



**TRAFFORD
COUNCIL**

**AGENDA PAPERS MARKED 'TO FOLLOW' FOR
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date: Wednesday, 9 February 2022

Time: 6.30 p.m.

Place: Virtual Meeting held on Zoom

A G E N D A	P A R T I	Pages
5. PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD		1 - 10
To receive a report from the Corporate Director of Children's Services.		
6. YOUTH PROVISION		11 - 26
To receive a report from the Corporate Director of Children's Services.		
7. OFSTED IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE		27 - 80
To receive and update from the Corporate Director of Children's Services.		

SARA TODD
Chief Executive

Membership of the Committee

Councillors D. Western (Chair), Mrs. P. Young (Vice-Chair), J. Bennett, Miss L. Blackburn, T. Carey, J. Dillon, S. J. Haughey, S. Longden, S. Maitland, A. New, A.M. Whyte and D. Acton (ex-Officio).

Further Information

For help, advice and information about this meeting please contact:

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This agenda was issued on **Tuesday, 1st February 2022** by the Legal and Democratic Services Section, Trafford Council, Trafford Town Hall; Talbot Road, Stretford, Manchester, M32 0TH.

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TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee
Date: February 2021
Report for: Information
Report of: Director of Education, Standards, Performance and Quality Assurance

Report Title

SEND Preparing for Adulthood (PfA)

Summary

Following a previous report in January 2020 which referenced the Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) Protocol, an update has been provided with regard to its implementation and planned next steps.

Recommendation(s)

That the contents of the report are noted.

Contact person(s) for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Karen Samples: Director of Education, Standards, Quality and Performance
Sally Smith: Head of Inclusion
Jacqueline Coulton: Chief Nurse
Colin Reynolds: Service Manager for Complex Needs Team Adults/Community Learning Disability Team

1. Introduction: Trafford's Local Area SEND Ambitions

Following a SEND Visioning Day held in partnership with Trafford Parent/Carers Forum, the vision and priorities were agreed. In essence, our ambitions are quite simply focused on ensuring our children/young people and their families get the right support from all partners so that they achieve well and are happy and safe. These are:

1. To promote co-production at the heart of professional practice so that the voice of children, young people and their families is at the heart of all we do.
2. Build stakeholder confidence by delivering timely information, advice and support and a high quality statutory assessment process which meets timescales and ensures that children and young people with SEND, and their parents and carers, are considered at every stage of the process.
3. Develop the quality and capacity of early years providers, schools and colleges to meet the needs of local families and their children with SEND.

4. Deliver greater local integration and co-ordination of education, health and social care services and plans for children and families to promote positive and seamless transitions at all stages between the ages of 0-25 years.

5. Develop outcome-focused approaches to joint commissioning and integrated working to promote early identification and intervention.

6. Maintain strong outcomes for Trafford SEND pupils, so that they achieve outcomes which are above national expectations for similar pupils and where possible, prevent school exclusions.

We are also committed to ensure the voice of the child is the golden thread running through each and every one of the ambitions so that our young people feel that they have helped to shape and influence the Trafford SEND experience. These ambitions were tested throughout the recent Peer Challenge process to ensure they were the right priorities for the Local Area and could be updated on the basis of the findings of the review.

Trafford are steadfast to the expectations in the SEND Code of practice 0-25yrs as we know being supported towards greater independence and employability can be life-transforming for children and young people with SEND.

The SEND Code of Practice states 'This support needs to start early, and should centre around the child or young person's own aspirations, interests and needs. All professionals working with them should share high aspirations and have a good understanding of what support is effective in enabling children and young people to achieve their ambitions'. Trafford's PfA protocol and the work lead by the PfA Board aim to put this into practice.

Preparing for adulthood means preparing for:

- Higher education and/or employment – this includes exploring different employment options, such as support for becoming self-employed and help from supported employment agencies
- Independent living – this means young people having choice, control and freedom over their lives and the support they have, their accommodation and living arrangements, including supported living
- Participating in society, including having friends and supportive relationships, and participating in, and contributing to, the local community
- Being as healthy as possible in adult life and strategic planning for the best outcomes in adult life

We recognise as an LA we must work with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to place children, young people and families at the centre of our planning, and work with them to develop co-ordinated approaches to securing better outcomes.

2. Trafford Preparing for Adulthood Protocol

'High aspirations are crucial to success – discussions about longer term goals should start early and ideally well before Year 9 (age 13-14) at school. They should focus on the child or young person's strengths and capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve'

(SEND Code of Practice 0-25yrs, 2015). In Trafford we have introduced PfA outcomes into EHCPs from Y6 onwards. We share the national PfA guidance with all schools starting with the [PfA outcomes across the age ranges for CYP with SEND](#) and plan to continue to embed this practice over the next year.

Trafford's revised Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) protocol sets out the local area's commitment to supporting those young people who may have the need for additional care and support in adulthood. It reflects Trafford's approach to multi-agency practice across the areas of Education Health and Social Care and describes how all the agencies will fulfil their duties and responsibilities under current legislation and guidance relating to transition. The PfA protocol lays out arrangements for an embedded PfA database within Liquid Logic that allows the local authority and partner agencies to track individual young people through their PfA journey or to recognise them as cohorts along a Complex Needs pathway, Neighbourhood Pathway and Independence Pathway.

The PfA webpage continues to be developed and acts as a young person's / parents and professional portal to all things PfA. The website is designed to reflect the four PfA outcomes and will provide all the necessary information to allow families and professionals navigate this complex landscape. It does this by providing information and links to both internal and external agencies.

[Preparing for Adulthood | Trafford Directory](#)

3. The PfA Journey for Young People

This pathway outlines the steps to support young people transferring from children's to adults services, however we accept these are not yet firmly embedded and this is being addressed through the ambition plan.

Year 9 (Age 13-14)

What changes for a young person

- The young person begins the Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) pathway aspect of their EHCP.
- The young person's EHC Plan will have outcomes related to education, work and independent living
- The young person will be placed on the SEND Monitoring Group database who will allocate the young person to the required PfA Pathway or request further information.
- The EHCP workspace for the young person will be made available to adult health and social care services.
- All health services involved with a young person with an EHCP will review outcomes for PfA

Year 10 (Age 14-15)

What changes for a young person

- Between the ages of 15 and 17 years, the young person's EHC Plan will be adapted to reflect their changing needs as they make their journey into adulthood, with all agencies contributing to the Education, Health and Care plan.

Year 11 (Age 15-16)

What changes for a young person

This is a key decision making year for many young people.

- Young people are supported to make decisions regarding their post 16 education

- The Educational psychologist assessment is updated if not recent.
- A multi-agency PfA annual review of the EHCP is undertaken. For those children with Complex needs an indicative care act assessment is completed which, when read alongside the EHC Plan, supports adult services in their decision making of when they will become involved for the Care Act assessment.
- Community services managing conditions such as asthma or epilepsy will hand over the case management to the young person's GP. Health and wellbeing post 16 is supported by the school nursing service.
- If young people have capacity then they can manage their own direct payments

Year 12 (Age 16-17)

What changes for a young person

- The young person is presumed by the Children and families Act (2014) to be competent to make their own decisions in regard to their health, care and education.
- Some young people will start college or engage in training. This will continue for 2 years for young people in mainstream schools (until 18) or 3 years for specialist schools.
- There may be work experience opportunities depending on course / institution.
- Preparations are made for any developmental therapy interventions (speech and language / physiotherapy) to be delivered through the GP.
- Plans are made for young people to transfer from children services to adult services if eligible

Year 13 (17-18)

What changes for a young person

- Legal childhood ends and a young person is legally considered an adult when 18
- Young people may begin to receive state benefits in their own name.
- Indicative Care Act assessments are completed on all children on the Complex Needs Pathway. That assessment is used by the Complex Needs team, in conjunction with the EHCP, to determine timeliness of allocation and Care Act assessment.
- EHC Plans are not continued into Higher Education but the LA should ensure a smooth transition before ceasing the plan.
- Preparations are completed for therapy services to end and for young person's health and therapeutic needs to be met through the GP.
- Healthy Young minds involvement ends and young people's support is delivered through voluntary or community groups. For young people with eligible mental health needs, the care will be delivered through adult mental health services.
- Care is delivered through Neighbourhood / Complex Needs Adult Social Care teams or Cheshire Wirral Partnership for eligible adults.

4. PfA Pathways

Each young person has an individual PfA form which describes the actions needed by agencies to meet the PfA outcomes. This creates the linkage between the Education, Health and Care Plan with the action planning of other agencies.

The monitoring of compliance and the gathering of intelligence is the remit of the PfA Monitoring groups. A PfA monitoring group (complex needs) has been established and meets bi-monthly. The purpose of this group is to gather assurance that the protocol is being implemented effectively and to monitor the cohorts of young people as they move through to accessing appropriate adult services in line with the new pathway model.

The multi-agency pathway groups are responsible for the monthly review of cases on a rolling basis, setting of actions in line with the PfA outcomes and ensuring the database is updated. These groups are multi agency and include representation from education, health and social care.

a. PfA Independence Pathway

The Independence Pathway is for young people with an EHCP but are unlikely to need care and support into adulthood. This is determined by the Care Act screening tool undertaken following Year 9 and, if necessary confirmed by the Care Act Indicative Assessment following Year 11. If the Care Act screening tool indicates that the young person is unlikely to be eligible for adult social care services (eg: they have needs based on circumstances rather than arising from or are related to a physical or mental impairment or illness) then involvement from adult social care services may be limited and the Preparing for Adulthood EHC plan needs to be focused on the young person's education, employment, independent living, community inclusion and health and include advice and guidance. If specialist advice and guidance is required a referral into Adult Social Care will be required.

b. Neighbourhood Pathway

This Pathway is for young people who are likely to need care and support into adulthood and those interventions will be delivered through the All Age Neighbourhood Teams. This will be determined by the Care Act screening tool at year 9 and confirmed by the Indicative Care Act assessment completed at year 11. This support may be delivered by exploration of a person's individual and community assets from an Adult Social Care perspective or by adult health services. This would be dependent on individual transition protocols and eligibility criteria for each service. It is likely that the young person's future needs for care and support arise from or are related to a physical or mental impairment or illness and are not caused by other circumstantial factors.

Young people on the PfA **Independence Enhanced Pathway** are likely to have multi agency reviewing processes either social care as Looked After Child or Child in Need or health due to social, emotional and mental health issues. It is likely their future needs for care and support arise from or are related to a physical or mental impairment or illness and are not caused by other circumstantial factors. They are likely to need specialist support in adulthood due to; autism, mental health issues, or learning disabilities meaning they may require care and support into adulthood.

c. Complex Needs Pathway

This pathway is for young people who are likely to need care and support into adulthood and those services will be delivered through the Complex Needs (adult social care and health) Team. That support may be delivered by either or both adult social care or adult health services subject to the individual transition protocols and eligibility criteria for each service.

5. The findings of the Peer Challenge regarding Preparing for Adulthood

- **Communicate clearly with children and families describing the provision and transition support available to them 0-25+**
- **Develop an employability pathway for those with less obvious needs and those with high functioning ASC where traditional supported internships are not appropriate**

The findings of the Peer Review reported several emerging improvements around Preparing for Adulthood as follows:

- ✓ Young people the peer team met were confident about their transition, they spoke about the support from their schools, college or the Sensory Impairment Service
- ✓ The Transitions Board has been refreshed with new terms of reference and a new Chair. (**See Appendix 1**)
- ✓ Educational Psychologists and SENCOs are using Preparing for Adulthood outcomes as the basis for their reports and reviews.
- ✓ There is a commitment to learning from practice and being responsive to young people's changing needs

However, the reviewers also reported the limited evidence that there is sufficient focus on the voice, views and lived experience of children and families at key transition points from 0-25. There are real concerns from parents about transition from primary to secondary and from 14+ - words used included 'frightened', 'fearful', 'terrified'.

Trafford's Education, Health and Care Plans have been reviewed to reflect the 4 key elements of PfA; Employment, Independent Living, Community Inclusion and Health, and these are considered from year 6 to support a young person's transition into secondary education. However, the Peer Review also stated that it appears that it is easier for those transitioning to adult health services who have a clear medical need or learning disability rather than those young people with less obvious needs. This gap may be exacerbated by post-COVID-19 emerging or unassessed needs.

As a result, some families would benefit from support around transitions, particularly around preparing for adulthood and the changing relationship with their child. For many they have been the child's principal advocate and the change to a world where their child has an independent voice may be a particular challenge.

Finally, although the Sensory Impairment Support Service, SEN Advisory Service and Educational Psychology Service provide advice and guidance to educational settings and specific ideas are shared with SENCOs, including the writing of Preparing for Adulthood outcomes for EHC plans and supporting young people directly when transitioning to Post 16 education, the review reported the inconsistent picture of adult health and care services involvement in supporting young people and that these services are not being involved soon enough.

Through the strengthened partnership meetings which are being embedded into the pathways, we are committed to ensure earlier involvement takes place to ensure a smooth and cohesive transition.

6. Next Steps

▪ **Parent Experience Panels**

Through the Communication & Engagement group, and in partnership with Trafford Parent/Carer Forum, a calendar of events have been devised to enable Parent Experience Panels to present to professionals on a series of themes, one of which is Preparing for Adulthood. These are designed for both positive and challenging experiences to be shared in order for lessons to be learned and improvements to be agreed. This is a valuable opportunity for effective co-production and the experience of our young people and their families, to influence and shape future working.

The PfA Board will also provide scrutiny for case studies which will be shared with the SEND Strategic Board.

▪ **Roll out of online training to all professionals**

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, training on the PfA protocol has been delayed, but is looking to be rolled out in the next few months.

We are working to plan a training programme for professionals around national PfA materials and person centred-working to utilise the experiences gathered and to complement other approaches.

▪ **Living my best life**

The PfA Board is focusing on creating ways of ensuring that the young person's voice is heard through developing self and citizen advocacy approaches and utilising "Living my Best Life" assessment tools and planning. This will in turn enable the identification of barriers to achieving the individual's full potential and the prioritisation of work outside the traditional commissioning of services to facilitate inclusion and integration in the local community and communities of interest.

The Learning Disability Team is also prioritising strength-based conversations around support and advocacy support during pathways to adulthood and legal literacy in helping people to understand how the law may change.

▪ **Earlier engagement**

We remain committed to ensuring that transition commences earlier to ensure more timely joint working and planning between all who are involved in a person's life and streamlined assessments so young people and their families are not repeating their story. Work is also taking place to ensure there is a full multi-disciplinary team attending all reviews.

APPENDIX 1

Trafford Transition - Preparing for Adulthood Board **Terms of Reference** **March 2021**

1. Purpose

The purpose and function of the Transition Board is

- To have a strategic overview of transition for all children and young people in receipt of a service who will transition into adult services.
- To pay particular attention to supporting the smooth transition of children who are subject to Education, Health and Care Plans who will be in receipt of services from two areas or more (education, health or social care) when they move into adulthood and those with complex health needs
- To retain strategic oversight of all associated Preparing for Adulthood pathway's data sets and any 'unlock' any potential barriers to achievement
- To ensure strategic oversight of young people and their journey to influence and deliver demonstrable practice improvement and improved outcomes for Children and young people
- To take a lessons learned approach

2. Responsibilities

The Transition Board will be responsible for:

- Establishing, delivery and monitoring a PfA Strategy & protocol and any associated action plan.
- Monitoring the delivery of the action plan monitoring against defined timescales.
- Ensuring links and interdependencies with other Boards are identified and addressed.

- Supporting the cascading of information to relevant; stakeholders/ groups/ organisations.
- Ensuring accountability to the Health & Well Being Board and SEND board.
- Providing assurance to the SEND Board that the Preparing for Adult processes for young people with EHCP's and other specific groups are robust and achieving against the outcomes set by the Board.
- Reviewing the performance reports of the sub groups relevant to Preparing for Adulthood. Currently these are the PfA Enhanced group, PfA Neighbourhood Group and the PfA Complex Needs Group.
- Monitoring and managing the effectiveness of the PfA pathways and working to improve processes and unblock areas of concern.
- A separate group will be established up to act as a mediation forum for individual cases which require strategic decision making, where attempts at reaching a resolution have proved challenging. An action log will be kept of these cases for audit purposes which will include personally identifiable data accessible to only the Chair & Co-chair.

3. Membership

The membership of the PfA Board will consist of:

- Director – Director of nursing
- Director – Education
- Director - Adults
- Director – Children's Services
- Strategic Lead – Complex Needs
- Strategic Leads – Adult neighbourhood services
- Head of Service – Inclusion
- Designated Nurse – Safeguarding and LAC
- Designated Nurse - Adults
- Representative - Joint Commissioning Unit
- Representative – Cheshire Wirral Partnership
- Representative - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Representative – Parents Forum
- Representative - Voluntary Sector
- Representative - Youth Justice
- Representative - Self-Advocacy Group – voice of young people.

Others may be invited to attend as appropriate and co-opted as necessary.

Members may send someone to represent them but the representative must come fully briefed and with the designated authority of the Board Member to take action as required.

The Board will ensure that appropriate methods are found to include the voice of young people in its meetings.

4. Frequency

The meetings will be held on a quarterly basis. More often by exception.

5. Governance

The Chair will be Director - Chief Nurse.

The Deputy Chairs will be - Head of Service - Inclusion
Strategic Lead - Complex Needs

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TRAFFORD
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Youth Offer & Street Talk January 2021



Trafford Youth Engagement Service

Vision of the Service



**“Empowering young people to achieve a better tomorrow”
(YES visioning day)**

The Street Talk team will work in partnership with young people, communities and the voluntary sector to ensure every Trafford young person has access to a suitable youth offer that meets their needs, and that this offer is targeted to young people to improve equity of access.

Street Talk – Detached Youth Work

- **Detached youth work is a form of street-based youth work provision, which operates without the use of a centre and takes place where young people "are at" both geographically and developmentally**
- This is a universal service to young people which is targeted at areas of highest need and where young people choose to congregate.
- Although universal in nature – full time workers also carry a small caseload and deliver groups and projects to meet specific needs.
- Young people engaged by the team have a range of needs from universal to those receiving intensive support, with social care youth justice or other statutory involvement including those at risk of exploitation or who go missing from home.
- The majority of delivery March – October is in parks and on the streets in Trafford however during the winter months the team also deliver some centre based activities so young people have a safe and warm environment to meet other young people and engage in positive activities

Street Talk – Aims & Objectives (2019-22)

1. Improve young peoples confidence and self esteem
2. Develop young peoples social and emotional skills
3. Improved mental wellbeing
4. Improve physical and sexual health
5. Diversionary activities & reduce criminal behaviour/activity (including violent/knife crime)
6. Educate young people about risks including alcohol and drugs
7. Reduction in young people becoming NEET
8. Increase early help activity and reduce escalation to statutory services.

Development of Street Talk

- **April 2019** – Trafford Integrated Youth Offer (TIYO) launched Youth Trust resources brought in house to launch Council run Youth Service (detached youth work team)
- **June 2019** – Initial recruitment, consultation and engagement with young people including naming and branding of service
- **Nov 2019** – TIYO re-named Trafford **Youth Engagement Service (YES)** New Street Talk detached Youth Work service launched
- **To end of March 2020** – the service delivered over 100 Youth Work Sessions (5 nights a week) with 1187 engagements with young people including 17 targeted casework referrals
- **March 2020 – March 2021** – The Covid pandemic had a significant impact with limited initial delivery to June 2020 then the team concentrated on public health messaging, mental health support and responding to community safety and other community referrals.
- **March 2021 to date** – Refocused activity to project and group activities with the ability to measure longer term outcomes

Street Talk April 2021-Dec 21 (Q1-Q3)

Localities

- Street Talk engaged with a total of 1,555 young people Q1-Q3
- North 725
- West 651
- South & Central* 179

*please note an underreporting in central due to covid staff sickness this has been rectified for future reports

- Delivery concentrated in areas of higher deprivation e.g. Partington/Old Trafford/Lostock
- Young people across Trafford congregate in parks (many around Urmston/Flixton in the Summer months as well as Turn Moss) so the team target areas where these YP congregate
- Work in Central area (Sale West) was reduced after a firearm incident and risks to staff in Summer 21. **However Gorse Hill Studios and Foundation 92 are providing regular detached youth work in Sale West.**

Issues raised by young people

All Street Talk sessions capture the reporting needs of young people. The following are the key issues raised by young people in 2021/22 to date:

- Emotional wellbeing & mental health
- Education & school
- Positive activities (something to do)
- Relationships and sexual health

An example of a (Informal education) project that was codesigned with young people to address these needs is the “Talking Nudes” project in Urmston.

Locality projects 2020/21

Project	Location	Partnerships
Drugs, Alcohol and Community Safety	Urmston various parks	Community Safety GMP
Skate Park Project	Seymour Park, Old Trafford	Tuf*C
Identity / Mental Health / Self awareness	Partington	Your Housing / Grip Adventure
Arts project	Partington	Your Housing
“Talking Nudes” project – online safety / consent / healthy relationships	Urmston/Davyhulme/Flixton various locations	
Youth Club night	Broomwood, Altrincham	BluSci
Young Carers – issue based work (started 31 st Jan 22)	Sale	Young carers Grip Adventure

YP Case study & feedback

Old Trafford Skate Park project:

One referral was made into Talkshop from this session, the young person was struggling with their mental health and sometimes self-harmed. They were also on a reduced timetable at school, one of the detached youth workers picked this referral up to deliver case work. The young person was supported in meetings with school and advocated on their behalf and they are now back onto a full timetable and said

“You guys have helped me so much and I feel great about myself”

The team said **‘It was a pleasure to see her with other young people at the skate park, sharing her skills and smiling.**

Feedback from young people and parents

- “It is a good idea to have an open space that we can come to talk to youth workers”
- “Speaking to someone in school can make it look obvious there is an issue in your life, it is very chilled here so we don’t feel under any pressure”
- “I feel that I can talk openly about issues I am facing, I cannot do this at home or with some of my friends”
- “My daughter is usually quiet shy and does not like to participate with social activities, since the art projects (Partington) my daughter is more socially engaged and I have seen a positive attitude change in her, this is a great support network to have in the community. For years we have asked for support for our children and community and to see we are finally being listened too is such a nice thing. I hope it continues”
- “As a parent there is only so much we can do to support our kids, they need fun youth workers to open up to and feel they are being supported”

Partnerships & wider Youth Offer

- The Street Talk team work with a wide range of VCS groups and commissioned providers as well as statutory agencies across Trafford so that youth offer provision is enhanced and not duplicated including.
- Detached street based work with Early Break and Foundation 92 (funded by Serious Violence Fund)
- Partnership delivery with Tuf*C, Grip Adventure, Your Housing and other groups.
- Close working with Community Safety and GMP to target areas of need including ASB
- Work with partners including the Community Collective to develop the Youth workforce of the future
- Gorse Hill and Tuf*C are represented on the YES steering group
- Boys and Girls Club of GM and Screamin' Wheels – there have been initial discussions to coordinate Youth Work Activity across Partington once the centre is redeveloped – completion due Spring 2022

Serious Youth Violence Mentoring & Detached Youth Work

- SYV funding has been used to supplement the work of the Street Talk Team with an additional worker funded to Oct 22 and increased sessional activity across the borough. Street Talk also work closely with Foundation 92 & Early Break to coordinate delivery. Staff are trained to have conversations and group discussions around carrying knives
- Two recent incidents that led to the very sad loss of 2 young lives has recently highlighted the importance of this work, with a specific need to focus on the 11-13 year olds prior to behaviour becoming entrenched.
- **In 2020/21 over 40 Young people have received mentoring from Youth Justice mentors funded by the Serious Violence fund with the following outcomes:**
 - 11 Perm exclusions avoided with comprehensive package including mentoring support for violence/knife incidents in school
 - 97.5% EET rate (only one Post 16 young person was NEET July 2021)
 - Only 7.5% (3 YP) went on to commit an offence and none involved knives or serious violence.

It's likely without this work that the frequency and seriousness of events could be worse and that despite entrenched behaviour amongst some older teens there is a lot of positive work and successes with a large cohort of at risk young people.

Gaps in provision / Issues

- **Staffing** – Both across the region and within Trafford there is a serious shortage of qualified/experienced Youth Workers (this is being reported by VCS partners as well). This has led to gaps in the amount of sessions able to be delivered and constant recruitment rounds
- **Pandemic** – The pandemic has delayed some of the mapping and development work of the service over the last 2 years as staff prioritised public health messaging & ASB in 2020/21. During much of this period large groups were not allowed so work was limited in scope.
- **Localities** – Although much of the work is based on staff going to areas of need and where young people congregate there is a need to map all the local provision and develop the offer in some areas e.g. Sale Moor and Altrincham Town Centre are areas for development in 2022. Areas of deprivation and high need will continue to be targeted.

Objectives and timescales

- **Launch of the new Mobile Unit – Feb/March 22.** Jointly funded by Hotel Football and Trafford Council the new vehicle will shortly be available to increase the scope of work we can do across the borough.
- **Youth Work training & future workforce** – The Service Manager and partners from the Community Collective are working with Trafford College and other providers to develop training routes and support to grow the workforce including new apprenticeships launching Summer 2022.
- **Mapping** – With the support of partners and via consultation with young people, Street Talk will undertake a further mapping exercise to identify localities with gaps in provision **by May 2022** so these areas can be targeted for Street Talk work in 22/23
- Areas already identified as additional priorities from Spring 22 delivery include **Sale Moor and Altrincham town centre** (leisure centre & transport hubs)
- **Visioning day in Summer 2022** with young people and partners to develop a new shared vision and ambitious objectives for the service for 2022-24

Celebrating success



- The Youth Engagement Service has recently been successful in securing **2 ESF programme bids worth over £300K**. Staff will be working intensively with 230 young people aged 15-24 to support them into employment education and training. The projects are directed at vulnerable groups including Care Leavers & SEND YP who are over-represented in the NEET group.
- The Youth Engagement Service including our Street Talk team have successfully passed the **Matrix Accreditation** which is the national quality award for providers of Information Advice and Guidance (the Assessor met with over 40 young people, staff and partners as part of our 3 day assessment).
- The **new youth work mobile** unit is fully fitted out and branded and will be on the road in the next few weeks.

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TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date: February 2022
Report of: Jill McGregor – Corporate Director Children’s Services

Report Title

Update on Children’s Services’ Improvement Activity

Summary

This report provides an update and assurance on the progress of improvement activity within Children’s Services since the last update presented to Committee in October 2021.

The report details the actions and progress that has been made following the formal Monitoring Visit by Ofsted, in September 2021; progress against our Ambitions Plan as well as the recent evaluation by the DfE advisor as to the current position and progress in Trafford. (February 2022).

In doing so this report, recaps on the priorities that were outlined to committee in October 2021 and updates on progress within those areas, and of the identified short-term priorities.

Recommendation(s)

- To note the contents of this report and the work that has been progressed to date.
- To agree to receive further updates
- To offer scrutiny and challenge to the service.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Jill McGregor
Extension: 2365

Background Papers:
Updated Ambitions Plan
Ofsted Monitoring Visit – Published Letter
Previous Report to Committee - October 2021
Revised Children’s Services’ Structure

Please specify whether the content of the report relates to any of the following areas. If the report does not relate to an area just put N/A.

Corporate Priorities	
Relationship to GM Policy or Strategy Framework	
Finance	
Legal	
Equality/Diversity	
Sustainability	
Carbon Reduction	
Staffing/E-Government/Asset Management	
Risk Management	
Health and Safety	

Monitoring Visit

As reported to Committee in October 2021 Ofsted undertook their second formal monitoring visits on 28th and 29th September with the report subsequently published on 2nd November 2021 (See background papers - Formal published letter).

Following the findings of this monitoring visit, the Service undertook an exercise to review whether the Ambitions Plan (Improvement Plan) and associated planned improvement activity fully addressed the key finding and whether any additional actions needed to be taken to support an acceleration of progress against critical priorities. These priorities included some specific actions within the areas of:

- Workforce stability
- Leadership and management
- Quality of practice

These action that has subsequently been progressed in respect of these key areas is detailed below

Workforce Stability

Workforce stability has continued to remain a significant priority for the service and is to be routed through Ambition 3 of the Ambitions plan under the action; 'Creating the Conditions for Practice to Flourish'. The impact of workforce instability was recognised during the Monitoring Visits, but it was also recognised that were factors that had contributed to this including the service redesign and continuing to work through the pandemic.

Despite this a number of actions have been progressed to improve the stability of the workforce these include:

- Implementation of the revised service structure and a detailed programme of change management to support “go live” with the new arrangements becoming operational on 4th October 2021
- Continued roll out of Care and Confidence modules to support the workforce through this change
- Establishing a systematic programme of recruitment campaigns and engaging an external recruitment company to enhance the approach
- Continuing to work with interim staff who are in a position to consider permanent employment with Trafford.
- Strengthened the induction programme ensuring that managers and practitioners are welcomed and supported in new roles and responsibilities.

The impact of these actions has started to be seen in terms of both recruitment and retention activity. 14 new permanent social workers were recruited over the last 6 months, one agency social worker joined Trafford permanently, one agency social worker converted to a permanent advanced practitioner post and two agency team leaders are now permanent practice managers.

This was further recognised in the DfE advisor’s January highlight report:

“Investment and appointment of a specialist recruitment agency to recruit to leadership posts on a permanent basis in the new structure and experienced Advanced Practitioners and Social Workers. This is beginning to show results and the churn in the workforce seen last summer is beginning to stabilise. Trafford are receiving good applications from good candidates”

(Claire Burgess – DfE Highlight Report – Jan 22)

Leadership and Management

There is a vast amount of activity taking place in this area including the embedding of the new Supervision Framework, and development of the Investing in our People Strategy. Since the last report, a new recording and monitoring system for supervision has been implemented that is providing an accurate self-view of frequency of supervisions. Quarterly thematic audits by Heads of Service have commenced that will serve to help evidence the improved quality of supervision. All practitioners have received a supervision in the month of December and January, with the only exceptions being where there has been sickness. The Practice Improvement and Learning Service are scheduled to complete a whole service audit to benchmark the quality of supervision across all areas against this new framework.

A Leadership Forum that has been established by the Director of Early Help and Social Care continues to be a key vehicle for strengthening the leaders and managers of the service. This is held on a fortnightly basis and the strength of bringing together the managers across the service has facilitated the development of consistent expectation and standards of practice

The continued embedding of the Quality Assurance framework at every level has resulted in the Service having a clear line of sight to practice and there is evidence of improvement activity being driven by managers. An increased volume of routine audits has been sustained (470 children's case files audited last year, a further 207 further audited via a moderation), and a mixed methodology approach has been introduced. This includes Live Multi-Agency Audit, TSSP Thematic Multi-Agency Audit, and conversational audits.

In addition, there is a developing sense of shared understanding of what “good” looks like. 44% of all audits across the last calendar year were further audited through a moderation. In quarter 2, 82% of all audits had the same grading after moderation).

There is a strong established understanding regarding the quality of practice and the service are now ‘able to present an accurate self-assessment’ however work is ongoing in respect of ‘closing the loop’ and getting to a place where this understanding is impacting on improvements for children and families.

Quality of Practice

There has been a continued to focus on the critical issues that need to be understood to *improve* the quality of practice that is really going to impact for the better for children and families being supported. During this reporting period there has been a concentration on becoming more data intelligent, effectively utilising the now strong performance monitoring arrangement and comprehensive datasets to analyse information and identify emerging issues and trends. A key development in this regard has been the implementation of permanence tracker and scorecard for children in our care

This has enabled the service to track the progress of children’s individual plans and whether there is any drift and delay in making long terms plans for our children as well as identify patterns and trends that may need focused attention e.g. this has supported the work in respect of children who are “placed with parents” and subject to legal care orders. The dedicated project approach that has been implemented has resulted in no care proceedings being concluded with the making of a full care order and children being placed with parents since May and there are currently 9 of discharge applications before the Court.

In November 2021 the service held the first Practice Fortnight as part of the continued investment in the workforce, and their development. The event was designed to share experience, learn from one another, and understand more about different areas within the service. The majority of sessions were delivered by operational staff and/or managers, some taking a ‘Day in the Life of’ format. In total there were over 750 attendances at over 25 sessions, with almost entirely positive feedback:

"It has been a brilliant fortnight and lots of positive interactions between services. This can only improve the outcomes for children and families we work alongside." Final Single Service Briefing Attendee’s comment

Building on the success of this event, planning for World Social Work Week (and other opportunities for sharing and learning) and a launch of a ‘Year of Practice’ is currently being progressed and this approach will further strengthen the commitment to continuous learning and improvement and further support the ambitions to not only strengthen practice but to make Trafford the employer of choice.

There has continued to a focus on the implementation of the use Child Impact Chronology though dedicated training and embedding the use of Child Impact Chronologies within procedures and practice standards as routine, understand the key role these play in helping us to understand children's lived experience. Since September, all but two of the 14 families being considered as part of the Legal Gateway process have child impact chronologies and as such, the impact of the work in these areas is starting to be seen.

Fortnightly reports are submitted to the DfE regarding performance in respect of seeing our children, maintaining the position that that only by visiting children can there be an understanding of what life is like for them and that they are safe. Ofsted recognised that *"There has been a determined focus on increasing the time social workers spend visiting children and speaking to them, which has continued through the pandemic. Children are regularly seen face to face and are spoken to alone when appropriate"* but there remained an understanding within the service that there was more to do regarding improving the quality of visits to children.

The Practice Improvement and Learning Service undertook a thematic audit in January looking at the quality of visits. The headlines were shared in January's Improvement Board Steering Group where there was collective agreement to hold a dedicated leadership session to revisit the principles of visiting children. This was hugely successful with the group coming together to agree a programme of further development with all practitioners.

In addition, there has been investment through the procurement of a strength-based intervention programme, (a 3-year contract with a strategic workforce development partner - Strengthening Practice) is crucial to developing and supporting the workforce and will also have a positive impact workforce stability going forward. Strengthening Practice are continuing to work with the whole of the workforce on a bespoke Core Skills programme, as well as a smaller collaboration group. This will support practitioners through an intensive development programme over a three-year period. The work of the collaboration group is currently progressing the development of bespoke Trafford specific learning objectives and focus.

Ofsted highlighted that there was work required to strengthen the Safeguarding Unit and the roll of the Child Protection Chairs/Independent Reviewing Officers. This is being progressed through work with Professor Jan Horwath (Emeritus Professor of Child Welfare in the Department of Sociological Studies University of Sheffield). This externally commissioned work with focus on ensuring that the role of the Unit is routed in strength based approaches that support and engagement families in a meaningful way whilst also ensuring that risk is managed effectively particularly in relation ensuring the lived experience of the child is central to safeguarding management and practice.

Progress against the Ambition Plan

Despite the challenges of recent months, the Service has continued to make progress against each of the 8 Ambitions within the plan.

In January, a full review of progress against each of the 8 Ambition took place, considering what has been achieved to date and, where relevant, to give clarity of what needed to be the short-term focus. It provided an opportunity for a sense check of

advancement in all areas of the detailed plan, to highlight those areas where it was apparent that further traction was required, and to reflect on achievements to date.

The updated action plan now outlines the priorities and some areas of focus for the forthcoming year, and it is the intention for this summary to provide key information to be considered on a Partnership basis through a series of round table events through February and March.

As a consequence of the progress that has been made in respect of establishing robust systems and processes (including the redesigned service arrangements) it is now vital to the next phase of improvement that the ambition workstreams are truly multi-agency. This is to both provide challenge and support, but to also ensure that the ambitions for children and families in Trafford are genuinely owned by the partnership.

With this in mind Ambition 8 will focus on quality of practice issues for the partnership e.g., improving the quality of referrals to CSC, the quality and effectiveness of strategy meetings or core groups.

A RAG has been applied to the Ambitions plan (attached) and the progress that has been made as follows:

RED - Limited or no progress with the action.

AMBER - Action is partially complete and on track with identified work still to do.

GREEN - Action is complete and is able to be reworded to reflect slight change in focus.

The document illustrates that there is progress within the vast majority of the multiple actions underpinning each Ambition. Ambition 1 (Leaders and managers at every level understand and influence practice to be consistently good) and Ambition 3 (Quality of Practice is consistently good across the service so that it makes a difference to our children and families) have seen the most substantial progress, alongside Ambition 2 (Children and families receive the right help at the right time from the right professional) where the prototype of the Trafford Team Together (TTT) model has been implemented across two locations (West and North) and is already having a positive impact on the children and families who are benefiting from it. The remit of the TTT model is now being expanded

A formal update of this plan was presented to the Improvement Board on 1st February 2022 and is embedded within this report.

Analysis and Summary of Position to Date

During this reporting period progress has continued against those areas that have been identified by Ofsted as needing to improve, and this continues to be monitored internally (through agreed quality assurance and governance processes) as well as through the formal oversight of DfE who recognised that:

“Trafford has continued to deliver improvement despite a significant redesign and the on-going impact of Covid. This is a positive testament to the strength of the Leadership Team, Corporate and Political Leaders, working together to deliver improvement and make a difference to children’s lives.” Claire Burgess - DfE January 22

In the most recent meeting with the DfE, following their 6 monthly review, it was reported that the biggest strength is how leaders, managers and all staff talk about children and young people, and that this is rare in inadequate authorities *“Over the last reporting*

period it has become increasingly obvious that the culture of putting children first in everything that Trafford does is becoming embedded.” (Claire Burgess – DfE Highlight Report – Jan 22)

This reflects the work and progress that has taken place over the last quarter however the leadership team continue to recognise that there is more that needs to be progressed to ensure a greater consistency of practice. As stated by Ofsted, a key determinant in achieving this is stability within the workforce.

The refresh of the Ambitions plan that is currently being progressed on partnership basis will provide further opportunities to ensure that action is being taken and ultimately that improvements for children and families are sustained.

Reasons for Recommendation(s)

The recommendations will be set out on the first page of the report. Set out here the reasons for those recommendations if they are not laid out within the main body of the report or consolidate the reasons if they are spread throughout the report.

Background Papers:



Monitoring Visit
Letter Sept 21.pdf



Improvement Plan 8
Ambitions Update to



Children's Services
(Revised Structure - O



CSC Improvement
Activity & Progress O

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2 November 2021

Jill McGregor
Corporate Director Children's Services
Trafford Council
Trafford Town Hall
Talbot Road
Stretford
M32 0TH

Dear Jill

Monitoring visit to Trafford Council children's services

This letter summarises the findings of the monitoring visit to Trafford children's services on 28 and 29 September 2021. This was the second monitoring visit since the local authority was judged inadequate in June 2019. As a result of the restrictions in place during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, monitoring visits did not take place after 17 March 2020. The local authority was the subject of a focused visit in March 2021. Her Majesty's inspectors for this visit were Paula Thomson-Jones, Kathryn Grindrod and Kendra Bell.

Areas covered by the visit

Inspectors reviewed the progress made in the following areas of concern identified at the last inspection:

- The quality of social work assessment and plans, to ensure that they are effective in meeting the needs of children who are the subject of child protection plans.
- The response to children who go missing, to ensure that return home interviews are completed and records of these contain information that will help reduce risk in future.
- Management oversight at all levels of social work practice with children, to ensure that work is effective and is helping them to achieve better outcomes.
- Senior leaders' understanding of the quality of social work practice, through accurate evaluation of performance information and implementation of an effective quality assurance framework.

This visit was carried out in line with the inspection of local authority children's services (ILACS) framework. This visit was carried out fully on site, with inspectors meeting social workers and managers in person within the current government guidelines.

Headline findings

Although there are some early signs of improvement in the quality of assessments and child protection planning for children, this has been limited by challenges resulting from the instability of the workforce and weaknesses in management oversight of frontline practice. Despite this, the work reviewed during this visit showed that most children's situations were improving as a result of the intervention taking place.

Increased corporate and political commitment, and stronger governance of children's services have enabled effective implementation of strategic plans to support improvement. Since the appointment of the current Director of Children's Services (DCS) in February 2020, an effective performance management framework has been established that ensures leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of social work practice. Significant development work has been progressed with the local partnership and a full restructure of children's services has recently been undertaken.

Findings and evaluation of progress

As reported following the focused visit in March 2021, Trafford has experienced significant disruption and additional challenges because of higher than average levels of COVID-19. For the last 18 months, staff have been responding to the personal and professional demands of the pandemic, with long periods of restrictions and remote working. This has presented an additional barrier to implementing the cultural and organisational change that was needed to facilitate improvement in services for children.

There has been a determined focus on increasing the time social workers spend visiting children and speaking to them, which has continued through the pandemic. Children are regularly seen face to face, and are spoken to alone when appropriate. For some children and families, having several changes of social worker has meant that building a meaningful, stable relationship has been very difficult, and this has caused delay in the progress of plans for some children. However, some social workers have worked hard to address the impact of these changes and have gone on to develop good working relationships with families, which are helping to bring about positive change.

Assessments of children's needs routinely include historical information and their wishes and feelings are sought. There remain weaknesses in the consideration of children's identity, particularly when children are from a Black or ethnic minority background. Risks, such as living in a home where there is domestic abuse, are clearly identified, and immediate action is taken to protect children when this is required. However, this information is not well used by social workers to evaluate

what the impact is for children beyond their immediate protection and what needs to change to improve their lives.

Written child protection plans are not a helpful tool for working with the family or with partners. They are too focused on generic tasks for adults to complete, without clear measurable outcomes for children being in place. Many children are getting support that is improving their situation but, too often, the detail and purpose of this work is not reflected in children's records. This means that parents and professionals are not clear what should be happening, or if their work is ensuring progress for children.

Professionals from a wide range of agencies provide appropriate support to many children and they attend and contribute to regular core groups and reviews. Core groups are not always effective at measuring the impact of their work, as they too often measure if parents are attending sessions or completing work rather than if this is making a difference to their children.

Child protection reviews are timely and well attended. The impact of the reviews is often limited, because they do not focus enough on evaluating children's experiences. Child protection chairs do not ensure that a robust child-focused evaluation of progress takes place. For some children, this leads to plans being ended too early, before their situations have really improved, and is then followed by further repeat periods of child protection planning, with little progress.

When children who are the subject of a child protection plan are reported missing from home, they are routinely offered a return home interview by an independent worker. The information gathered in this interview is often limited, and the reasons for children going missing are not well understood. The needs of children are discussed at daily risk management meetings, but children's records are not clear about what action is then taken, or how information is incorporated into their child protection plan. Although these services have been maintained during the pandemic, they have not improved since the last inspection.

The local authority has made progress to establish strong corporate governance, improved partnership working and effective systems to provide an accurate self-view. They have appropriate plans for improvement and clear ambitions and priorities, and have maintained this commitment throughout the pandemic.

At the centre of this organisational change has been a restructure of children's services. Leaders' commitment to ensure effective consultation with staff and stakeholders, despite the challenges of doing this during the pandemic, has resulted in this taking longer than anticipated, with the process planned to conclude on 4 October 2021. Since the focused visit in March this year, workforce instability has increased, with turnover at the point of this visit being 13.7%. This has created additional challenges in improving practice, and has led to many children having too many changes of social worker. Caseloads remain manageable and the local

authority has developed strong plans to attract and retain staff, but these now need to progress at pace to ensure further improvement for children.

Over the last 18 months, leaders have developed a strong, detailed understanding of the quality of social work practice and are able to present an accurate self-assessment. Inspectors' findings during this visit confirmed that there is a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the work undertaken with children in need of protection. This is as the result of extensive, regular and detailed performance reporting, which provides helpful narrative analysis, in addition to the data itself.

Leaders ensure that where concerns are identified from the data, quality assurance work then takes place to identify any deficits in practice, and what this means for children. In addition to specific focused audits, a quality assurance framework has now been embedded, and results in regular case audits, including routine moderation by senior managers. The local authority has correctly identified that the findings from its audit work are not having sufficient impact on improving the quality of practice or the experiences of children. Inspectors found that although most audits result in an accurate assessment of the work, the individual feedback to practitioners remains too focused on process and compliance, and does not help them to improve their practice.

Management oversight of work with children has increased compliance, but it is not providing enough challenge to drive improvements in the quality of work with children. It remains overly focused on processes rather than children's experiences. Most social workers receive regular supervision and find it supportive, but managers do not provide sufficient quality assurance of their work. For example, when there are gaps in assessments, or drift and delay for children, this is not consistently addressed, and as a result the quality of practice is not improving quickly enough.

Instability in the workforce and weak management oversight of frontline practice, including that undertaken by child protection chairs, are limiting the impact of strategic plans.

I am copying this letter to the Department for Education.

Yours sincerely

Paula Thomson-Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector

1.0 Our ambition : Leaders and managers at every level understand and influence practice to be consistently good

Lead: Director Early Help and Children's Social Care - Pamela Wharton

Our approach: To coach and support managers to audit for impact so that they support practitioners' learning that makes a difference to children and families.

Action Plan		Review of Progress & Priorities	RAG
1.1	Complete coaching sessions with every manager to embed consistent standard of what "good" looks like.	<p>Recruited & established new Leadership Team, following the redesign.</p> <p>Implemented bespoke management development programme as managers and practitioners moved into new service arrangements e.g. Leadership Forum. Practice Managers and Heads of Service starting to come together as an established and cohesive leadership group who are starting to drive forward practice improvement as routine.</p> <p>Need to continue to build on what has been achieved so far in strengthening our leadership team and middle managers, and ensure managers new to post have same as part of their induction.</p>	
1.2	Refresh the QA Framework to demonstrate a mixed methodology of audit and quality assurance activity to include side by side learning audit, practice observation and development, themed and exploratory audit processes and attention to feedback from children, young people and their families.	<p>Implemented & embedded a new Quality Assurance framework. Sustained an increased volume of routine audits; 470 children's case files audited last year, a further 207 further audited via a moderation.</p> <p>Introduced mixed methodology - Including Live Multi Agency Audit, TSSP Thematic Multi Agency Audit, conversational audits.</p> <p>Need to strengthen closing the loop & our learning loop.</p>	
1.3	Develop and embed a moderation and benchmarking process by which all strategic leads understand the quality of practice across their service area	<p>Moderations are embedded as a key quality assurance process. Continued to ensure managers are confident with the audit process & there has been focus on supporting our new managers and providing coaching in order that we could effectively embed a consistent standard of what 'good' looks like. We are confident that what we are reporting about the quality of practice this is accurate. 44% of all audits for across the calendar year were moderated & we are increasingly seeing a shared understanding of what 'good ' looks like (82% Q2 have the same judgement).</p>	
1.4	Embed supervision audits as standard including revision of our supervision audit tool.	<p>Refreshed Supervision Framework as a result of a piece of practice led task & finish improvement work from a group of practice supervisors with a programme agreed for supervision audits.</p> <p>We need to use the newly implemented recording and monitoring system for supervision to give us an accurate self-view of frequency of supervisions, audit activity around supervision, and most importantly in the quality of supervision.</p>	
1.5	Embed practice learning sessions as routine for all audit activity building on existing practice Every Auditor to become a practice leader	<p>Developed a varied programme of learning and development activity, including coaching, lunch & learn sessions and a dedicated session within Practice Fortnight.</p> <p>We need to progress now to ensure that we are closing the loop, and implementing the learning from audits to improve practice.</p>	

1.6	Embed and enhance our closing the loop and practice learning across the whole service	<p>Further developed our audit tracker, and implemented a process for reauditing case files where the original audit had an outcome of inadequate. Our bespoke programme with Strengthening Practice is supporting us achieve this element of the ambition . Learning session have been held within the Practice Fortnight and other learning spaces.</p> <p>We now need to ensure that we have a forensic focus on looping learning back to practice.</p>	
1.7	Work with TSSP to develop a multi-agency audit process as routine	<p>Extended our audit activity and approach across the partnership with TSSP leading on the completion of three multi-agency audits in respect of Domestic Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation. This is a significant shift in terms of being open about learning and safeguarding as a shared responsibility. The learning has been disseminated across the partnership.</p> <p>There is a rolling programme in place, with a further three planned for the year ahead. .</p>	
1.8	Implement and embed the revised Performance monitoring arrangements, inclusive of supported performance clinics for every team and every service reporting to DCS and DMT.	<p>Continued to concentrate on embedding performance monitoring arrangements and develop our understanding of the quality of practice and any emerging issues and trends from analysis of data. We now have a comprehensive data set utilised by all managers for reporting and analysis of practice through service specific performance clinics. Performance clinics are in place within each new service areas, and take place routinely, with each Head of Service producing their own service report.</p>	
1.9	Understand the skills base of the CSC leadership workforce to inform the learning and development programme for managers and add focus to workforce development.	<p>Implemented a bespoke management development programme as managers and practitioners moved into new service arrangements.</p> <p>We need to carry out a skills audit and use the analysis from that to support with the production of some targeted actions.</p>	

2.0 Our ambition: Children and families receive the right help at the right time from the right professional

Lead: Strategic Lead - Early Help & Front Door - Vicky Hodgkins

Our approach: To harness the strength and expertise across the service and partnership to respond to children and families issues as they emerge

Action Plan		Review of Progress & Priorities	RAG
2.1	Develop and implement "Right help, right time locality model of support" (Early Help Locality based teams)	<p>Implemented our prototype of the model Trafford Team Together (TTT) across 8 schools in two localities (West and North) & achieved partnership buy-in for the TTT approach, and the approach is having a positive impact.</p> <p>We have completed our Family Hubs submission, and are progressing this innovation. We have reviewed and developed an action plan in respect Intensive Family Support and are in the process of redesigning offer to locality teams. We have implemented dedicated Child In Need services that are organised on a locality basis.</p> <p>We need to progress with expanding the remit of Trafford Team Together and co-ordination of Early Help Offer (remodelling Early Help Hubs into Family Hubs) and develop our outcomes framework. It is important that we also embed the role of the voluntary sector broker that will sit within the TTT model, connecting children and families to their communities for the right support at the right time</p>	
2.2	Introduce and embed the use of child impact chronologies (CimC) in Early Help cases.	<p>Intensive Family Support workers have received training and are now using CimCs as a way to understand and record the impact of significant events in a child's life on their health, development and wellbeing - Champions.</p> <p>We need to measure the impact of the increased use of Child Impact Chronologies across the system & the partnership.</p>	
2.3	Stream line systems and processes within FRT to ensure responsive, reach out offer of support to families	<p>Through the redesign we implemented significant changes at the front door, with a shift away from case holding social work practitioners. We have continued to strengthen systems & processes at the front door, embedding and mainstreaming specialist workers: domestic abuse specialist mainstreamed and recruited), Education specialist (mainstreamed) and in addition there is a review of Health Visiting and school nursing services which will see the role specialist Health practitioner embedded with the front door; Co-location with the GMP is in place.</p> <p>We need to embed and maximise the role of Domestic Abuse Specialist and to continue to develop systems and process of information with the Police and other partners, as part of our ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of our multi-agency front door,</p>	

2.4	Develop and embed conversational audit approach to user feedback	<p>Developed a conversational audit approach, as part of the wider QA framework although whilst conversational audits have started but they are not happening in the volume that we are aiming for.</p> <p>A key priority area in this regard remains the embedding of conversational audit approach to user feedback, and closing the loop in respect of the information coming out of these audits.</p>	
2.5	Revise and refresh step down (exit pathways) across the child's journey	<p>A multi-agency task and finish group sought to understand the barriers and issues to safely "stepping down" and identified a number of barriers. The findings of the Task & Finish group helped to support the drafting of proposals and a new framework.</p> <p>Partial - Task and Finish group included partners.</p> <p>Held case progression clinics looking at all of our children in advance of the restructuring of services to help determine which service was best placed to support each family. in terms of determining whether things that we need to do.</p> <p>We need to progress with the rolling out of the new pathways and then review the impact.</p>	
2.6	Embed quality assurance processes including of re-referrals at the Front Door to understand and act on themes	<p>Developed bespoke quality assurance arrangements to fit the unique nature of the work at the Front Door and continued to routinely dip sample contacts, referrals and re-referrals to understand the quality of our decision making. We have held 2 live audits at the Front Door and this now part of QAF - learning is being taken forward</p> <p>Need to formalise some of our routine audit activity, and the arrangements for the coming together of services to look at themes and learning. A focus also to be on the quality of the information that is provided within contacts and referrals. This will be an action in Ambition 8 moving forward .</p>	
2.7	Strengthen CIN planning and interventions through an agreed service delivery model	<p>Established a dedicated Child In Need Service 'Families First' as part of our drive to raise the status and quality of Child in Need planning and interventions. The remit of these teams is work intensively with children and families to work cases successfully to a conclusion .</p> <p>The teams are in place and established and there is an emerging ownership of the work .</p> <p>Team building sessions have happened and this is developing practice improvement.</p>	
2.8	Evaluate the effectiveness of Families Matter Pod and cascade learning to inform practice model.	<p>Completed evaluation and disestablished our Families Matter pod. Utilised the learning from what was successful and made a difference within our Families Matter Pod and integrated this within our new 'Families First' service area.</p>	
2.9	Embed and co-design strength based child in need reviews as the vehicle to drive outcome focused planning.	<p>Created new teams, using strength based interventions as our model.</p> <p>Need to continue to work with practitioners to drive forward the strengthening with the planning for these families, moving away from being process driven and moving towards being strength based. Our work with Strengthening Practice further supports these improvements.</p>	

2. 10	Establish a fully integrated multi agency Front Door.	As referenced in 2.3, the role of Domestic Abuse Specialist and Health Specialist have now been mainstreamed at the Front Door, and GMP are now colocated with the team within Trafford Town Hall. to continue to develop systems and process of information with the Police and other partners, as part of our ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of our multi-agency front door.	
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3.0 Our ambition: Quality of Practice is consistently good across the service so that it makes a difference to our children and families

Lead: Strategic Lead - Practice Improvement & Learning - Jude Brown

Our approach: To support practitioners at every level through high quality supervision and learning opportunities to enable them to be agents of change when working with children and families. We will coach and support all to achieve this.

Action Plan		Review of Progress & Priorities	RAG
3.1	Build upon our RP programme to roll out strength based intervention led practice programme.	<p>Procured a new strength-based relational partner – Strengthening Practice – and commenced the rollout of our bespoke programme that is supporting practitioners and managers at all levels. This has started with care and confidence modules recognising the impact of redesign and COVID on the workforce.</p> <p>We have a collaboration group established who will work SP to develop and the Core Skills Programme that will start in April 2021.</p>	
3.2	Review of our Practice Guidance and connectivity with our recording systems to ensure compliance with latest statutory guidance.	<p>Reviewed our Practice Guidance and have commissioned an external provider to carry out a review of our children's recording system and how it supports practice as part of the improvement plan. This work will take place throughout January and February.</p> <p>We have had a focus on the importance of timely and child centred recording, continuing with our relentless focus on 'basics'; ensuring we are seeing children to ensure they were safe, and recording the details of that interaction. We have reported regularly throughout the year. Dedicated sessions are in place to support purposeful visits as the basis of assessments and care planning</p>	
3.3	Co-produce strength based family assessments.	<p>Whilst there are some specialist teams within the wider service, such as SHINE through the ACT model, who are co-producing assessments, in the main this is an action that has not yet been progressed. The Core Skills programme from Strengthening Practice will be a key element to this. It has also been necessary to pause activity in this area, as it is important that it links in with the programme of work that Jan Howarth is carrying out with us.</p>	
3.4	Embed the consistent use of evidence based tools in assessment, planning and interventions as routine	<p>Throughout the service different tools are being used but we are yet to see these used consistently and routinely and becoming widely accessible in shared areas. Practising using tools will run through out the SP module. Evidence of this working well was seen in the recent Ofsted inspection at Kindle - outcome wheels.</p>	
3.5	Revise and embed our approach to the use of child impact chronologies (CimC) so they become an integral tool in understanding each child's story and informing case planning.	<p>Developed and rolled out the child impact chronology as a tool to enable analysis and inform care planning. In May 2021 established a dedicated project to drive forward the use as routine and deliver the training. Coaching and mentoring and dedicated learning sessions have been core elements of the project including developing 6 in house trainers to continue to develop best practice across the whole service.</p> <p>Need to continue with our targeted approach for the embedding of Child Impact Chronologies, linked to key decision-making points in child's journey.</p>	

3.6	Use a variety of Practice Learning spaces to share learning and practice effective use of tools and interventions.	<p>Agreed a formal programme with Strengthening Practice that meant that we have been able to progress development /learning hubs. These are in place and operational and being used to support learning. We have progressed several lunch and learn sessions, and have a programme of sessions for the year ahead. Held our first Practice Fortnight that was designed in a way to best enable us to share experience, learn from one another, and understand more about different areas within the service.</p> <p>Need to continue to develop the emerging learning culture e.g., external peer reviews and innovation continuing</p>	
3.7	Using the learning from the Covid period - engage with a variety of children and young peoples voice portals to ensure their feedback and that of families and family groups are an inherent part of service design and learning plans. E.g. our service users, YPFJB, Family Rights Group	<p>Task & Finish Group has been established to develop our strategy. Peer learning session has been held with South Tyneside (a Sector led Improvement Partner - SLIP) to learn from elsewhere and inform our thinking. A conference has been progressed through our YC service for children with additional needs and our youth cabinet. Scoping of options such as use of Apps to oncrease more accessible 1-1 feedback is currently underway .</p>	
3.8	Embed child centred decision making and recording so that every child's record reflects their experience and story.	<p>Reviewed and implemented our Scheme of Delegation which will support our practitioners and managers in ensuring there is clarity on decision-making and provide a framework for them to confidently work within. We have had a focus on the importance of timely and child centred recording, continuing with our relentless focus on 'basics'; ensuring we are seeing children to ensure they were safe, and recording the details of that interaction. WE have started to use "Child's Journey's methodology to infence planning for children and a programme of learning in respect of purposeful visits and records being written for children is in pace . Some evdicne of IRO writing letters to their children after reviews . Audit of the quality of recoding has taken place and learning being accsaded - including good practice exemplars.</p> <p>We still need to take part in the planned learning sessions (Feb. 21) around visits and recording, and to work together regarding how better we can achieve child centred recording, consulting with children and young people regarding what they would like recorded on their file, and what they would like people to know about them.</p> <p>(Also links with Life Story work - Ambition 4 and CIMCs)</p>	
3.9	Develop and embed coaching for quality supervision and process and rigorously monitor and check quality and effectiveness of supervision	<p>Refreshed Supervision Framework as a result of a piece of practice led task & finish improvement work from a group of practice supervisors. A programme ahs been agreed for supervision audits. We need to use the newly implemented recording and monitoring system for supervision to give us an accurate self-view of frequency of supervisions, audit activity around supervision, and most importantly in the quality of supervision.</p>	

3.10	Create the conditions for best practice to flourish and Trafford to become the employer of choice.	<p>Implemented a full service redesign acknowledging that having the right structure and the right people in place was crucial to sustained improvement to the service we were delivering for our children and families. Implemented a systematic layer on layer approach to the recruitment in the newly designed service from Head of Service to social workers that has been successful;</p> <p>Ensured a robust interview process for anyone in a leadership role, made difficult decisions in some areas such as our determination to have "the right people in the right places" to build the strong solid foundations that are required to achieve sustainable change.</p> <p>Produced a new recruitment & retention strategy "Investing in Our People" that is based on four key principles: Recruit, Retain, Develop & Sustain, that we are now working within.</p>	
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4.0 Our ambition: Our children will live safely and permanently with a family wherever it is safe to do so

Lead: Strategic Lead Cared for & Care Experienced Children - Phil Bradley

Our approach: To ensure children have the right plan that supports them to have a stable safe base with trusting relationships that endure to adulthood and beyond . We will use the principles and provocations of No Wrong Door to underpin our approach and apply the bench mark of " would this be good enough for my own child"

Action Plan		Review of Progress & Priorities	RAG
4.1	Roll out and embed principle led permanence strategy that has the No Wrong Door Provocations at the heart	Refreshed and strengthened our frameworks for planning for permanence with our Permanence Strategy and Care Planning Framework to strengthen the quality and consistency of care planning across the whole service. Principles of the stargeies align with the NWD principles . Socialisation of the strategy starting to take place and has been prdsented to CPB. Learning session are in place to promote and embed that approach . Permance tracker and data set in place and being used to identify areas that need focused attention	
4.2	Reset and embed No Wrong Door Model as our Edge of Care and family based model of care	Reset and adopted our project approach to re-shape No Wrong Door (Kindle), aligned NWD with our in house supported living accommodation. In addition, we have secured funding for health specialist posts within the model, and are with the Police to agree their coniuened involvement in NWD . Formal consultation currently underway to formally integrate Kindle (residential) with Family Focus - in line with the efficacy of the NWD model	
4.3	Roll out and embed the deep dive methodology for No Wrong door as our approach to dynamic care planning	Started to use the Child Journey methodology (similar to RAISE meetings in NWD) as we go live with revised NWD model those RAISE meetings will be embedded. Care planning meetings as routine is embedded with the strategy and being rolled out.	
4.4	Refresh & embed a dedicated discharge project that maximises the full range of legal options available to carers and reduces statutory interventions	<p>Invested in a dedicated discharge project team with a focus on stepping out of children's lives. The discharge project is now fully operational, and the project workers are attending the case progression panel. All cases deemed as 'moving to discharge' are being co-worked and supported by the project workers. We now have a strong understanding of which children we can seek to end PWP arrangements. We have 21 children and young people moving to discharge and 11 awaiting a Court date so this figure is expected to improve over the rest of the year.</p> <p>We need to continue to monitor & report on the impact of the dedicated discharge project & ensure that we embed the infrastructure within the Permanence Strategy and tracking process.</p>	
4.5	Redesign and modernise our family placements service to maximise foster care recruitment and the support offered to all carers including friends and family carers	Re-designed and organised the fostering service on a function basis (established 3 teams that are linked to the functions of fostering rather than generic) and implemented a whole service modernisation plan. In addition we are engaged with GM and local innovation taking a proactive approach to increasing foster care retention and recruitment (e.g. digital marketing campaign; spare room project, development of foster care portal through LCS housing solutions to increase sufficiency).	
4.6	Roll out and embed placement support meetings as routine from the point of placements being made	Placement Support Meetings are taking place (28 held this year) but are not fully embedded. There will be a renewed focus on these as part of the launch of the Care Planning Framework. The ambition is to make these meetings routine rather than in response to stress within a placement.	

4.7	Maximise and embed the range and use of strength based reviews so that our children and young people are fully involved and influence their plans	<p>This is an area that we have yet to make significant progress and will be a focus of the bespoke commissioned programme of work that Jan Howarth is carrying out January/February.</p> <p>There is some limited evidence of strength based reviews across the service, in areas such as SHINE.</p>	
4.8	Develop and embed a whole service approach to life story work that ensures every child has a record of their story and decisions we have made for them / with them made and that their case file is a record and celebration of their life	<p>Produced a Life Story Work Framework following work within a Task & Finish group and commissioned training to support practitioners. Life Story Work session at Practice Fortnight. . Still need to embed life story work as routine across whole service.</p>	
4.9	Improve the quality and consistency of Pathway planning for our care experienced young people that reflects the standard of "would this be good enough for my own child" and supports consistent persistent support	<p>Redesigned the service to support better planning and transition through care with a proactive approach in terms of transitions. Developed a dedicated scorecard that is helping us become more data intelligent, and understand where there are gaps.</p> <p>Reviewed the systematic recording of pathway plans to support practice. This has involved making changes to LL and we are now focusing on consistency and quality.</p> <p>We need to retain the new focus on the quality and consistency of pathway planning through the launch of the refreshed Pathway Plan with a workforce development plan to support the delivery of this.</p>	
4.10	Review and refresh the care leaver offer and implementation to ensure it aligns and is consistent with GM offer and the raising of the standard of "only good or better is good enough for our young people".	<p>This is an area with limited progress. We have signed up to GM charter, and there are plans in place to meet with care leavers in April for their input into the production of our new leaving care offer. This need to include the development of a transition pathway between our Care Experienced Service and Adult Services. We have continued to promote the Offer as is but we want to extend and expand this based on the wishes and ambitions of our young people.</p>	
4.11	Increase and enhance Employment, Education and Training Opportunities for looked after children and care leavers.	<p>Maintained a forensic focus on education and achievement and introduced a post 16 PEP co-ordinator, as part of national pilots. Dedicated plan in place.</p>	

5.0 Our ambition: To narrow the gap through working collaboratively to reduce the number of children that are living and experiencing neglect

Lead: Strategic Lead Safeguarding - Tony Morrissey

Our approach: We will 'Work with' rather than 'do to' parents where children are living in households where neglect is a feature by recognising that neglect is a cumulative issue and working collaboratively. We will harness the strength of the partnership to identify neglect at the earliest stage.

Action Plan		Review of Progress & Priorities	RAG
5.1	Embed and roll out "standing in the child's shoes" as an approach for understanding children's lived experience and to inform our interventions when working with neglect	Rolled out the 'Child's' Journey' methodology which is a strengths-based approach to support learning and improvement where there are levels of complexity that require stepping outside of process to reflect. The methodology now needs to be rolled out across the service. This is similar to standing in the child's shoes. This approach was further cascaded at our Neglect Conference and partners have been "called to action" to say what they are doing to understand and intervene for children who are experiencing neglect.	
5.2	Commission and roll out strength based intervention led programme of training when working with families who experience neglect to include using a Child Impact Chronology to understand the impact of cumulative experiences for children and young people	Developed Multi-Agency Neglect Strategy and formally launched at our Multi Agency neglect conference in October 2021 Multi-agency audit focusing on children and families where neglect was a feature of their lived experience A bespoke audit tool was devised was used to enable agencies to gather information on their involvement with the service users and reflect on the quality of practice. Partners have been introduced the Cim C methodology though our practice fortnight and plans to progress cascade across the partnership are being developed.	
5.3	Embed our Practice Development Hubs to explore best practice when working with families where neglect is a feature	Bespoke programme with Strengthening Practice means that we have been able to progress our vision of development hubs. These are in place and operational and being used to support learning. We have progressed several lunch and learn sessions, and have a programme of sessions lined up for the year ahead. Held our first Practice Fortnight that was designed in a way to best enable us to share experience, learn from one another, and understand more about different areas within the service. People coming together talking about practice.	
5.4	Develop, introduce and provide training on use and understanding of the Child Impact Chronology across the child's journey.	Developed and rolled out the child impact chronology as a tool to enable analysis and inform care planning. In May 2021 a dedicated project was established to drive forward the use of child impact chronologies as routine and deliver the training Ref where we ae getting traction and what we are doing to get others. we have incorporated this into audit activity, and we have targeted specific points on the child's journey as a check point e.g., the PLO process. Since September, all but two of the 14 families being considered as part of the Legal Gateway process have child impact chronologies and as such, we are starting to see the impact of the work in this area. We need to continue with our targeted approach for the embedding of Child Impact Chronologies, linked to key decision-making points in a child's journey.	

5.5	Co-design with parents strength based plans that are clear about the changes that need to be made and the help that will be given	<p>Focussed work on practice and quality of plans has taken place through lunch & learn sessions but there has been limited progress within this action. Jan Horwarth, Emeritus Professor of Child Welfare in the Department of Sociological Studies at the University of Sheffield, has been commissioned to offer a dedicated programme of support (January/February) and the programme will link in with this action.</p> <p>We need to work closely with Jan Horwarth as she implements her dedicated programme of support</p>	
5.6	Practice model for tackling neglect to be embedded within locality Early Help Model	<p>Barriers to the use of the Graded Care Profile 2 and it's effectiveness have been considered within a multi-agency Steering Group, supported by the NSPCC</p> <p>Developed new screening tool to support practitioners in their decision making and in working with families and the roll of TTT is inclusive of working with families experiencing neglect</p> <p>Further work must be carried out to promote GCP2 as the neglect tool of choice.</p>	
5.7	Roll out and implement distance travelled tools to measure sustainable change.	<p>Rolled out a number of tools (Residential staff using Outcomes Star Intensive Family Support using distance travelled) and there are plans in place for further roll out of these tools.</p> <p>Need to carry out a scoping exercise for further rollout across the service.</p>	
5.8	Develop multi agency skills base audit of practitioners' competence and confidence to identify neglect.	<p>Held Neglect Conference attended by in excess of 150 practitioners from across partnership. Conducted a multi-agency audit focusing on children and families where neglect was a feature of their lived experience.</p> <p>Rolled out Section 11 audit further providing a baseline around this</p>	

6.0 Our ambition: We will work together to strengthen our practice and approach when working with families where domestic abuse and or coercion is a feature and to reduce the harm our children experience

Lead: Strategic Lead - Support & Protection - Lisa Gordon

Our approach: Using evidence based practice that makes a real difference. We will stand in our children's shoes to understand their lived experience and the action we need to take to reduce the harm they maybe experiencing

Action Plan		Review of Progress & Priorities	RAG
6.1	Embed Domestic Abuse practitioners within our locality Early Help teams to support early identification and intervention.	Mainstreamed the post of domestic abuse specialist at the Front Door. Progressing our model of Family Hubs and the re- design of our IFS. and these will be inclusive of practitioners with specialist skills and experience around domestic abuse. Plans are in place to integrate the IDVAs from Trafford Domestic Abuse Service within locality teams (progress hindered by Covid) but there is agreement in principle for 1 person to be in each of the four hubs for 1-2 days per week.	
6.2	Research and pilot evidence based approaches to the management of risk in respect of DA - such as "Safe and Together" and rollout so we have consistent approach across the service and wider partnership.	Restructured governance arrangements around DA and now moving into practice. Research was carried out in respect of approaches to DA, including Safe & Together, and progress is being made with the pilot of FDAT course on GM basis, but as yet there is no agreed consistent approach. Practitioners would value a model and agreed tools and it is agreed that this is a priority for this ambition going forward.	
6.3	Refocus our resources to commission what works based on impact	Partnership money has been combined and has been used to secure an increase in provision and more refuge places. Further analysis to take place of the JSNA to understand what is already being commissioned and where there are gaps for children's social care.	
6.4	Refresh of MARAC system and processes	Completed a full refresh of MARAC systems and processes and changes have now been implemented. DSL are contributing to process, and are attending for cses that relate to pupils that attend their schools. Approach being adapted to focus on GP contributions Ambition workstream will continue to review impact of revisions, and feed into Task and Finish group.	
6.5	Embed our Practice development hubs to explore cases and share best practice in respect of working in cases where DA is a feature - Introducing reducing parental conflict practitioner tool kit	Bespoke programme with Strengthening Practice means that we have been able to progress our vision of development hubs. These are in place and operational and being used to support learning. We have progressed several lunch and learn sessions, and have a programme of sessions lined up for the year ahead. A number of learning events have taken place following the multi agency TSSP audit in respect of Domestic Abuse, and the learning has been taken out into the localities in a series of roundtable events.	

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6.6.	Roll out and embed Reducing Parental Conflict Programme internally and across the partnership.	<p>Reducing Parental Conflict (RPC) is an agreed element of our early intervention work and is currently being embedded. Train the trainer implemented, although turnover of staff has created gaps, particularly across the partnership. This is be refrshed and refocused and dedicated support through DWP and etcrnalcomony is in place. Hve adapted a targeted approach to who are trainers and linking this to delivery commitments.</p> <p>Successful EIF bid; They are providing support with putting a pathway in place.</p>	
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7.0 Our ambition: To take action and collectively safeguard our children and young people from all forms of exploitation and going missing

Lead: Strategic Lead Vulnerable Adolescents - Jen Houghton

Our approach: To develop confidence and competence in addressing missing and exploitation across the service and partnership. To have a commitment to prevent, protect, pursue and prosecute

Action Plan		Review of Progress & Priorities	RAG
7.1	Embed a fully integrated multi disciplinary team for complex safeguarding	<p>Restructured service in a way that brought together teams (including the MFH team and CSE Mentor) with SHINE social workers and Trafford Youth Justice to provide an enhanced service for young people who are vulnerable and may be at risk of exploitation.</p> <p>Increased partner expertise having successfully recruited to Health worker; trusted relationship psychologist needs to be recruited to although GM commitment and funding to continue this across GM has been secured. Agreement to commission parenting expertise has been secured.</p>	
7.2	Effectively capture outcomes from Return to Home Interviews to inform the child's plan and reduce risk	<p>Strengthened recording processes. Developed clearer understanding and assurance processes around who is missing and what the issues are. Multi-agency audit planned for RHI</p> <p>We need to utilise this information in care planning and establish regular Multi-Agency audits of our Return Home Interviews</p>	
7.3	To utilise intelligence gathered as part of the return home interviews to inform risk and disruption activity.	<p>Linked 'Missing from Home' workers to children's homes.</p> <p>Maintained our governance and operation oversight for children who are missing or exploited with monthly MFH Steering group, Complex Safeguarding Panel and DCS Assurance meetings. Becoming more data intelligent, and developing an improved understanding but a full review of all the panels in place still needs to take place.</p> <p>We still need to strengthen early identification of young people at risk of exploitation across the service and not just those within the Shine service.</p>	

7.4	Develop an early help focused Complex Safeguarding panel for those children open to Early Help or Universal Services	<p>Developed Exploitation Strategy to help ensure that vulnerable children at risk of exploitation or going missing are identified at the earliest possible stage and that action is taken.</p> <p>Improved information sharing between Early Help Services and social care/SHINE, and we are using data more effectively to understand what is happening for our children. A full review of all the panels still needs to take place to ensure those children who are not being supported at a social care level are being appropriately supported/identified.</p>	
7.5	Harness the Youth Engagement Service Mentoring project as a model to reduce risk for young people involved in violence.	<p>YES mentoring in place, embedding services in schools (knife crime) Police officer in schools. Trained up the YES engagement works in the Act Methodology.</p>	
7.6	Roll out specialist training across the whole service.	<p>Agreed an integrated offer with commissioned substance misuse service. Trained a number of our Youth Engagement workers in the ACT methodology and now working on applying the approach in practice.</p> <p>Established liaison meetings with one of our special schools to respond preventatively.</p> <p>We have an agreed transitions protocol with adult social care with a newly drafted Terms of Reference. Adult services in the process of identifying workers who can sit within Shine on a rotational basis</p> <p>Peer supervision in place, delivered by SHINE Advanced Practitioner for workers across the service.</p> <p>Access to case formulations approach through Trusted relationships psychologist is available although the post is currently vacant.</p> <p>Delivered training for Corporate Parenting Board Members and delivered a dedicated session on Complex Safeguarding at Practice Fortnight.</p>	
7.7	Develop and roll out 4P Approach (Prevent, Protect, Pursue, Prosecute) as vehicle for addressing risk.	<p>Limited progress with this action - Currently reviewing the best approach with partnership.</p>	

7.8	Implement and strengthen care planning for young people at risk of/being exploited.	<p>Links in with work that is being done under Ambition 4 around Care Planning Framework.</p> <p>Refreshed Care Planning Framework and this now needs to be launched and embedded across the service.</p> <p>Planning is strengthened for those children that are open to SHINE as they have a dedicated SHINE worker and a case practitioner but we know that we need to continue to strengthen the quality of risk assessments and planning across children's service, and ensure we are under taking young person centred planning.</p>	
7.9	Embed specific preventions approach for children/young people at risk of/being excluded or absent from School.	<p>Commenced with a dedicated Police pilot in Schools. Now have an education representative as part of both Youth Justice Board and Missing panels.</p> <p>Plans are in place to pilot a Contextual Safeguarding Conference which will be held on Sale West Estate involving all agencies who have an interest in the area with an aim of putting together a multi-agency disruption plan for young people.</p> <p>Extension of the role of our Virtual School will support with this.</p>	

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8.0 Our ambition: To have "partnerships with purpose" that impact positively upon the lives of children young people and families

Lead: Corporate Director Children's Service - Jill McGregor & Chair Safeguarding Partnership - Maureen Noble

Our approach: To ensure our governance and partnership arrangements are interconnected and maximise the strength, expertise and knowledge of all. We will be data led and intelligent to determine agreed priorities

Action Plan		Review of Progress & Priorities	RAG
8.1	Refresh and implement our children's commissioning arrangements	The Children's Commissioning Board has been refreshed and established with strong provider and commissioner representation. Commissioning intentions have been developed on thematic basis and are currently being progressed including transformational activity. CCB reporting directly into the Start Well Board to ensure that there is collective ownership on improving outcomes for all children. Deccuated work in resoect of what ICS means for our Trafford Locality model for children is being progressed. Strong interconnectivity with the Provider Collaborative	
8.2	Refresh and relaunch the Start Well Board to become that agreed governance for "right help, right time" model	Refreshed TOR and membership of Startwell Board. Chair of TSSP is now a member of the Board to ensure connectivity . Board has been refocused to look at needs and outcomes for "all" Trafford children - prevention focus and aligned with Commissioning intentions. Early Help Board is reporting into Startwell. Dedicated Children's Group etsablished through the VCSFE collective . These measures are ensuring that we have whole system ownership of ambtion" Right help, right time"	
8.3	Review and revise TSSP arrangements including the sub boards	Complete and in place. This includes joining of Ambtion 5 , 6 and 7 with sub boards. Safeguarding Effectiveness Sub Board has been etsablished and now provides a QA and challenge function including oversight of MA audit activity and learning	
8.4	Enhance the children's element of the JSNA to develop suite of agreed commissioning intentions	Completed bespoke JSNAs in respect of Early Help, SEND and Domestic Abuse. Developed commisioning intentions and strategic approach on a thematic basis. A number of major programmes of work are in place and progressing	
8.5	Implement an agreed suite of safeguarding indicators and measures and reporting arrangements that hold al agencies to account.	Agreed a full suite and reporting arrangements are in place. Refinements and outcomes measures are being further developed	
8.6	Maximise learning from pandemic response to consolidate learning and interconnectivity.	Arrangements remain in place both for responding and recovering to the pandemic . Areas of greatest lerning and connectivity have been through joint working and development of systems with schools, line of sight on children not in school, and joint working between Public Health and our schools. Learning and areas to amplify and adapt continue to be indentified. Approach to visiting childen to know they are safe has been embedded.	

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TRAFFORD COUNCIL



Children's Services Improvement Activity and Progress October 2021

Introduction



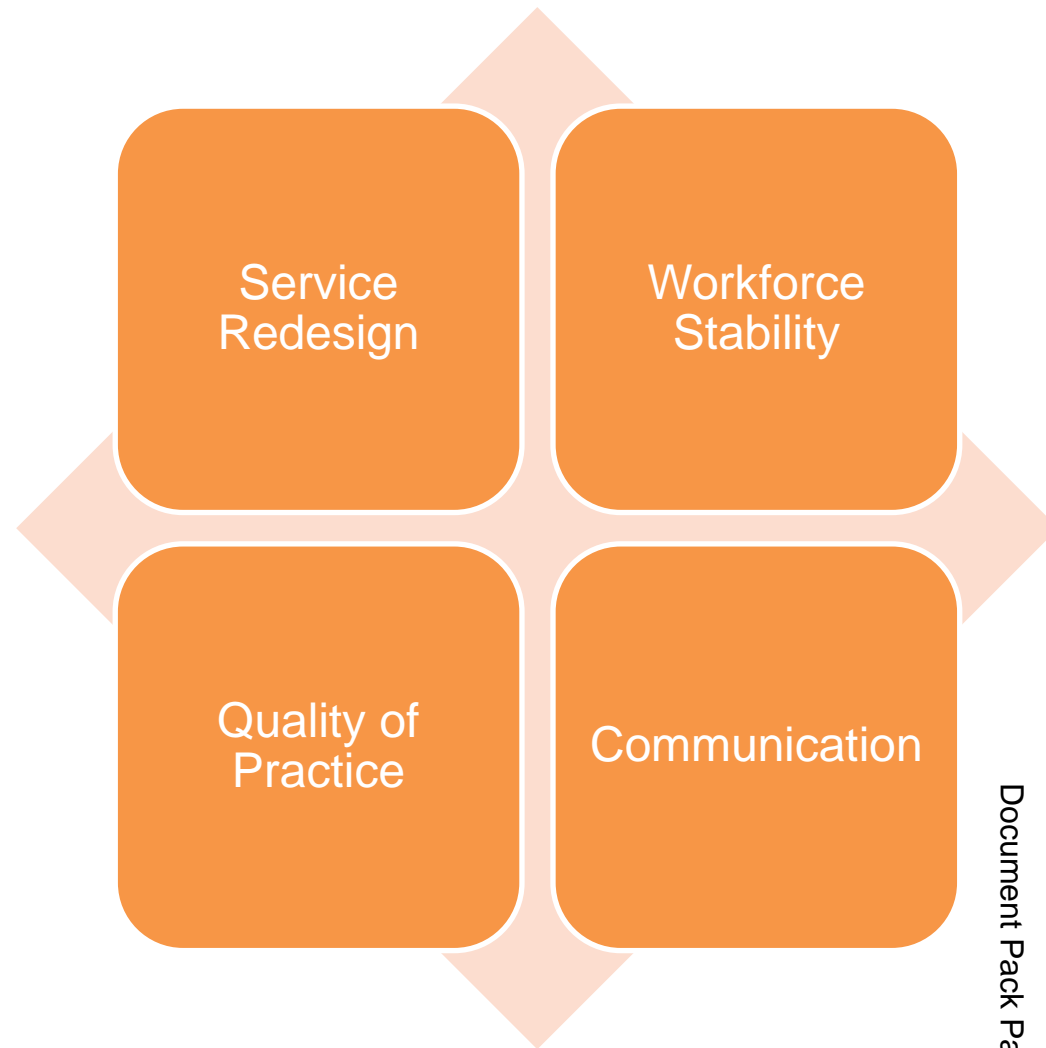
- Recap on the improvement activity that has taken place over the last 6 months
- Review of where we are up to – progress and areas for further work
- Consider barriers and issues
- Share and update on formal assessment of progress: DfE and Improvement Chair's assessment
- Ofsted through the Monitoring Visit 28th & 29th September 2021
- Lay out next steps including how we will chart progress

Our Focus over the last 6 months

- Reflected on findings from the Focus Visit – and sense checked the findings against Our Ambitions plan & incorporated areas we needed to strengthened
- Continued to have a “back to basics” approach but moving more to think about purpose and quality
- Recognised the on going impact of COVID and Redesign on our workforce
- Forensic focus on Workforce – this has been and continues to be our biggest priority
- “Chunked” up immediate priorities for our managers and practitioners
- Continued to strengthen our QA and performance reporting – line of sight to practice
- Continued to focus on partnerships – strategically and operationally
- Kept all our conversations about children and families – and kept seeing our children regularly

Priorities within Priorities

- We have identified 4 key areas of focus and overlaid these upon the 8 Ambitions
- This has helped managers & work stream leads to focus on the task in hand and to prioritise.
- It provides the 'golden thread' from strategy to practice.
- Ambition leads have reviewed their work streams within this context
- Practitioner Board is now doing the same
- Shared ownership of issues and solutions



Redesign Journey March 2021-Sept 2021

28th Jun - Sept :

- Recruitment and Matching processes commenced and service structure being populated starting with Management roles (HoS Practice Manager)
- Marketing and recruitment company secured for social work vacancies

4th Oct:
Launch and go live of new Children Service's model

5th Oct:
Making it work in practice!!

1st Jul- Sept:

- Case progression clinics held to determine right pathway for children and families

19th Mar 30th Apr:

- Assimilation and analysis of consultation responses .
- **131** 121s sessions held HR colleagues, Unions and managers for staff
- **5** Dedicated team meetings held
- **Be-spoke day in the life of sessions held** & attended by **211** staff
- Partner session held - attended **55 Partners**
- Carers session held - attended by **20 Carers**
- **Managing the Psychology of Change & Personal Change** sessions held to support staff

22nd - 24th Jun:

End of Consultation Outcome briefings held with staff. Led by DCS and Director

16th Jun:

- Final Union briefing to share proposed structure

30th Apr:
Close of staff consultation

1st May- 15th Jun:

- Finalisation of the revised structure and sign off

17th-18th Mar:
Launched formal consultation. Whole service and individual service presentations delivered

Redesign



- Redesign has taken longer than we had anticipated Worked with our staff and managers to get it right
- Needed to make brave decisions and hold our nerve and match / appoint people with the right skills and experience
- COVID & different ways of working has also been a challenge - seeing this locally and nationally
- Seeing an increase in agency staffing levels and turnover - not unique to Trafford but our agency usage is higher than average – currently 40%
- Majority of Practice Managers posts will be permanent appointments (56%) but opportunity to bring talent in
- Majority of social workers will be working in the areas of the service they want to - only 7 social workers did not get their first preference
- Recognised that simply changing people and posts won't get us to where we need to be...

Progress - Investing in our People

- Market force supplement for posts where there has been greatest turnover implemented in July but too soon to see impact
- Re-shaped our “Investing in our People” steering group – chaired by Director of Early Help and Social Care
- Commissioned a marketing and recruiting company to support our recruitment campaign
- Continuing with our ‘grow our own’ approaches – Front Line and social worker apprenticeships; 11 new starters in this quarter
- Increasing and improving our student offer – including fast track pathway to join us
- New approach to supporting our newly qualified social workers (NQSW) in their assessed year (ASYE) – Commissioned a new provider to deliver bespoke sessions to NQSWs
- Progressed refresh of supervision framework led by “practitioners and managers for practitioners and managers”
- Started our 3 year Strengthening Practice Programme – first part of which is “Care and Confidence”
- Developed be-spoke management induction programme

.....**Great deal going on in this space but the key is managers that support with confidence and we are not there yet**

Progress: Quality of Practice – Audit Activity



- Practice Improvement and Learning Service is now in place and working across the whole service – driving QA systems and processes as well as “show and tell”
- Compliance 78% managers starting to see the value
- 76% agreement with moderated & audited judgements – better understanding of what good looks like
- 63% of audits are rated as RI or better – slight drop from previous quarter but linked to high expectations and workforce challenges
- Key gap is closing the loop and influencing practice; we will see the same issues if this doesn't happen
- Extending our range of QA activity e.g. live audits; conversational audits and multi- agency audits – means of influencing the partnership
- Becoming more data intelligent and undertaking deep dives to understand the issues e.g. – repeat CP planning
- QAF and expectations built into induction for **all** post redesign
- Means we have a clear understanding of the issues but managers influencing practice key to improving outcomes for children

Progress: Quality of Practice – Practice Lens

- Have continued to see children & see them face to face – 94% of children with CP plan seen 4 weekly
- Have continued to roll out Children Impact Chronologies (CimC) to understand the lived experience of our children and the decisions we make ; Over 100 practitioners trained and starting to use CimC
- Revised Public Law Outline (PLO process) – early days but already seeing improvements in grip, ownership and diverting children from care
- Have a dedicated service plan for Child Protection Chairs and IROs supported by a performance score card – to focus on influencing plans and decisions we make for children
- Continued to strengthen Missing From Home practice and processes e.g. creative approach to how interviews take place and revised electronic reporting and assurance arrangements but have more to do in respect of managing risk
- Introduced 'Child's' Journey' methodology; a strengths based approach to approach & planning for children
- Strength Based Intervention Led Practice Programme – 3year investment
- Continued to strengthen partnership and governance arrangements e.g. established safeguarding effectiveness sub-board; co-location of FRT and GMP enhancing joint decision making

What we know

- Leadership continue to have a better line of sight to practice but middle and front line managers remains an issue
- Experience of supervision is mixed – In terms of both frequency and quality & especially in teams were we have needed to move managers on
- Workforce stability is impacting on children - 33% of children have had three or more workers makes it difficult to build trusted relationships and influence plans for our children.
- Role of CP chairs and IROs needs further strengthening – overseers of planning for children to be strengthened – need to change the culture.
- Written records do not reflect the lived experience of our children – they are not ‘their story’
- Strengthened PLO processes and starting to see impact
- Assessment and planning still driven by process and compliance and this is limiting the effectiveness of our interventions

.....But when we get it right and have consistency of worker we make a difference

DfE Highlight Report Sept 2021

In the most recent LA Intervention Highlight Report, DfE adviser commented on a strengthened “*focused determination both within the Council and across the partnership to deliver the improvements needed.*”

Other key points highlighted within the report:

- *“The **redesign** consultation, planning and implementation of Phase1 has gone well and this has been recognised by the Unions.... All open cases are being assessed to ensure they are allocated to the right part of the redesigned structure and this has provided an additional level of scrutiny in terms of quality of practice and ensuring children and young people have their needs met in the right part of the system”*
- *Workforce stability remains a concern, particularly in relation to the recruitment of permanent experienced social workers.*
- *“Continued improvement in compliance and outcomes of **quality assurance** activity”*
- ***Management oversight** & the impact of this on the quality of decision-making & practice needs to be more consistent*
- *“Successful procurement of **Strengthening Practice** improvement partners for a three year period”*
- *“Good use of **external consultants and peer sector led improvement** support to provide constructive challenge and learning for Trafford”*
- *“Despite being in intervention for over two years Trafford will only be receiving their second Monitoring visit at the end of September as a result of the pandemic. They have therefore not had the benchmarking and progress checking from Ofsted around improvement progress that other LAs would have benefited from during this time”*

“Improvement has continued to be delivered through the challenges of the pandemic at a steady and focused pace and the Council now has an accurate self-assessment of where its strengths are, areas that are improving and areas that still require further improvement”

Key Points from MV Feedback

Work with children

- Evidence of children being seen regularly and being seen alone. After a very limited period, social workers quickly resumed seeing children face to face.
- Saw examples of social workers working really hard to build relationships. Social Workers could talk in detail about their cases but some of this detail not always evident on case files.
- Quality of recording often not meaningful.

Assessments & Plans

- Evident that workers do try and get wishes and feelings, but gap in how this is used to understand the life of the child.
- Quality still too variable

Plans

- Written plans are vague with a focus on compliance and process rather than whether things are improving.
- Changes of social worker have caused delay for some children
- Child impact Chronologies not consistently used; when used they are useful.
- Plans Mostly updated when there is a change of circumstance.

Key Points from MV Feedback

Child Protection chairs and effectiveness

- Not always clear evaluation of risks. Chairs do not model child focused approach; Not framed around risk and children. Chairs don't always consider history, second or subsequent CP plans.
CP plans are reviewed but the way they are presented makes them hard to follow. Lot of focus on task and compliance.
- Minutes for reviews delayed, poor and often difficult to follow.

Child subject to Child Protection who are missing

- Return Home Interviews routinely offered, but quality of the intervention is not always visible. Reason why children are missing is still limited.

Impact of Leaders

- Strong corporate and political leadership; Strong governance and commitment to maintain strategic development & improvement has been maintained throughout pandemic.
- Effective set of performance indicators & gives an accurate view.
- Still some significant weakness; instability of workforce, inconsistent quality of practice, too many changes of workers (compounded by weakness in management & CP chairs)
- Good foundation, but over the next 6 months need to accelerate the pace of change

How we are going to deliver on all that is yet to do?



We know that we need to pick up pace, and start to 'land' some of the goals in advance of our next monitoring visit. DMT will meet on 7th October to target set against critical priorities – agreeing what is a priority for the next two and four months.

October – November 21

December - January 22

Next visit – February 2022

Priorities and next steps

Area of focus	Actions	How it will make a difference	By when	How we will know
Leadership and management	<p>Launch and embed supervision framework</p> <p>Dedicated coaching sessions for all managers to enable reflective conversations.</p>	<p>Staff will have good quality reflective supervision that supports practice</p>	<p>November 21 – Launch of Framework Dec 21 - Audit Jan 21 - Survey March – Next audit</p>	<p>Quarterly audits and staff survey will confirm</p>
Leadership and management	<p>Deliver against the Child Protection Conference Chair / Independent Reviewing Officer Improvement Plan</p>	<p>Children and families will benefit from a child focused approach to help understand what we are worried about and their progress with the plan.</p>	<p>Dec 21</p>	<p>Audit will show Child Protection conference minutes will evidence evaluation of risks, consideration of history & challenge where drift & delay is identified.</p>

Priorities and next steps



Area of focus	Actions	How it will make a difference	By when	How we will know
Workforce stability	<p>Develop bespoke agency retention programme</p> <p>Target set against agency rate.</p>	<p>Agency staff feel invested in & valued and, in turn, are committed to Trafford. Children experience fewer changes of workers</p>	<p>October 21</p> <p>October 21</p>	<p>Decrease in % children with 3+ more workers</p> <p>Improved turnover & retention rate</p>
Workforce stability	<p>Continue working with the external recruitment partner to target social work vacancies.</p> <p>Further strengthen the Induction Programme in line with newly designed service areas.</p>	<p>Permanent recruitment of social workers to reduce the over reliance on agency staff which reduces the risk of turnover.</p> <p>New starters to Trafford (or new roles) will feel invested in.</p>	<p>October 21</p> <p>October 21</p>	<p>We will have more permanent workers coming to join us. Agency rate reduces.</p> <p>New starters will be routinely asked by Practice Improvement Service for feedback on their induction experience.</p>

Priorities and next steps

Area of focus	Actions	How it will make a difference	By when	How we will know
Quality of practice	<p>Strengthening Practice to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - complete the delivery of the Care & Confidence phase of programme. - commence the delivery of the Core Skill programme (assessment, planning & parenting capacity) 	<p>Staff will feel supported and re-connected to core values of the work we do with children & families. Assessments & plans are strength based and avoid drift and delay</p>	<p>Phase 1 due to conclude April 22 Phase 2 due to start April 22</p>	<p>Regular Keeping in Touch meetings with Strengthening Practice take place monthly. Attendance is monitored. Workforce collaboration with SP to continue to co-produce the programme. Audits will evidence improved strength based plans & assessments and how we work with parents.</p>
Quality of practice	<p>Develop and implement child centred recording using sprint methodology Review of systems to support practice</p>	<p>Records will reflect child's lived experience and drive planning in a way that children & families understand.</p>	<p>December 21</p>	<p>Through routine monthly case file audits quality of recording will be reflected.</p>

Ongoing Priorities



There are a number of key things that we know we *have* to keep at the forefront of all of our improvement work:

- We have to maintain a **forensic focus on practice**
- We have put in place the **right support and scaffolding** - Managers supporting staff is key
- We must keep the conversation around **“what difference is this making to children?”**
- The judgement has to be **“Is life getting better for this child?”** and we have to continue to ask

“Would this be good enough for my own children / family”





Any Questions?

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