure the best outcomes for children and families and requests that this continues to be a key area of focus and recognised area of risk.

I am entirely in agreement with the Committee's view. Work to develop an energised partnership undertaking is indeed an area of primary focus and I summarise below the arrangements in place to give effect to this.

i) Overseeing partnership delivery for children's services

We now have strong mechanisms to articulate and coordinate the partnership work in children's services. To oversee the partnership improvement programme arising from the Ofsted judgement, the **Children's Improvement Partnership Board** is chaired by the Commissioner for Children's Services and attended by Police, Schools, Health and District Council representatives. To address all aspects of continuing service delivery there is the **Children First Board**, a sub-group of the Health and Wellbeing Board and reporting to it, which is chaired by myself as Cabinet Member for Children and Young People. This has an appropriately broad base of membership, which also includes representatives of children and young people, their parents and carers, schools and colleges and the community and voluntary organisations that make such a vital contribution to our combined work at a local level.

The other key partnership body is the **Children's Safeguarding Partnership**, operating on a pan-Sussex basis, which has high-quality collaborative arrangements in place. The main practice priorities and activities of the Partnership are:

1. **Neglect:** A multi-agency action plan to drive improvement forward is overseen by the Neglect Working Group, supported by practice toolkits, and with the voice of the child embedded.
2. **Child exploitation:** a pan-Sussex strategy has been developed, supported by robust information-sharing; understanding patterns of exploitation in Sussex and promoting professional investigative skills.
3. **Effective multi-agency safeguarding practice:** promoting a range of practice improvement standards across the partnership, including the ICON programme to prevent abusive head trauma in infants, and a project to work with fathers; publishing and learning from Serious Case Reviews.

The overarching strategic priorities and activities are:

4. **Lead and consolidate effective partnership arrangements:** partnership governance has been independently scrutinised, leading to additional subgroups and revisions of membership to align with best practice.

5. **Revise and embed a Learning and Improvement Framework:** a new Quality Assurance and Scrutiny Framework has been agreed to share and evaluate learning and skills across the partnership.

ii) An example of the context for partnership collaboration

It may be useful to offer an example of how partners can collaborate on particular issues to maximise impact. The Children's Improvement Partnership Board meeting on 12th November included a very constructive discussion led by Sussex Police, exploring how children excluded from school tend to become marginalised and vulnerable to criminal exploitation. This is naturally a key area of concern across the partnership.

Consideration of the support available to schools to prevent exclusions led in turn to an emphasis on how work to build parental capability can address the fundamentals of home life, so that children and young people come to school from a more stable, nurturing family environment, ready to learn and able to build a stronger, more coherent future for themselves. Safeguarding will always be the top priority within Social Care; but parent capacity for change is a cornerstone of the Family Safeguarding model of practice that we have explained to the Committee and propose to introduce in 2021. At the same time the ability of Health partners to support welfare at home and in school considerably underscores the combined impact of all the agencies. Our district council and voluntary sector colleagues can also play their part in delivering these outcomes.

This single example illustrates that the partnership has a developing sense of the potential for effecting positive change, based on the interplay of sometimes complex but generally interconnected social factors. I know that Lucy Butler is determined, as I am, to follow through to ensure that each partnership area is geared to maximise its collaboration, and very clear about the benefits accruing to public services of all kinds from closer co-operation. I will ensure that, through the Update report, the Committee continues to be briefed on partnership arrangements and initiatives, with an assessment of their impact.

3. The Committee requests further data and information on the number of referrals, children under child protection plans and coming into care since the start of the pandemic and the impact this is having on the service is included in the update report presented at the 7 January Committee meeting.

I am pleased with the service's response to the Pandemic and the Scrutiny Committee has received a detailed account of the methods being adopted for continuing to keep children safe, in contact and continuing their development during this period. One of the key principles of managing the service is that evidence-based decisions are informed by high-quality data. As you would expect, the Senior Leadership Team and service managers regularly review and respond as necessary to a range of key performance information. This discipline has been ever more important

during the Pandemic and has included a close scrutiny of the available staff resource in each part of the service, in relation to presenting demand.

In response to the Committee's request, the data and information sought on case levels in the different areas of the service since the start of the pandemic, along with how the service is dealing with this, is included within the Improvement Programme Update report provided as agenda item 5 for the 7 January CYPSSC meeting.

I hope this information meets your current need, and I would propose to provide a further 2020/21 year-end report at an appropriate meeting of the Committee next year, so that members can examine how the current issues have played out.

4. The Committee would welcome a view from the Corporate Parenting Panel on the quality of health support for children looked after.

In my role as Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP), I am well aware of the important function that health support – both physical and mental - has on the wellbeing of the rising number of children who are looked after by this authority. Providing the right healthcare to children looked after requires good coordination between the County Council, the Clinical Commissioning Groups and the Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust, which provides the majority of interventions. Resources need to be scheduled in such a way that prompt referrals by social workers lead to timely Initial Health Assessments (IHAs, with a target of 20 working days after coming into care), and further interventions and reviews as needed.

At its meeting on 18th November, the CPP received the annual health reports from the Clinical Commissioning Groups and the Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust covering 2019/20. These drew attention to; better coordination between social work and health teams; there are signs that the voice of the child is being heard more; and attention has been paid to more timely assessments and following up the actions in individual health plans. However, Coronavirus and pressure on health service resources have inevitably made these improvements difficult to sustain during 2020, although children looked after received a priority status, and on-line assessments took over from face-to-face in many instances. In terms of Children's Services, performance on IHA referrals has fluctuated and still needs more work to be on target for all children looked after to have an IHA in the correct timescales.

My assessment of the current situation is that the picture is mixed. Our performance is not yet as good as I would wish it to be. However, all the partners have committed to working together to improve performance and I am determined to drive this agenda forward. Key priorities of the Health Subgroup (which reports to the CPP) are to improve our performance on Initial Health Assessments (IHAs) and provision for Mental Health issues and these feature prominently within its action plan.

I would welcome the opportunity to keep the Committee informed of progress in this crucial area, especially as the impacts of the Pandemic hopefully subside in the coming months.

5. Supports that co-production work with children and young people is carried out as part of the transformation agenda to ensure the voice of the child is at the centre of the development of the service.

The Committee's support is welcome as it echoes a strong theme in the new service outlook. This requires further development, but we have made considerable progress in our avowed principle of being child-focused and ensuring that their voice is not only heard, but that children and young people actually contribute to and influence the process of designing services for them.

As a recent example of this I would cite the active involvement of care leavers in the development of a new Care Leaver Offer, which we recently launched; their input has significantly enhanced its value. The last meeting of your Committee received a report on the use of technology (the Mind of My Own App) which encourages children to express their feelings in ways which help us to tailor our response more closely to their needs; we wish care practitioners to work in this spirit as a default approach. I look forward to being able to report further evidence of co-production and child-centredness as the improvement programme unfolds. I also welcome the increased presence of young people to provide feedback at meetings of the Scrutiny Committee, where that is appropriate.

In order to take this agenda forward in a more comprehensive way, we have commissioned an external provider, 'The Care Leaders Fellowship' to provide coaching and training to embed the views of young people into the work we do. In this way we will be able to give a clear demonstration of child-centredness across the service, and I look forward to giving the Committee an update next year on the progress of this initiative and its impact on children and young people.

6. The Committee requests that updates on staff engagement work are included in future update reports to the Committee

I know that Lucy Butler and her Senior Leadership Team are intent on establishing and maintaining a high-quality dialogue with staff; they recognise that this is an essential part of the improvement journey, and that genuine cultural change must support the professional and technical aspects of a service that aspires to be 'good'. As reported to your 24th September Committee meeting, a service vision and key supporting principles have been agreed and adopted as the bedrock of a culture that involves and respects all its members.

To introduce the principles of service improvement and redesign, a substantial Staff Engagement exercise was undertaken (July to October

2020), comprising 15 face-to-face events and 2 virtual sessions, welcoming over 450 staff from across the breadth of Children, Young People and Learning. At the same time, each part of the service was engaged in a discussion about 'what good looks like' and teams were invited to discuss and propose their own local view of this. A network of staff forums has been created, for Group Managers, Practice Managers and Social Workers, to ensure regular exchange of information and opinion. Lucy Butler sends staff a weekly message highlighting current matters, and this has been well received.

In addition to the above, a diagnostic survey was undertaken during the Summer which all staff were encouraged to participate in through filling in the questionnaire, an individual interview or attending a discussion group. This exercise was based on the principle that it is necessary to understand the past in order to inform the future. The findings were fed back to the Leadership Team and will help to inform the improvement programme.

It is pleasing to be able to report an excellent response to the extension of our retention offer for practising social workers: 96% of eligible staff have opted in for the retention take-up in December and we have seen a good level of early response for the next few months. It is extremely positive news that so many of our staff want to make this commitment to the organisation, and I am more than ever aware that this is because we all wish to see the same thing: the best outcomes for our children and young people.

I therefore believe that we are adopting a thorough and transparent approach to working with staff to establish a service of which we can all be proud. A new round of staff engagement will commence in December, to take forward the service redesign exercise that will run into the Spring. This will involve staff at all levels through regular updates and interactive discussion. I will ensure that your Committee is briefed on these discussions as we move forward and gains an understanding of the views of the workforce. I would like to assure the Scrutiny Committee that staff wellbeing through these difficult times is very close to my heart; I am confident that their strong commitment and appetite for change offers good prospects of better outcomes for children and young people in West Sussex.

I have deliberately elaborated my answers, in order to give the Committee a full picture and to stress the intensity of effort that is being applied to this great journey of improvement. I hope that I have addressed the questions you have raised, and I look forward to another fruitful meeting of the Scrutiny Committee in January.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Russett'. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Cllr Jacquie Russell

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
West Sussex County Council

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Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee
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7 January 2021

Children First Improvement – Service Update
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Report by the Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning
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Summary

To assist the Committee in its role of scrutinising the Children First Improvement Programme. This report updates the Committee on service developments since its last meeting on 5 November 2020 and includes topics on which it has requested further information. The report sets out the following:

- a) The published outcomes of the Focused Visit by Ofsted in October 2020 (Section 2).
- b) An update on the situation regarding the Children's Trust (Section 3).
- c) The effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on service demand and the service performance response (Section 4).
- d) An update on Staff Engagement in the context of the current Service Redesign process (Section 5).
- e) A digest of other service improvement projects (Section 6).

The focus for Scrutiny

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to assess the progress made on the Children First Improvement Programme, as set out in this report.

Key areas for scrutiny include:

- a) Whether the current transformation activity provides assurance that the objectives for improved outcomes for children and young people will be met.
- b) To consider the published Ofsted assessment following the October 2020 Focused Visit and next steps, together with the recent amended Statutory Direction and the letter from the Children's Minister, and how these provide assurance of a satisfactory rate and quality of service improvement.
- c) To consider the impact of Covid-19 on service demand and how the service has responded in order to continue to meet the needs of children and young people.

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

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report is part of a series that provides the Committee with a regular update on plans and actions from the Children First Transformation

programme. The programme of improvement has reached its milestones for this year in that; Firstly, objective external evidence has now been received from Ofsted, the Department for Education and the Commissioner for Children's Services, confirming that the service is making progress and is on a trajectory of improvement; Secondly, having broadly stabilised the service a new phase of Service Redesign is commencing. This will build, during 2021, the new service that is intended to deliver on the expectation of 'what good looks like'. This report considers these subjects in turn, and goes on to provide further updates in line with the Committee's previous requests for additional information.

2. Ofsted Focused Visit, October 2020

2.1 As reported to the previous meeting of the Committee, Ofsted conducted a Focused Visit between 12-22 October 2020. Inspectors formed a view of the whole service, but in particular they examined the quality and impact of key decision-making across help and protection, children in care and services for care leavers, together with the impact of leadership on service development, including the response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

2.2 It should be noted that an Ofsted Focused Visit does not result in a formal Ofsted scale judgement, but a letter giving a narrative account of findings. This [letter](#) was published on the Ofsted website on 4 December 2020. The findings are summarised below. Service management agrees that the findings are a fair reflection of the current position. Although there is, quite rightly, continuing challenge from Ofsted, the inspectors did not present any findings that have come as a surprise to the service: the letter therefore confirms the management view of the service, as presented to Ofsted in the form of a self-assessment prior to the visit. Most importantly, no issues were raised by Ofsted for 'priority action' by the Council. This means in effect that Ofsted believes that, while further improvement is required, the service has broadly been stabilised and is well placed for the next phase of development.

2.3 The following is a summary of the Ofsted findings on this occasion:

- Social workers report a shift in culture and express tentative optimism; there is a sense of ownership and direction. They felt well-supported during the pandemic.
- Ofsted acknowledged that the service response during the pandemic has been effective and this ensured that children were kept safe.
- The pace of change and improvement needs to increase; at times, the impact on children has not been sufficient.
- Ofsted saw an improving picture with regards to practice in some areas; however, there are still too many areas of variable practice in:
 - Children with disabilities
 - Management & decision-making
 - Quality of assessments & care planning
 - Quality of records
 - Permanence and pre-proceedings
 - Exploitation & Missing

- Ofsted could see some progress against the recommendations from the last inspection.
- There was strength from the corporate approach and multi-agency partnerships during the pandemic, but there is still more to do around key areas of practice.
- Strengths were highlighted in regard to:
 - school attendance during the pandemic
 - the virtual school
 - the unaccompanied asylum seekers service
 - strong relationships with young people in the leaving care service

Management Response and next steps

- 2.4 The outcome of the Focused Visit is broadly satisfactory, especially in regard to the alignment of the Ofsted view with that of the senior leadership team. The areas of 'variable practice' identified above are receiving very close attention and each has a dedicated improvement plan. Actions being prioritised with immediate effect include:
- Improvement managers are working in key Ofsted priority areas for maximum impact.
 - Priority is being given to support managers and social workers to embed improved quality of practice so that there is accountability and oversight.
 - Active support is being provided in the Children with Disabilities (CWD) service to respond on the improvements needed. This has included ensuring that all the outstanding assessments for CWD were completed by mid-December 2020.
 - Carrying out a refresh of the Practice Improvement Plan and improvement approach in liaison with Hampshire County Council, the Partner in Practice.
 - Ensuring all practice areas have action plans so that progress can be monitored in a rigorous and timely manner.
- 2.5 The future programme of Ofsted scrutiny is now expected to revert to Monitoring Visits on a roughly quarterly basis, with the next visit sometime in early 2021. It is hoped that a regular cycle of visits will provide continuity of Ofsted scrutiny and a clear understanding of the pace of improvement during a very intensive period of service development in 2021. This regular feedback will also assist the Scrutiny function of this Committee.

3. The Children's Trust

New Statutory Direction

- 3.1 As members are aware, on 10 December 2020 the Department for Education (DfE) on behalf of the Secretary of State issued a new Statutory Direction stating Children's Services should remain with the Council for at least a further year, with the move to a Children's Trust 'paused'. The new Direction was published alongside a second report by the Commissioner (October

2020) which states that there are 'compelling reasons why a company to deliver children's services functions on behalf of the Council is no longer required'.

The Minister's Letter

- 3.2 At the same time, Children's Minister Vicky Ford wrote to the Leader of the County Council outlining details of the decision. The Minister said: 'I am encouraged that there is now a new political leadership in respect of children's services, supported by strong senior executive appointments, including a new director of children's services. This has undoubtedly been strengthened by the wider work the Council is undertaking to reform the corporate Council, with the support of its corporate improvement partner, East Sussex County Council. The strength of this partnership will evidently be important in creating the conditions in which children's services can continue to improve.' The Minister's letter goes on to refer in positive terms to the Ofsted findings during the Focused Visit as evidence of 'a shift in culture and that the building blocks for improvement are being put in place' and to the effective handling of service delivery throughout the pandemic.

The Statutory Direction, Minister's Letter and Report from the Commissioner can be found [here](#).

- 3.3 The new Direction requires the County Council to continue to work under the oversight of the Children's Services Commissioner, John Coughlan who has been confirmed in this role for the next year. Hampshire County Council will continue as the Partner in Practice, supporting further service improvement.

Commentary on the current situation

- 3.4 These developments demonstrate categorically that the Department for Education, which acts as the legal arbiter on behalf of the Secretary of State for determining the governance of children's services, has decided that the County Council has made sufficient progress to justify suspending the enactment of a Children's Trust. The Council has achieved this result in two key areas: first, it has made the necessary constitutional changes and adopted appropriate corporate practice to give assurance of sound and compliant governance; and second, based on the opinions of Ofsted and the Commissioner, it has made enough progress against a trajectory of improvement, together with its declared forward intentions to transform its Children's Services, to justify retaining direct control of them.
- 3.5 These events mark a change from normal DfE practice of imposing an ADM on inadequate authorities, although it should be noted that this new situation formally marks only a suspension of the Trust process. Despite the positive indications, the Minister states: 'it is clear that there is still much work to do to address the weaknesses identified in 2019, and bring the standard of service up to the quality that children and families in West Sussex deserve.' This means that the imperative to make continuous positive change, as set out within the Children First programme is as strong as ever. The Minister's letter concludes: 'There therefore needs to be, over the next twelve months, real determination, effort and energy put into achieving the Council's

improvement plan and demonstrating a tangible and lasting impact on social work practice and outcomes.'

- 3.6 The suspension of the Trust process is welcomed from a corporate perspective. In operational terms, it means that senior management and other resources will not now be diverted from the primary task of improving the service over the next twelve months.

4. Service Demand and Response during the Pandemic

- 4.1 At the last meeting, the Committee received details of the robust operational approach taken to working with children and families during the pandemic. Ofsted confirmed in its recent visit (Section 2 above) that the Covid-19 response had been effective. Children remained safe, the workforce stayed healthy and effective and was well supported; all risks were effectively managed. Additionally the Committee examined the circumstances around the return to school following lockdown, which also painted a broadly satisfactory picture.

- 4.2 The Committee requested further information on the number of referrals, children under child protection plans and coming into care since the start of the pandemic and the impact this demand is having on the service. There was an inevitable reduction in demand during lockdown, although this has started to increase in recent months. **Appendix 1** sets out demand trends in graphic form, up to the end of November 2020, as reported to the Children First Improvement Board on 10 December. The main highlights are as follows:

- MASH experienced a lull during lockdown, but contacts rose by 20% in September 2020 and a further 5% in October, and referrals increased in line with this, returning to pre-Covid levels, although with a small reduction in November.
- Child Protection Plan numbers went up during lockdown, then stabilised between September and November, suggesting that safeguarding during lockdown had been effective; however numbers were up by about 14% over the course of the year.
- The number of children looked after has been subject to a long-term rise, independently of Covid-19, in line with national trends and also partly influenced by the 2019 Ofsted judgement; the trajectory slightly intensified in the Summer as lockdown ended.
- There has been a corresponding increase in volumes of open Child & Family Assessments: December 2020 - 1,675 open Assessments, compared to December 2019 - 1,141, although good rates of assessment completion have been maintained.

- 4.3 In terms of demand, the impact of Covid-19 has not been as significant as originally feared: this is due both to low staff absence and robust procedures having been put in place at an early stage, combined with cooperative partnership arrangements with schools and other stakeholders. Performance in general has been maintained - for instance, with the Timeliness of

Contacts and Referrals, 95.8% of contacts have been completed in 3 days and 93.5% of referrals completed in 3 days. Re-referrals have continued to reduce (to 23.7% in November having been 30.5% in June), indicating greater process efficiency and quality of assessment.

- 4.4 The Committee will note that staff have performed consistently well during this very difficult period; and as they have commented to Ofsted inspectors, they have been well supported to do so. In terms of caseloads, neither the Commissioner nor Ofsted have regarded these as excessive. Management has given constant and very close consideration to analysing and responding to issues of staff capacity and demand in different parts of the service and additional resources have been brought in where necessary. At team level supervision has improved, fostering professional confidence and a growth in quality and timeliness.

5. Staff Engagement in Service Redesign

- 5.1 In line with the agreed service vision and operational principles, the Departmental Leadership Team has adopted an open and transparent managerial style, with collaborative communication keeping staff informed and engaged within a rapidly changing environment: this benefits morale, with staff more able to take part in a dialogue and move towards a shared understanding of the improvement challenge; they are thereby enabled to contribute fully to the service redesign work.
- 5.2 The Update reports to the meetings of this Committee on 24 September and 5 November introduced members to the main elements of the Service Transformation programme. As previously indicated, the service is now in an intensive period of redesign activity. During December 2020 and January 2021, a series of transformation workshops is being run with staff representatives, covering the following service areas:
- Fostering Service
 - Children with Disabilities
 - Children Looked After & Leaving Care
 - Safeguarding & Quality Assurance
 - Family Safeguarding
 - Youth Justice & Exploitation
 - Commissioning
- 5.3 The purpose of these workshops is to engage with staff to move from the current service model, towards the new Family Safeguarding model: this represents a crucial phase of the service redesign. It is acknowledged that staff have the knowledge and experience to contribute to the design process, and it is essential that – in common with all stakeholders – they participate actively in the discussions. The programme of activity remains on track for the new service to go live in the Autumn of 2021. Other associated elements of the service redesign are discussed in the following section.

6. Service Improvement Update

The following is a summary of recent and forthcoming developments within the service improvement agenda:

Management Assessment & Development Programme

- 6.1 Good quality management at all levels is a prerequisite of any effective service. A management assessment and development programme has been formulated to deliver the support and improvements necessary within the service. The assessment element of the programme will start in January 2021 with all managers attending the programme by the end of April 2021. Managers will then have access to a bespoke management training and development programme throughout the Spring and Summer. Its main features are:
- It invests in the staff through an inspirational, high impact development programme.
 - It aligns with the findings of the Ofsted inspection and Commissioner's report, thereby contributing to the necessary process of delayering and simplifying managerial levels.
 - It will support the cultural and practice improvements that managers need to make to bring sustainable, long-lasting change as service leaders.

Hearing and Responding to the Voice of the Child

- 6.2 Putting children and young people at the centre of all undertakings is central to the new service vision. The proper integration of the voice of the child into the service model now needs to move to a more comprehensive level. In order to take this agenda forward, an external provider, 'The Care Leaders Fellowship' has been commissioned to provide coaching and training to practitioners, so that understanding and responding to the views of young people is embedded in the fabric of the new service, in ways that are clearly demonstrable.
- 6.3 The Care Leaders Fellowship works with local authorities and other agencies to establish the voices and influence of the children they care for and care-experienced children at the heart of their business. The programme which will run during 2021, will involve developing a strong offer for care-experienced children, with bespoke digital platforms and training forums to develop practice, so that all involved in a corporate parenting role better understand how to build and sustain relationships with children.

Integrated Front Door

- 6.4 It is important that an effective and efficient 'front door' to all services is developed and maintained. This includes ensuring that early help provision is properly aligned with the statutory social work activity and these services are therefore joined to provide an integrated front door.
- 6.5 The Integrated Front Door will launch at the end of January 2021, with the following features:
- Creating one pathway within Children's Services for referrals relating to children and young people.
 - Enabling a joined-up approach, with one combined Early Help and Social Care team at the Front Door.

- Children will receive a service proportionate to their needs, in a timely way.
- A reduction in the number of transfer points on the child’s journey.
- A reduction in the time from initial contact to outcome.
- Providing a simplified process for the public and professionals.
- Potentially reduce unnecessary social work interventions.

Children Looked After and Care Leavers’ Strategy

6.6 The new Children Looked After and Care Leavers’ Strategy 2020-2024 was agreed by the Cabinet Member for adoption on 17 December 2020.

Residential Homes

6.7 The new children’s residential homes (Cissbury Lodge and May House in Worthing, and Seaside at Shoreham) remain on course to reopen in the Spring of 2021.

7. Issues for consideration by the Scrutiny Committee

7.1 The Committee is invited to review the material presented in this report and confirm that it is satisfied with the pace and quality of the improvement activity across the Children, Young People & Education Department.

8. Consultation

8.1 Not applicable – this is a report for information.

9. Risk Implications and Mitigations

9.1 A summary of the risk areas identified in the current risk log, and the associated mitigating factors, is given in the table below:

Risk Area	Examples of Mitigating Actions
The Covid-19 pandemic may continue to 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	The service has dealt well with the pandemic to date, as confirmed recently by Ofsted; much learning has resulted, and new ways of working have been developed. This risk is thought to be under control with safeguarding and wellbeing issues soundly catered for.
A surge in demand following the cessation of Covid-19 restrictions, return of children to school etc	As expected, there has been an increase in demand across the service: there has been a rise in MASH contacts; higher caseloads in Assessment & Intervention; and an increased number of children subject to Child Protection Plans as well as

	<p>a continuing rise in Children going into Care. The service planned for these factors in advance, and the situation is under control (as discussed in Section 4). Service Redesign and the new Service Model (Family Safeguarding) will support greater efficiency in the management of future demand.</p>
<p>Knowing that the service is safer for children</p>	<p>Every aspect of the improvement agenda is orientated towards this fundamental issue, from Workforce through Practice Improvement, to Performance Management, Governance, Scrutiny and use of Technology: it is a whole-system issue. Again, the service transformation work will further enhance outcomes in the round. The recent Ofsted opinion and DfE intervention provide external assurance of improved service stability in this respect.</p>
<p>Understanding and applying quality practice</p>	<p>A Practice Improvement Plan has been developed to implement quality standards and assurance and will increase in effectiveness in a redesigned workforce.</p>
<p>Multi-agency capacity and capability</p>	<p>The joint undertakings with partners are very strongly stressed in the design principles of the proposed changes and the senior leadership team works with key partners to develop a joined-up approach to service delivery.</p>
<p>Demonstrating to the Commissioner, Ofsted and the DfE that the service can continue its improvement journey</p>	<p>The service has demonstrated to the Commissioner, to Ofsted and the DfE that it has the ambition and capacity for comprehensive change. The Commissioner has signified that he is satisfied with the direction of travel to date. Feedback from the Ofsted Focused Visit in October was further evidence that the service has an accurate self-evaluation, that improvement plans are appropriately focused on key service areas and reasonable progress is being made.</p>
<p>Leadership capacity and capability</p>	<p>New permanent leadership team now fully in place. Leadership has been commended by the Commissioner, Ofsted and the DfE.</p>
<p>Organisational morale & retention of experienced social work staff, in the context of national market scarcity and</p>	<p>This risk is comprehensively addressed in the new Service Redesign proposals and the staff Retention Strategy.</p>

competition from other authorities for their services	
Social workers encumbered with administrative burdens are less effective	Within the Service Redesign the need has been recognised to remove unnecessary administration and to maximise productive professional time with clients. The Integrated Front Door (6.4-6.5) is an example of this principle being operationalised.
Data management not supporting good practice	Using technology to improve service is recognised as a priority; an ICT development workstream is in design, allied to quality improvement. Much has been learned from managing Covid-19 about effective use of technology.
Preparedness for cycle of Ofsted monitoring visits	The senior leadership team maintains regular Ofsted readiness meetings to plan and coordinate the work. The successful Ofsted Focused Visit, as covered in this report (Section 2) demonstrates that these processes are effective.

10. Other Options Considered

10.1 Not applicable – this is a report for information.

11. Equality Duty

11.1 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.

11.2 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.

12. Social Value

12.1 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.

13. Crime and Disorder Implications

- 13.1 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.

14. Human Rights Implications

- 14.1 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.
- 14.2 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:

Vince Clark, Children First Transformation Director

Appendices

Appendix 1: Performance Summary Report to Children First Improvement Board, 10 December 2020, covering the period to the end of November 2020.

Background Papers

None

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Children First

West Sussex Improvement Board

Performance Summary Report

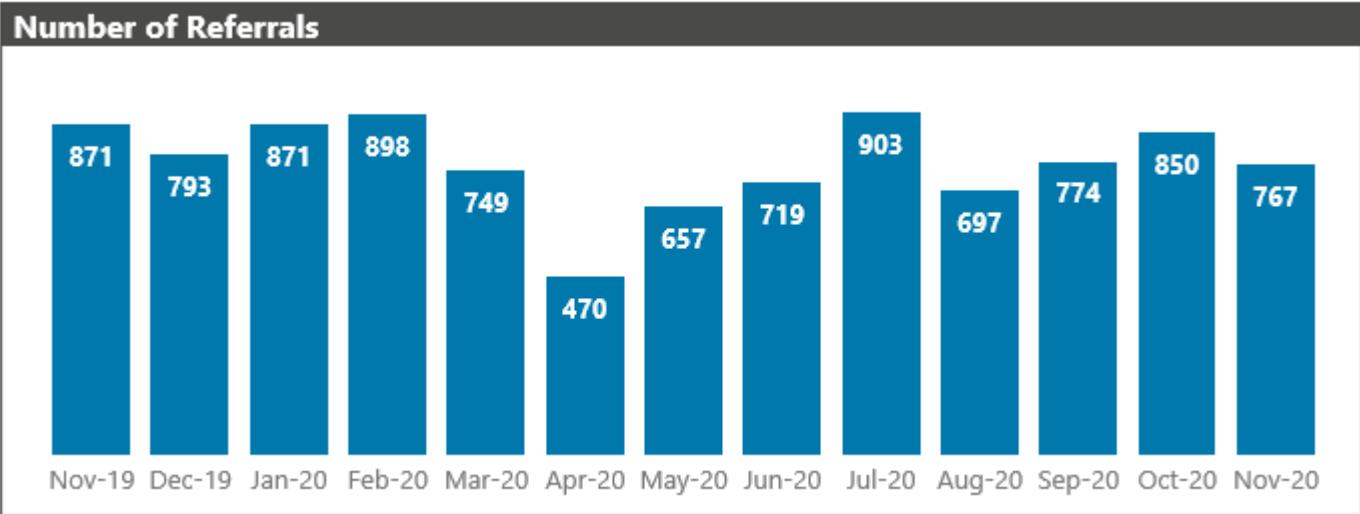
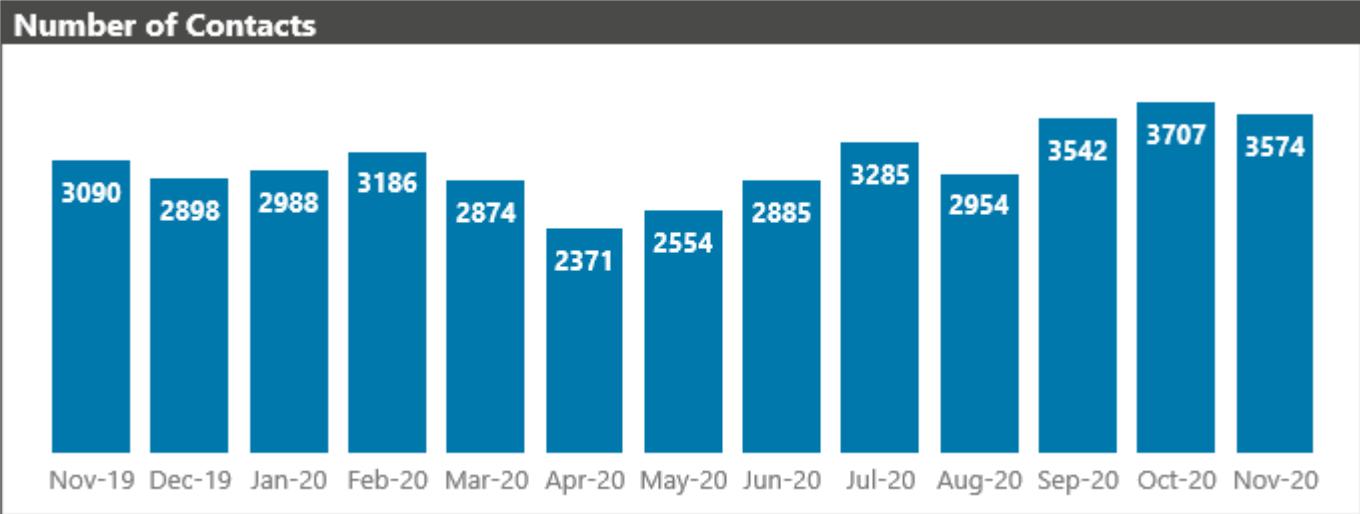
10th December 2020



Performance Summary October 2020

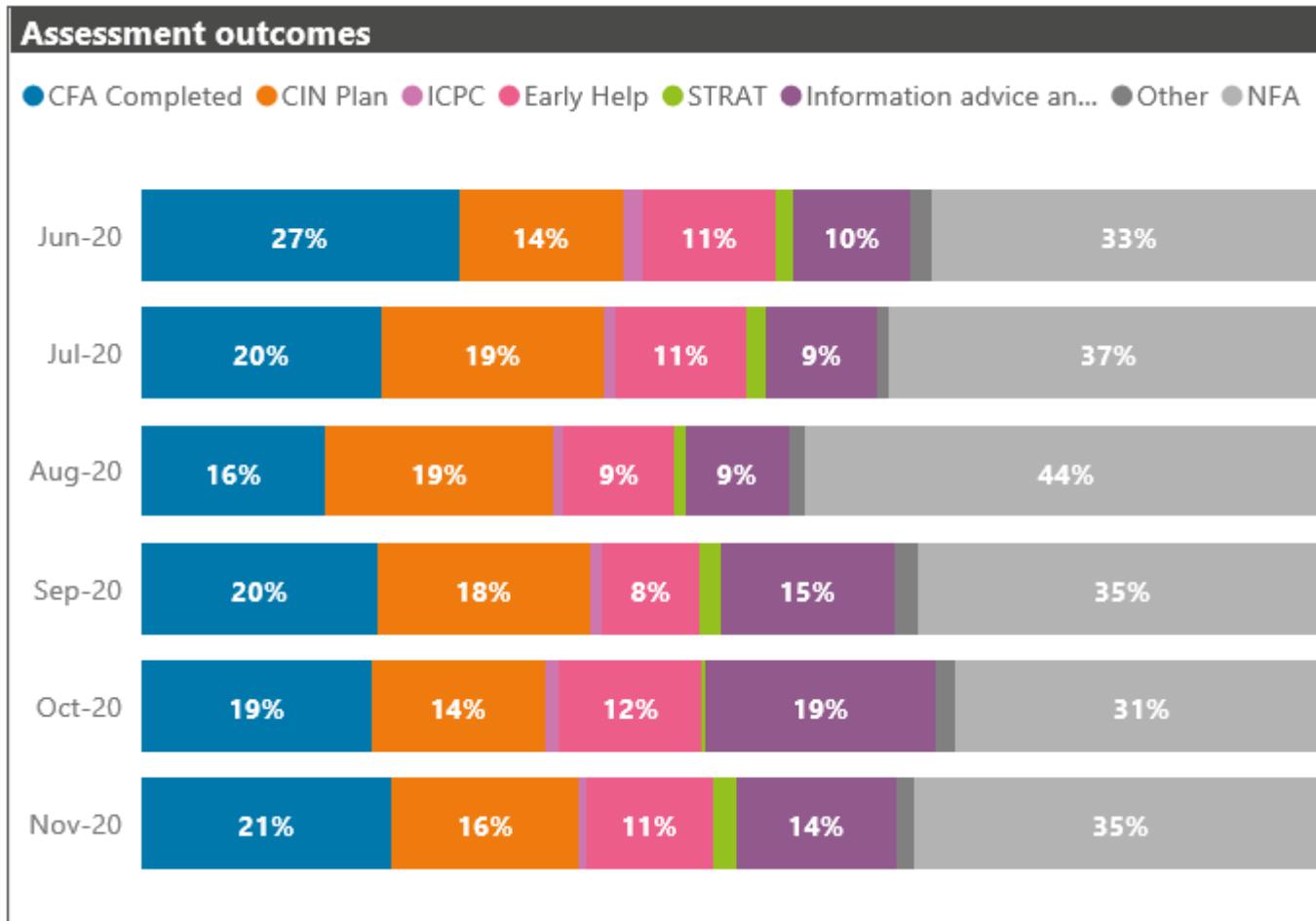
- Key Children's Social Care Summary
- Performance Board score card
- HCC Escalations

MASH Performance

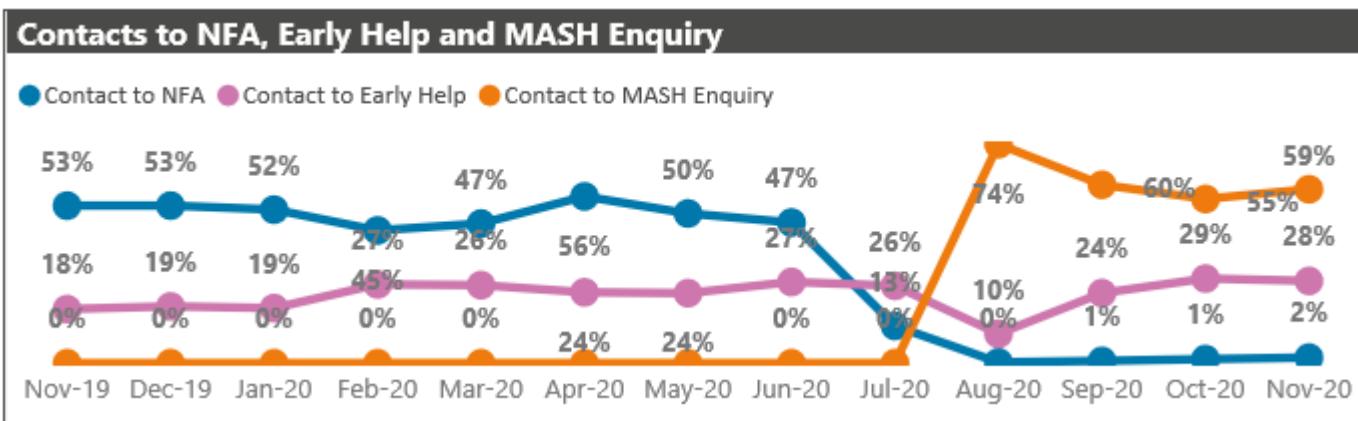


- A small reduction of contacts and referrals into MASH in Nov-20.
- Timeliness of Contacts and Referrals performance has been maintained with **95.8%** contacts completed in 3 days and **93.5%** referrals completed in 3 days.
- Re-Referrals has reduced further to **23.7%**.

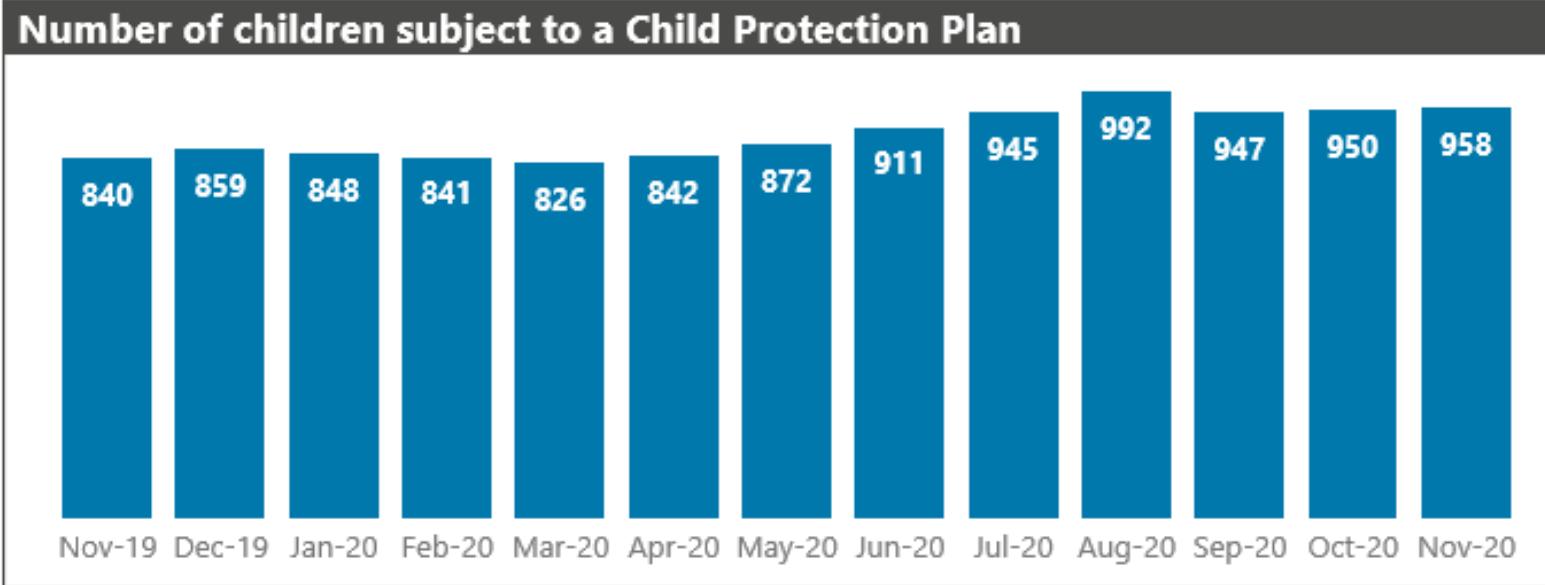
Step Down Performance



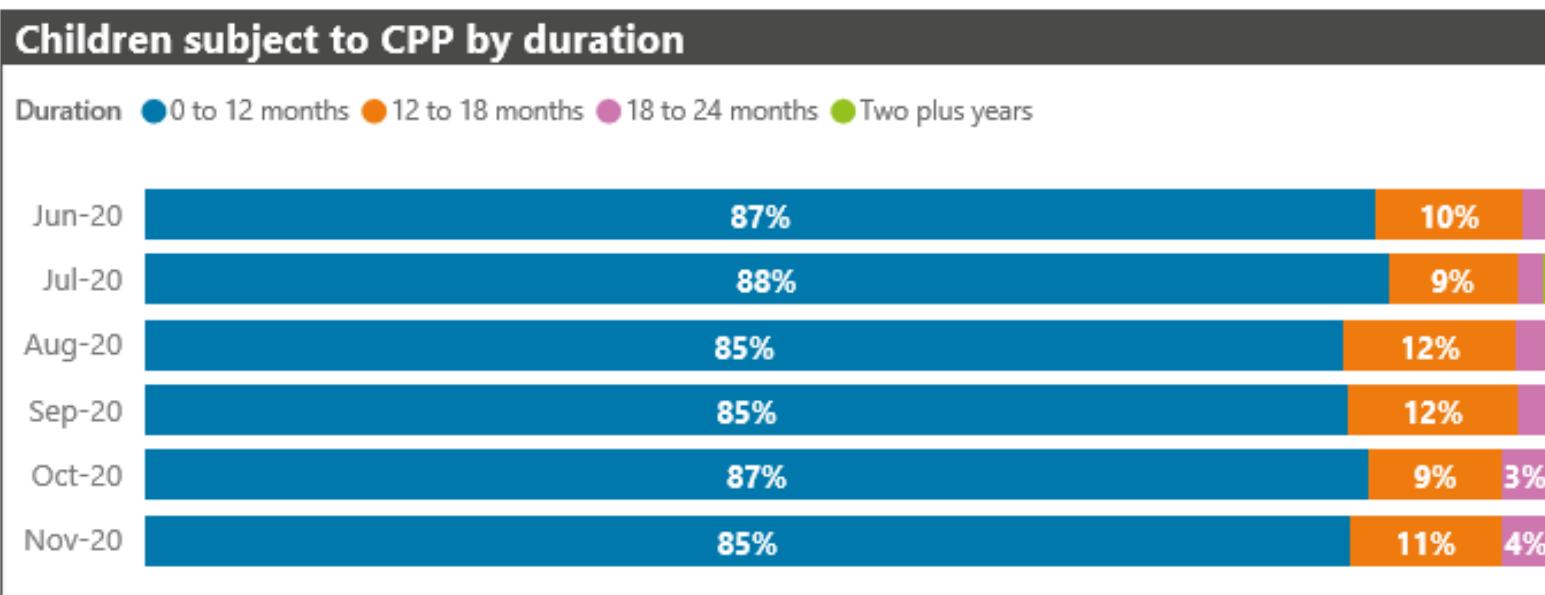
- **21%** (30 children) Step down from CIN Plan to Early Help in November 2020, which is an increase.
- Assessment to Early Help ranges between 8% and 12% in the last 6 months. In November **11%** of CFA went to Early Help (85 children).
- Contact to Early Help has remained similar in November with **28%** to Early Help.



Child Protection Performance

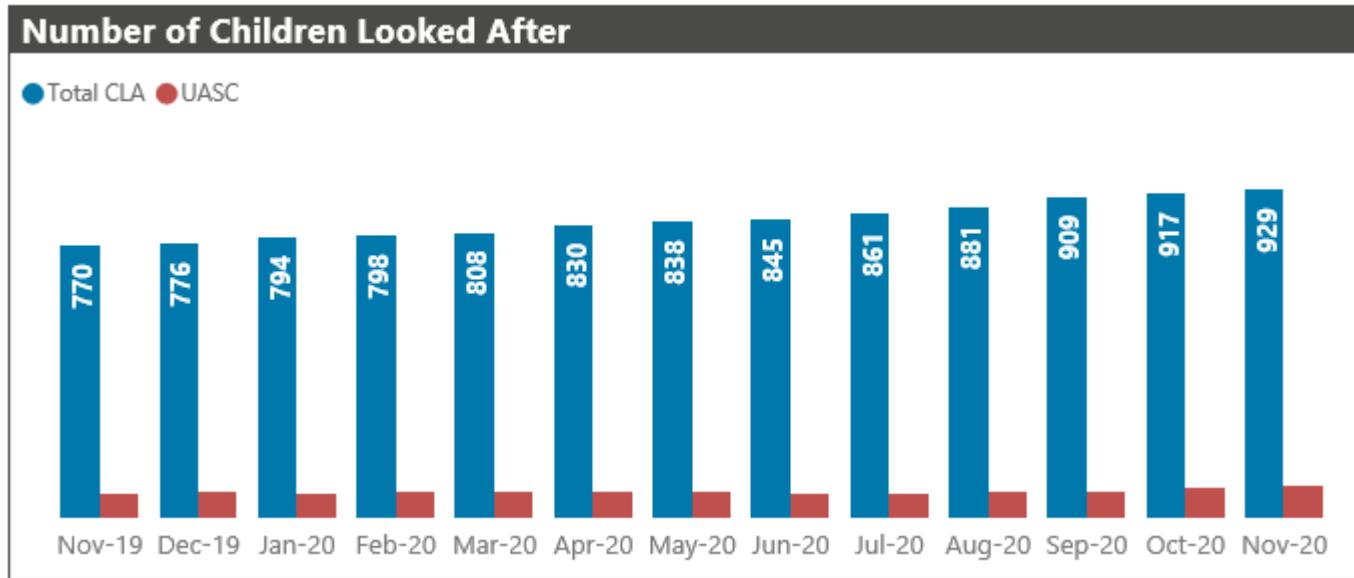


- Small increase in CP numbers in November 20.
- **3.6%** (34) of children on a plan for 18 months to 2 years.
- **0.42%** (4 children) for 2 years or more.

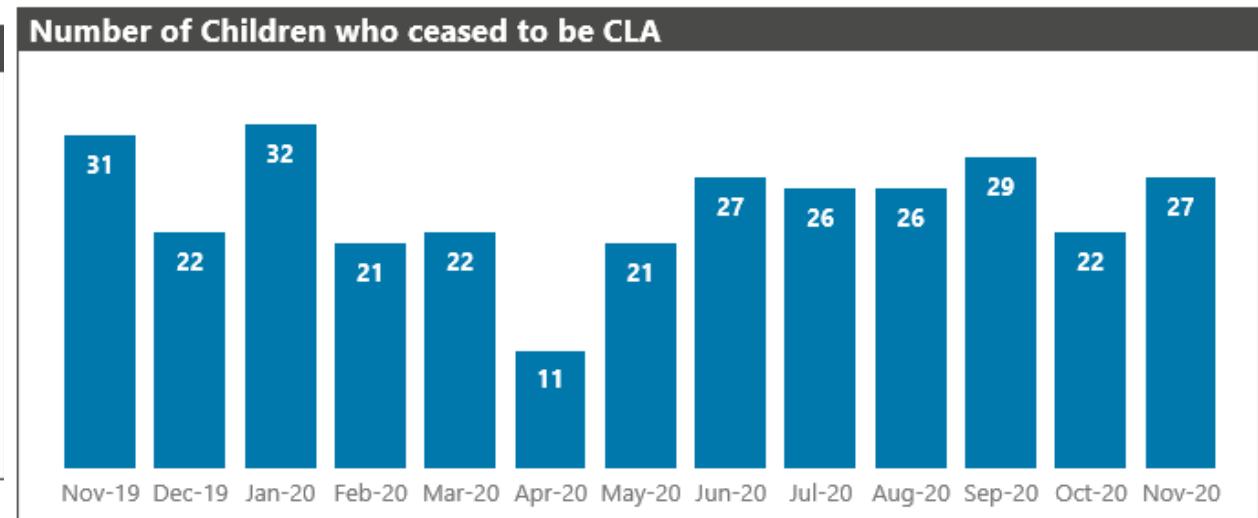
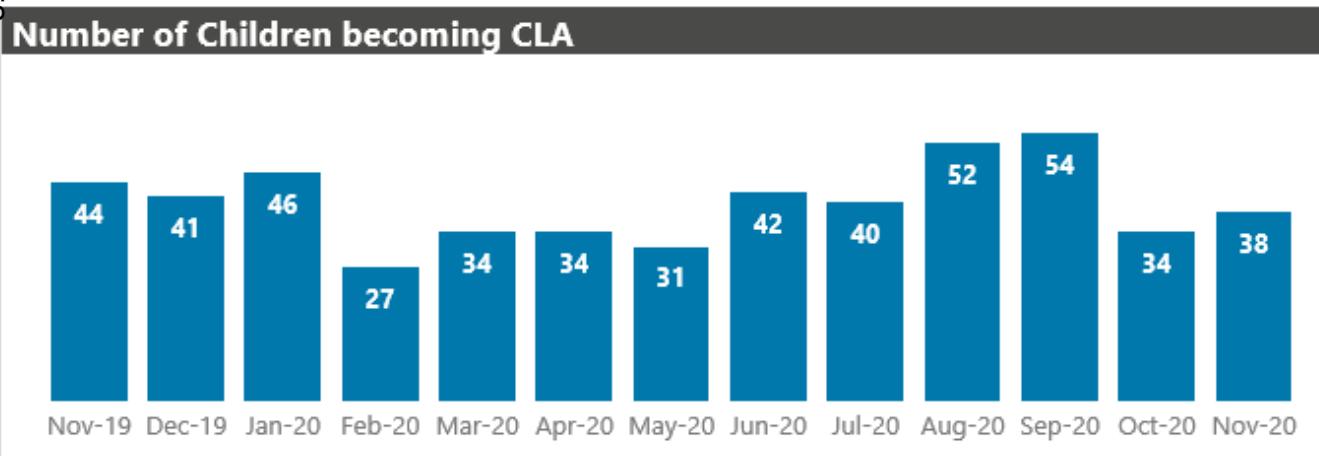


- 2 in FSP South
- 2 in FSP North
- CP Statutory visits 83.1%

Children Looked After



- Steady increase in Children Looked After numbers, with 929 at the end of Nov-20. Same as SN average of 52 per 10,000 as at 31st March 2019.
- An increase in numbers of new and ceasing CLA in Nov 20.
- CLA statutory visiting 91.8%



Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee

7 January 2021

West Sussex Reset Plan and Key Performance Indicators

Report by Chief Executive

Summary

The latest version of the West Sussex Reset Plan was presented to County Council in December 2020 for approval. The Plan has been developed through engagement with officers and partners building on the framework approved by County Council in July. The views and additional ideas of all members were sought at a session on 12 November 2020 and have been included within the latest version of the Plan.

The Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee in December 2020 was asked to consider the expectations and principles which should drive scrutiny of corporate performance and how scrutiny committees can be supported in that task and in their contribution to setting performance measures. The committee recommended some over-arching principles to be followed; that KPIs needed to be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely), include value for money type indicators to link to financial management, allow benchmarking information for comparison with key statistical neighbours and trend analysis to track progress.

During January each of the service scrutiny committees will focus attention on the priorities and outcomes specific to their area of council business and consider how scrutiny of performance may best be achieved in order to inform the proposals for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These measures will be included in the final plan which will be presented alongside the budget for approval at County Council in February 2021.

Focus for scrutiny

The Committee is asked to consider the draft Reset Plan (attached) in order to focus on the following areas for discussion:

- Are the priorities, outcomes, activities, KPIs and targets relevant to this Scrutiny Committee's remit?
- Do the proposed KPIs reflect the service priorities and enable Members to measure service performance and recognise issues or areas of concern in a timely manner?
- Do they deliver the overarching principles identified in relation to performance management; the KPIs are SMART, include VFM type indicators to link to financial management, allow benchmarking information so can compare with key statistical neighbours and trend analysis to track whether

the Council is improving or not?

- Do the Reset Plan KPI's support the service improvement journey?
- What support do you as scrutiny members need to assist you in scrutinising the outcomes of the Reset Plan?

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

1. Background and context

- 1.1 The background and context to this item for scrutiny are set out in the attached Appendix. As this is an internal overview report for the scrutiny committee the Equality, Human Rights, Social Value, Sustainability, and Crime and Disorder Reduction Assessments will be addressed as part of the overall Reset Plan and within individual projects and work streams.

Becky Shaw

Chief Executive

Contact Officer

Katherine De La Mora, Senior Advisor 0330 22 22535

Appendices

Appendix A: Key Performance Indicators by Portfolio

Appendix B: Draft West Sussex Reset Plan

Background Papers

None

Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee Work Programme June 2020 – March 2021

Topic/Issue	Purpose of scrutinising this issue & Source	Timing
CYPSSC – January 2021 – March 2021		
Children First Improvement Programme	Performance monitoring - To seek assurance and evidence that appropriate progress is being made on the children first improvement journey and outcomes are improving for children and families. Focus: To include outcome of Focussed Ofsted visit.	7 January 2021
Strategic Budget Savings	Pre Decision Scrutiny- to review any service-related strategic budget savings as part of the budget process.	7 January 2021
Early Help Redesign	Service Improvement – to assess and provide recommendations on the draft proposals for the redesign of early help.	7 January 2021
West Sussex Reset Plan and Key Performance Indicators	Performance Monitoring – to consider the draft reset plan and key performance indicators relevant to the portfolio area.	7 January 2021
Mental Health	Joint inquiry session with HASC and West Sussex Youth Cabinet. Performance Monitoring - To review emotional health and wellbeing support for children and young people. To include the Action Plan of the Sussex Wide Children and Young People Emotional Health and Wellbeing Report and the impact of Covid-19 on mental health of children and young people. Range of witnesses to be invited to provide evidence.	24 February 2021
Inclusion	A themed session in Inclusion To cover the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND and Inclusion Strategy • Alternative Provision • Exclusions – School Approach to inclusion • Attainment Gap due to Covid-19 	10 March 2021

Topic/Issue	Purpose of scrutinising this issue & Source	Timing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Needs Block deficit (impact of SEND and Inclusion strategy on this) Performance Monitoring - To review the County Council's approach to inclusion and how all children have equal rights to achieve their full potential. Committee to look at what is working well, how objectives are being met and identify any recommendations/areas for improvement/focus. 	
Children First Improvement Programme	Performance monitoring - To seek assurance and evidence that appropriate progress is being made on the children first improvement Journey and outcomes are improving for children and families. Focus: tbc	10 March 2021
CYPSSC –Confirmed items for timetabling		
Early Help Redesign	Pre Decision Scrutiny– to review the outcome of the public consultation and provide recommendations to Cabinet on the final proposals prior to a decision being taken.	Summer 2021
West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report	Performance Monitoring – to consider the successes and areas of improvement for the Partnership and to identify any areas for future scrutiny.	Summer 2021
Foster Service Review	Policy development/pre decision scrutiny – To review and provide recommendations on the proposals of the foster service review (recruitment and retention).	Spring 2021 – update to BPG on 22 February 2021.
Regional Adoption Agency	Service Improvement - To assess the impact of the Regional Adoption Agency (requested by BPG in February 2020 & SC in 2019) and scrutinise its first year of operation (established April 2020).	Summer 2021
Support for School Governors	Raised at CYPSSC on 14 April & 9 January- to identify any areas of improvement for the support, training and guidance provided to school governors and to consider recruitment and retention issues.	Summer 2021

Topic/Issue	Purpose of scrutinising this issue & Source	Timing
Visits to residential homes	To form part of a training day for CYPSSC members (originally scheduled for June 2020). Will be linked with above agenda item.	TBC post pandemic
Post-16 and NEETS	Performance Monitoring - To focus on the impact on young people on the changes to the services following the cessation of ECF funding in December 2020.	Update to BPG on 22 February 2021 to discuss appropriate timing.
Business Planning Group – items for BPG to consider for Scrutiny (including those raised by Committee Members under 'Items for Future Scrutiny').		
Attainment Gap for disadvantaged Children and Children Looked After	Performance Monitoring – to understand reasons for attainment gap and explore how this can be reduced, including Early Years. To include monitoring progress of disadvantaged children and Children Looked After. BPG to monitor impact of work being progressed and feedback from schools forum to identify any potential areas for future scrutiny.	BPG 22 February 2021 to receive update on progress and identify areas for future scrutiny.
School Funding	Pre decision scrutiny – to review the proposals for school funding for 2021/22 and provide recommendations to the Cabinet Member ahead of a decision being taken (decision due January 2021).	Confirmed no scrutiny required in January 2021 (will be removed from Work Programme).
High Cost Residential Placements and Residential Homes	Service Improvement – To review plans for post-16 residential placements and the re-opening of some children's residential homes. (requested by BPG in February 2020).	Chairman to liaise with Corporate Parenting Panel to assess if future scrutiny is required.
Elective Home Education	Performance Monitoring - Discussed at BPG in March 2020 – agreed to await government feedback/guidance on EHE before considering if further scrutiny is required. Impact of Covid-19 on EHE also to be considered.	TBC – will be explored at future BPG once further government guidance is available.
Adoption of the Children First Strategic Approach	Pre-decision scrutiny –to review the proposed Children's First Strategic	Briefing on work of new

Topic/Issue	Purpose of scrutinising this issue & Source	Timing
	Approach. Work is being progressed through the newly created Children Sub-Group that reports to HWB to develop a Children and Young People Plan.	Sub-Group to be provided at BPG on 22 Feb 2021
Adult Community Learning Curriculum	To review the current curriculum and performance. BPG on 23 November agreed to monitor this through contract monitoring item and identify any areas for future scrutiny as required.	Will be monitored by BPG through Contract Monitoring item.
Business Planning Group – to monitor		
Woodlands Meed	BPG to monitor progress and identify any areas for scrutiny as the project progresses	Ongoing
Total Performance Monitor	To review the latest performance monitor at each BPG and consider any areas that require scrutiny.	At each meeting
Work Programme Planning	To consider updates from the services and stakeholders and consider whether any issues should be subject to formal scrutiny by CYPSSC (when assessed against the BPG checklist).	At each meeting
Contract Monitoring	The BPG agreed to look at contract monitoring twice a year and identify any areas that may require further scrutiny.	Twice a year
Children and Young People Services Training (as requested by Committee)		
Children’s Safeguarding Partnership (focus on neglect)	Suggested as a full member day to inform members of the work of the Safeguarding Partnership with a focus on neglect (requested by CYPSSC 4 March 2020).	Complete: Virtual Member Day took place on 17 November 2020.
Exclusions and Alternative Provision	Suggested as a Member Day to inform members of the processes, roles and responsibilities, voice of child, quality assurance and members role with local residents requesting assistance.	Member day being explored with Member Development Group
School Federations	To look at how this is proceeding with schools and how it is assisting with the delivery of the school effectiveness strategy. BPG confirmed this would be more appropriate as a member day to inform all members (rather than scrutiny).	Member Development Group to be asked to consider as topic for future Member Day

Topic/Issue	Purpose of scrutinising this issue & Source	Timing
Completed CYPSSC Meetings		
Children First Improvement Programme	Performance monitoring - To seek assurance and evidence that appropriate progress is being made on the children first improvement journey and outcomes are improving for children and families. Focus: To include detail on preparation/outcome of OFSTED monitoring visit and detail on the stability of Social Care workforce (including plans to mitigate any impact of the cessation of the current recruitment and retention offer), and how this is impacting on the outcomes for children and families. There will also be details of the transformation programme.	24 September 2020
Report from Education and Skills Annual Report TFG	Performance monitoring - To review the output of the Education and Skills Annual Report TFG of July 2020 to monitor educational attainment (see below).	24 September 2020
Children First Improvement Programme	Performance monitoring - To seek assurance and evidence that appropriate progress is being made on the children first improvement Journey and outcomes are improving for children and families. Focus: tbc	5 November 2020
The Impact of Covid-19 on Schools and the Educational Outcomes of Children and Young People in West Sussex	Service Improvement - Assessing the impact of school/college closures on children and young people; measures to support the return to education and preparedness for any future emergencies. External Witnesses to be invited (DfE/RSC, School Governors etc)	5 November 2020
Completed Task & Finish Groups		
Education and Skills Annual Report	Performance Monitoring - To review the performance of West Sussex Children in academic year 2019-20 and progress towards achievement against targets in the WS Plan. The TFG will be invited to put forward any recommendations to the Cabinet Member and identify any priorities for further scrutiny.	Complete – met 8 July 2020

Topic/Issue	Purpose of scrutinising this issue & Source	Timing
Home to School Transport	Performance Monitoring - Suggested by PFSC as a cross cutting TFG to explore the service provided and contract. Scoping meeting took place on 1 October 2020. Agreed that a TFG is not required at this stage and the impact on Home to School Transport will be included in the SEND Strategy item scheduled to go to Committee.	Complete
Proposed Scope of Services for a Children's Trust	Pre-decision scrutiny. A one off TFG meeting on 9 October to review the proposals ahead of the decision being taken by Cabinet on 20 October.	Complete – met 9 October 2020



Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The County Council must give at least 28 days' notice of all key decisions to be taken by councillors 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 councillors in remote attendance. Public access will be via webcasting and the meetings will be available to watch 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:

Decision	A summary of the proposal.
Decision By	Who will take the decision - if the Cabinet, it will be taken at a Cabinet meeting in public.
West Sussex Plan priority	Which of the five priorities in the West Sussex Plan the proposal affects.
Date added	The date the proposed decision was added to the Forward Plan.
Month	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.
Consultation/ Representations	How views and representations about the proposal will be considered or the proposal scrutinised, including dates of Scrutiny Committee meetings.
Background Documents	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.
Author	The contact details of the decision report author
Contact	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.

Published: 17 December 2020

Forward Plan Summary

Summary of all forthcoming executive decisions in West Sussex Plan priority order

Decision Maker	Subject Matter	Date
Director of Property and Assets	Award of contract for construction of new school hall at Thorney Island Primary School	December 2020
Director of Property and Assets	Award of contract for installation of Modular Teaching Block at Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Special School, Horsham	December 2020
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	Procurement of a Dynamic Purchasing System for Independent Alternative Provision for children with SEND	December 2020
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	Expansion of Palatine Primary School, Worthing	December 2020
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	Replacement All Weather Pitch at Tanbridge House School, Horsham	January 2021
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	Provision of an All Weather Pitch at The Forest School, Horsham	January 2021
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	Slinfold CE Primary School - Funding for Replacement of Modular Teaching Accommodation	January 2021
Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning	Award of a contract for the provision of urgent care and support for children and young people	January 2021
Director of Education and Skills	Contract Extension for the Provision of Primary Phase School Meals	January 2021
Director of Education and Skills	Contract Extension for the Provision of Primary Phase School Meals to seven schools in the Horsham area	January 2021
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	Change of status for Forest Boys' School, Horsham - Capital Funding for Delivery of Phase One Works	January 2021
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	School Funding 2021/22	January 2021
Interim Director of Public Health	Healthy Child Programme Contract Extension	January 2021
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	Phase 2 Special Support Centre Programme - St Margaret's CE Primary School, Angmering - Allocation of Funding	February 2021
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	Phase 2 Special Support Centre Programme - West Park Primary School, Worthing - Allocation of Funding	February 2021
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	Expansion of Oak Grove College, Worthing	February 2021
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools in West Sussex from September 2022	February 2021
Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	Procurement of a Pseudo-Dynamic Purchasing System for Family and Community Support for Children and Young People with SEND	February 2021

Best Start in Life

Director of Property and Assets

Award of contract for construction of new school hall at Thorney Island Primary School

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.

In June 2020 the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills approved the allocation of capital funding from the Basic Need Capital Programme to enable the project to proceed and delegated authority to the Director of Property and Assets to award the contract for the works (Decision reference [ES01 \(20/21\)](#)).

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.

Decision by	Andrew Edwards - Director of Property and Assets
West Sussex Plan priority	Best Start in Life
Date added	27 April 2020
Month	December 2020
Consultation/ Representations	School 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.
Background Documents (via website)	Cabinet Member Decision Report ES01 (20/21)
Author	Liam Hayward Tel: 033 022 22002
Contact	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

Director of Property and Assets

Award of contract for installation of Modular Teaching Block at Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Special School, Horsham

Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee School (QEII School) in Horsham caters for a wide range of Special Educational Needs, for children aged between 2 and 19 with severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties or complex needs.

Agenda Item 9

Over recent years additional pupils have been accommodated by the school but without the supporting investment in accommodation. Pupil numbers have increased from 85 in 2017 to 105 in 2019.

In July 2020 the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills approved the allocation of capital funding from the Basic Need Capital Programme to expand the school and delegated authority to the Director of Property and Assets to award the contract for the works (Decision reference [ES02 \(20/21\)](#)). The building project will provide a three class modular teaching block with associated group room, hygiene provision, storage and external works.

The Director of Property and Assets will be asked to approve the award of contract for the expansion works at QEII school.

Decision by	Andrew Edwards - Director of Property and Assets
West Sussex Plan priority	Best Start in Life
Date added	3 August 2020
Month	December 2020
Consultation/ Representations	School Parents and local residents Parish and District Councils Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Director of Property and Assets via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.
Background Documents (via website)	Decision Report ES02 (20/21)
Author	Liam Hayward Tel: 033 022 22002
Contact	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Procurement of a Dynamic Purchasing System for Independent Alternative Provision for children with SEND

The County Council has a statutory obligation to provide suitable education for all pupils including those who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education; this is termed Alternative Provision

Currently the need for Alternative Provision is predominately for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and is commissioned on a case by case basis with Individual Placement Agreements (IPAs) ensuring that the provision meets the needs of the child/young person for each placement.

Whilst the County Council provides some of these services, the demand is such that a significant amount of provision has to be purchased from the external market and evaluation shows this is a trend expected to continue. In order to meet this demand, it

is proposed to set up a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) to enable the efficient sourcing of Independent Alternative Provision services from qualified suppliers.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills will be asked to approve the commencement of a procurement to set up a DPS to enable the purchase of Independent Alternative Provision services for children with SEND.

Decision by	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
West Sussex Plan priority	Best Start in LIfe
Date added	16 October 2020
Month	December 2020
Consultation/ Representations	<p>Consultation with the market – current and potential providers Legal Finance Procurement</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>
Background Documents (via website)	None
Author	Helen Johns Tel: 07715 616560
Contact	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Expansion of Palatine Primary School, Worthing

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.

Following a review of current numbers on roll, projected needs and the existing accommodation at Palatine Primary School in Worthing the need for additional 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.

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<p>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.</p>	
Decision by	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
West Sussex Plan priority	Best Start in Life
Date added	1 April 2020
Month	December 2020
Consultation/ Representations	<p>School, parents and local residents Parish and Borough 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>
Background Documents (via website)	None
Author	Leigh Hunnikin Tel: 033 022 23051
Contact	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

<p>Replacement All Weather Pitch at Tanbridge House School, Horsham</p>	
<p>As part of the secondary school curriculum, Physical Education is a core subject and suitable provision is required to enable a wide range of sport to be offered and ensure children are given the Best Start in Life.</p> <p>Tanbridge House School has an All Weather Pitch facility which is in a deteriorating condition and is now at the end of its life. The pitch requires replacement to ensure continued provision for sport.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills will be asked to approve the allocation of capital funding, from Section 106 contributions, to undertake a project to replace the All Weather Pitch at Tanbridge House School, thereby ensuring ongoing sports provision to meet the needs of the secondary school curriculum.</p>	
Decision by	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
West Sussex Plan priority	Best Start in Life
Date added	3 August 2020
Month	January 2021

Consultation/ Representations	School Parents and local residents Parish and District Councils Cabinet Member for Finance 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
Background Documents (via website)	
Author	Leigh Hunnikin Tel: 033 022 23051
Contact	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Provision of an All Weather Pitch at The Forest School, Horsham	
<p>As part of the secondary school curriculum, Physical Education is a core subject and suitable provision is required to enable a wide range of sport to be offered and ensure children are given the Best Start in Life.</p> <p>The Forest School does not currently have an All Weather Pitch (AWP) facility. Following the Cabinet Member Decision in July 2020 (Decision reference ES02(20/21)) that approved the siting of additional accommodation for QEII School on some of the existing playing field at The Forest School installation of an AWP is now required to mitigate the impact.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills will be asked to approve the allocation of capital funding from Section 106 contributions to undertake a project to provide an All Weather Pitch at The Forest School thereby ensuring ongoing sports provision to meet the needs of the secondary school curriculum.</p>	
Decision by	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
West Sussex Plan priority	Best Start in Life
Date added	3 August 2020
Month	January 2021
Consultation/ Representations	School Parents and local residents Parish and District Councils Cabinet Member for Finance 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.

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Background Documents (via website)	Cabinet Member Decision ES02 (20/21)
Author	Leigh Hunnikin Tel: 033 022 23051
Contact	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Slinfold CE Primary School - Funding for Replacement of Modular Teaching Accommodation	
<p>The County Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient primary and secondary school places for all children who need a place. Slinfold CE Primary School is a 5 class Primary School with a broad range of buildings including a double modular unit which was installed on the site in excess of 30 years ago. The modular unit has significant suitability issues and requires replacement with new teaching accommodation that meets current required standards for construction.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills will be asked to approve the allocation of capital funding from Section 106 contributions and a procurement exercise to undertake a project to replace the modular classrooms with new purpose built classrooms.</p>	
Decision by	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
West Sussex Plan priority	Best Start in Life
Date added	8 July 2020
Month	January 2021
Consultation/ Representations	<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>
Background Documents (via website)	None
Author	Leigh Hunnikin Tel: 033 022 23051
Contact	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning

Award of a contract for the provision of urgent care and support for children and young people	
<p>The Council has a statutory duty to safeguard children and young people under the Children Act and to ensure sufficient and appropriate accommodation for looked after children.</p>	

A contract is required to provide 24-hour care packages to support children and young people with significant and complex needs. These packages must be put in place very quickly because of the urgency of each situation. These children are in acute distress and require highly specialist care and support from experienced and trained staff. It is also essential that these children are accommodated in placements based within West Sussex to ensure the right wraparound support services can be provided, in particular services to support social, mental and emotional health and wellbeing, and that the care plan can be effectively managed by Council social care teams.

Due to the limited market of providers able to offer this type of care package, a contract will be sought through a single tender process.

The Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning will be asked to award a contract for the provision of urgent care and support to children and young people with significant and complex needs.

Decision by	Lucy Butler - Executive Director Children, Young People and Learning
West Sussex Plan priority	Best Start in Life
Date added	1 December 2020
Month	January 2021
Consultation/ Representations	Representations concerning this proposed decision can 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
Background Documents (via website)	None
Author	Thomas Strivens Tel: 033 022 22082
Contact	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

Director of Education and Skills

Contract Extension for the Provision of Primary Phase School Meals

The Council's main contract for the provision of Primary Phase school meals is delivered by Chartwells, who currently provide a service to a total of 194 schools. The contract was let on a 5-year term, commencing 31 July 2016, with the option for a period of up to 5 years extension. The meals provided through the contract include Free School Meals (FSM), Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM), and parent paid Key Stage two (KS2) meals.

The initial contract term ends 31 July 2021; taking up the extension will allow the County Council to continue building upon the contract's success including the nationally recognised Eat Right Stay Bright (ERSB) healthy food added value schools engagement programme.

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The Director of Education and Skills will be asked to approve the extension of the contract for up to a period of a further 5 years to 31 July 2026.	
Decision by	Paul Wagstaff - Director of Education and Skills
West Sussex Plan priority	Best Start in Life
Date added	2 November 2020
Month	January 2021
Consultation/ Representations	Schools Procurement Legal and Finance Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Director of Education and Skills, via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.
Background Documents (via website)	Cabinet Member decision ES01(15/16) to procure the contract
Author	John Figgins Tel: 033 02222814
Contact	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

Director of Education and Skills

Contract Extension for the Provision of Primary Phase School Meals to seven schools in the Horsham area	
<p>The Council has a contract with the Easy Lunch Company for the provision of Primary Phase school meals to 7 schools in the Horsham area. The contract was let on a 4-year term, commencing 31 July 2017, with the option for a period of up to 5 years extension. The meals provided through the contract include Free School Meals (FSM), Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM), and parent paid Key Stage two (KS2) meals.</p> <p>Easy Lunch offer these 7 schools a specialised Delivered in Hot food service (DIH) These schools do not have their own kitchens and therefore are not able to cook meals on site.</p> <p>The initial contract term ends 31 July 2021. Taking up the extension will allow the County Council to continue building upon the contracts success including increasing meal choices for the children and supporting schools with lunch provision.</p> <p>The Director of Education and Skills will be asked to approve the extension of the contract for up to a period of a further 5 years to 31 July 2026.</p>	
Decision by	Paul Wagstaff - Director of Education and Skills
West Sussex Plan priority	Best Start in Life
Date added	2 November 2020
Month	January 2021

Consultation/ Representations	Schools Procurement Legal and Finance Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Director of Education and Skills, via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken
Background Documents (via website)	Cabinet Member Decision ES08(16/17) to procure the contract
Author	John Figgins Tel: 033 02222814
Contact	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Change of status for Forest Boys' School, Horsham - Capital Funding for Delivery of Phase One Works	
<p>In October 2020, following a public consultation, the proposal to alter Forest Boys' School, Horsham to a co-educational school from September 2021 entry was confirmed (Decision Reference ES08(20/21)).</p> <p>The County Council's Multi-Disciplinary Consultant (MDC) were appointed to undertake a study of the site and accommodation to identify the capital investment required to enable the school to welcome girls in September 2021. The design work is ongoing and 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 first phase of the project to proceed.</p>	
Decision by	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
West Sussex Plan priority	Best Start in Life
Date added	1 December 2020
Month	January 2021
Consultation/ Representations	School Governing Body Cabinet Member for Finance 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.
Background Documents (via website)	Cabinet Member Decision Report ES08(20/21)
Author	Leigh Hunnikin Tel: 033 022 23051
Contact	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

School Funding 2021/22	
<p>West Sussex County Council is required, under national funding regulations, to consult schools and the Schools Forum on proposed changes to funding arrangements affecting mainstream school budgets. The School Funding Review 2021/22 consultation document detailing the proposed changes was published on 21st October 2020.</p> <p>To help fund the DSG deficit a proposal to transfer £2.5m of funding from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools block to the DSG High Needs Block has also been included as part of the schools funding consultation. Under the funding regulations, any transfer between blocks is a decision that is taken by Schools Forum, although the County Council can seek to overturn this by applying to the Secretary of State for Education through a disapplication request.</p> <p>Responses to the consultation and feedback from Schools Forum will be taken into account in the development of the local funding formula for mainstream schools in 2021/22. Following consideration of these responses and the feedback from Schools Forum the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills will be asked to approve the changes to school funding arrangements.</p>	
Decision by	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
West Sussex Plan priority	Best Start in LIfe
Date added	13 November 2020
Month	January 2021
Consultation/ Representations	<p>Schools Schools Forum – 26 November 2020</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>
Background Documents (via website)	Consultation Document
Author	Andy Thorne Tel: 03302223349
Contact	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

Interim Director of Public Health

Healthy Child Programme Contract Extension
<p>The Health and Social Care Act 2012 sets out the statutory responsibility for West Sussex County Council to deliver and commission public health services for children and young people aged 5-19 years. On 1 October, 2015 the Council became responsible for statutory children’s public health services. West Sussex County Council, Public Health, currently commission the Healthy Child Programme with Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust (SCFT). This is a national programme delivering pre-school and school</p>

age services by Health visitors and School nurses to deliver Public Health outcomes (0-19 years of age, 25 years of age for Young People with Special Educational Needs).

The contract is 5 years plus an option to extend for a further period of up to 2 years (5-year contract expires March 2022). On 20 July 2020 the WSCC Public Health Board recommended an extension of one year plus one year. The original publication online in Official Journal of the European Union – (OJEU) and contract contained the extension period which the Council now wishes to exercise.

West Sussex County Council's Commercial Panel met on 6, November 2020 and endorsed the recommendation of an initial one-year extension 2022/2023. The Interim Director, Public Health will be asked to approve the initial one year contract extension 2022/2023.

Decision by	Tony Hill - Interim Director of Public Health
West Sussex Plan priority	Best Start In Life
Date added	4 December 2020
Month	January 2021
Consultation/ Representations	Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Interim Director Public Health via the officer contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.
Background Documents (via website)	None
Author	Fiona Mackison Tel: 0330 22 27049
Contact	Erica Keegan Tel: 033 022 26050

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Phase 2 Special Support Centre Programme - St Margaret's CE Primary School, Angmering - Allocation of Funding

There is a need to increase provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) through the creation of additional places in Specialist Support Centres that are attached to mainstream schools and academies. This will assist with the aim of enabling children to attend school locally.

In December 2019 Cabinet approved the proposal to develop Phase two of the project for opening additional Special Support Centres in accordance with capital governance processes (decision reference [CAB03\(19/20\)](#)). In October 2020 the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills approved the allocation of design fees to progress 6 of the Special Support Centres including St Margaret's CE Primary School ([Decision reference ES09 \(20/21\)](#))

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Since that approval further design work has been undertaken and costed in relation to the Special Support Centre at St Margaret's CE Primary School.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills will be asked to approve the allocation of capital funding from the Capital Programme to enable the project to create a Special Support Centre at St Margaret's CE Primary School to proceed.

Decision by	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
West Sussex Plan priority	Best Start in Life
Date added	1 December 2020
Month	February 2021
Consultation/ Representations	Cabinet Member for Finance 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
Background Documents (via website)	Cabinet Member Decision ES09(20/21)
Author	Leigh Hunnikin Tel: 033 022 23051
Contact	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Phase 2 Special Support Centre Programme - West Park Primary School, Worthing - Allocation of Funding

There is a need to increase provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) through the creation of additional places in Specialist Support Centres that are attached to mainstream schools and academies. This will assist with the aim of enabling children to attend school locally.

In December 2019 Cabinet approved the proposal to develop Phase two of the project for opening additional Special Support Centres in accordance with capital governance processes (decision reference [CAB03\(19/20\)](#)). In October 2020 the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills approved the allocation of design fees to progress 6 of the Special Support Centres including West Park Primary School ([Decision reference ES09 \(20/21\)](#))

Since that approval further design work has been undertaken and costed in relation to the Special Support Centre at West Park Primary School in Worthing.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills will be asked to approve the allocation of capital funding from the Capital Programme to enable the project to create a Special Support Centre at West Park Primary School proceed.

Decision by	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
West Sussex Plan priority	Best Start in Life

Date added	1 December 2020
Month	February 2021
Consultation/ Representations	Cabinet Member for Finance 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
Background Documents (via website)	Cabinet Member Decision ES09(20/21)
Author	Leigh Hunnikin Tel: 033 022 23051
Contact	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Expansion of Oak Grove College, Worthing	
<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.</p> <p>Following a review of current numbers on roll, projected needs and the existing accommodation at Oak Grove College in Worthing the need for additional accommodation has been identified, to enable an increase in planned places from 256 in September 2020 to 271 in September 2021. The school caters for a wide range of Special Educational Needs and Disability for pupils aged between 11 and 19, including children with moderate and severe learning difficulties, complex social and communication difficulties and profound and multiple learning difficulties.</p> <p>The additional physical space created through this work will enable Oak Grove College to accommodate the most complex young people with SEND transferring from neighbouring special schools. Whilst numbers transferring this year are high the profile of need is also complex requiring additional adult support to meet needs.</p> <p>The feasibility work for the project to accommodate the pupils has been commissioned. 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>	
Decision by	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
West Sussex Plan priority	Best Start in Life
Date added	17 December 2020
Month	February 2021

Consultation/ Representations	Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources 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
Background Documents (via website)	None
Author	Leigh Hunnikin Tel: 033 022 23051
Contact	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Admission Arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools in West Sussex from September 2022	
<p>The County Council has a statutory duty to set the School admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools in West Sussex and to publish a National scheme of coordination for all schools. The scheme of coordination is in place to ensure that in instances where parents put schools located in two different local authority areas on the preference list of their admission application, appropriate arrangements between the authorities exist to ensure that parents receive only one offer of a school place.</p> <p>A number of changes are proposed to the current admission arrangements for schools in the Chichester, Horsham and Mid Sussex areas and a public consultation will be carried out during December 2020 and January 2021 to seek views on the proposed changes.</p> <p>Following assessment of the outcome of the consultation the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills will be asked to endorse the proposed admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools in West Sussex and the changes on behalf of the academy trust for Portfield Academy, Chichester, for the academic year commencing September 2022 and approve the coordinated scheme of admissions.</p>	
Decision by	Cllr N Jupp - Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
West Sussex Plan priority	Best Start in Life
Date added	4 December 2020
Month	February 2021
Consultation/ Representations	<p>Parents School staff and governors Own admission authority schools Diocesan Authorities Neighbouring Local Authorities. District and Borough Councils Parish Councils</p> <p>Representations concerning this proposed decision can be made to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills via the officer</p>

	contact, by the beginning of the month in which the decision is due to be taken.
Background Documents (via website)	Consultation Document
Author	Ellie Evans Tel: 033022023582
Contact	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Procurement of a Pseudo-Dynamic Purchasing System for Family and Community Support for Children and Young People with SEND	
<p>The Council has a statutory duty to provide a range of services which is sufficient to assist carers of disabled children and young people with complex needs, to continue to provide care or to do so more effectively. Where these needs impact significantly on daily life, it can be necessary to commission specialist support and care provision.</p> <p>The demand is such that a significant amount of provision has to be purchased from the external market and evaluation shows this is a trend expected to continue. In order to meet this demand, it is proposed to set up a Pseudo-Dynamic Purchasing System (P-DPS) to enable the efficient sourcing of specialist support services from qualified suppliers.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People will be asked to approve the commencement of a procurement to set up a P-DPS to enable the purchase of family and community support services for children and young people with SEND.</p>	
Decision by	Cllr Russell - Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
West Sussex Plan priority	Best Start in Life
Date added	17 December 2020
Month	February 2021
Consultation/ Representations	<p>Consulting with the market – current and potential providers, Legal Finance Procurement</p> <p>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.</p>
Background Documents (via website)	None
Author	Philip Slater Tel: 03302 223766
Contact	Wendy Saunders Tel: 033 022 22553

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